

# Readers' Digest .com

# THE VITAMIN SCAM



**Read this before you pop another pill!**

PAGE 86

**13 Things Your Plumber Won't Tell You** PAGE 24

**7 Simple Gadgets to Save You \$\$\$** PAGE 47

**DEADLY ROADS, DUMB DRIVERS**  
PAGE 126  
**How does your state rate?**



April 2010 \$3.99

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## F E A T U R E S

- 86 Vitamin Truths and Lies** CHRISTIE ASCHWANDEN  
Those daily pills are supposed to protect you, but some may hurt you instead.
- 92 “Dad’s Overboard!”** JOHN DYSON  
When a father falls off a boat, his son faces the toughest choice of all.
- 100 Meet the Madmen of Pranks Inc.** LANCE CONTRUCCI  
Insane hoaxes! Outrageous stunts! The funniest practical jokes ever.
- 110 Heroes and Hope**  
The earthquake that devastated Haiti failed to crush its people’s spirit. Six remarkable stories from the front lines of the global relief effort.
- 122 Four Ways of Looking at a Robot** ROBIN SAYERS  
Incredible automatons, from a Japanese android to a rare breed of dog.
- 140 Every Step a Miracle** JESSICA SNYDER SACHS  
A summer day, a small tumble—and Trudy Tuffy was paralyzed. The real surprise came next.
- 148 Invader** ROBERT KIENER  
What happens when a handsome aquarium fish from the other side of the world runs rampant off the Atlantic coast? (Hint: It’s not pretty.)
- 155 You Be the Judge** VICKI GLEMBOCKI  
A man donates sperm to a friend, who gives birth to twins. Is he a dad or just a donor?

**126 The Best, Worst & Deadliest Roads**

A special report on the nation’s highways. **PLUS:** How to survive your drive—and your fellow drivers.

## BOOK EXCERPT

**158 Doctor’s Orders** DAVE HNIDA, MD

In this gripping memoir, one man trades his family practice for the battlefields of Iraq and finds his own personal peace.



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Pleasantville, New York 10570.  
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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For short humor items,  
please see page 71. We  
regret that we cannot  
accept or acknowledge  
unsolicited artwork,  
photographs, or article-  
length manuscripts.

### **>> Customer Care**

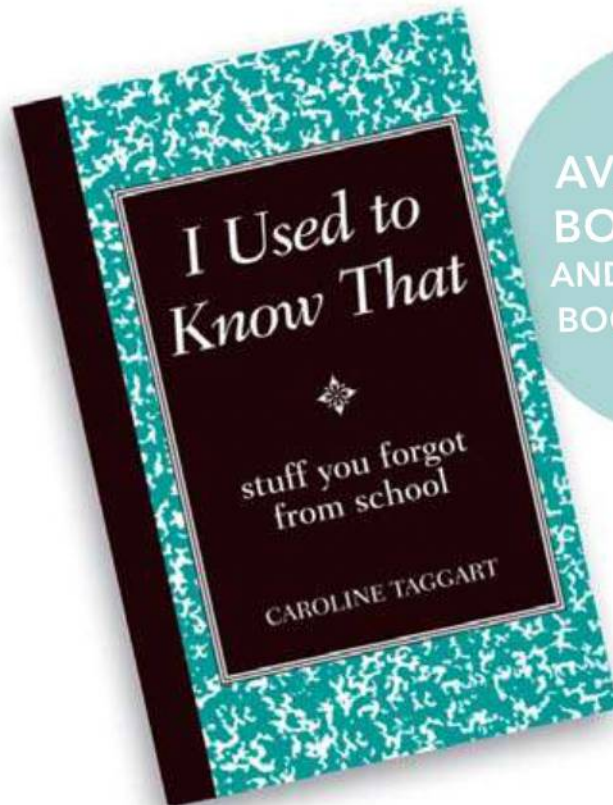
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**WHO** was the first president to live in the White House?  
**WHAT** are the seven deadly sins?  
**WHERE** did Samuel Clemens get his pen name—  
Mark Twain—from?

Educate your friends and amuse yourself: Find out the answers to these and hundreds more fascinating facts in the new book *I Used To Know That (Stuff You Forgot From School)* by Caroline Taggart, published by Reader's Digest. *I Used To Know That* takes you through geography, literature, science, world civilization, and more—all that stuff you learned in school, but probably forgot.



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**Answers:** John Adams was the first president to live in the White House; the seven deadly sins are wrath, greed, sloth, pride, lust, envy, and gluttony; and Samuel Clemens took the name Mark Twain from a term that means a river is safe to navigate.



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## Grammar Gaffes

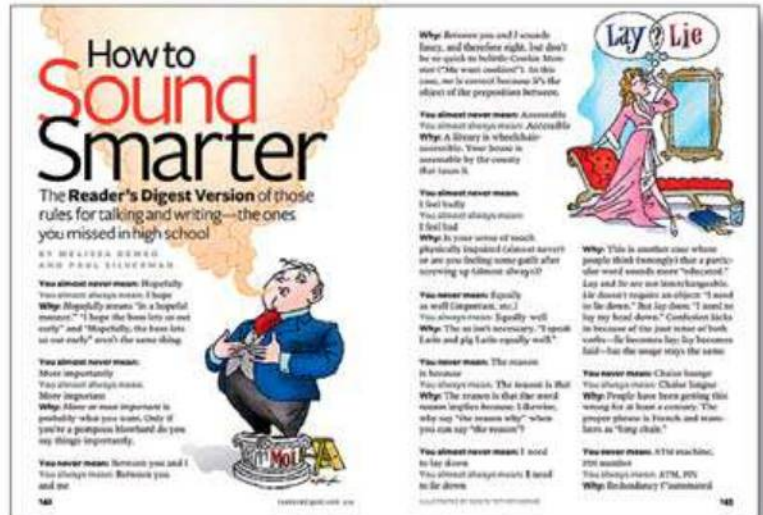
“How to Sound Smarter” struck a chord in this music teacher. I start each of my university classes with a brief lesson in grammar, such as the difference between *it’s* and *its*. A student once shouted, “Who cares?” (He was a graduate student—in education!) The deterioration of our language must stop somewhere. I do my wee part and wish that all teachers would do the same.

John B. d’Armand,  
University of Alaska, Juneau, Alaska

I felt smug to see so many of my pet peeves, then chagrined to learn of mistakes I never realized I’d been making. I wish you had included a blunder I see on many menus: “with au jus.” The French word *au* means “with,” so this is the same as saying “with with natural juices.”

Laura Rupers, Hull, Georgia

Animals are beings, not things, and I reject your rule that only a human is a “who.” In addition to having written such great fantasy as *The*



**People are like parrots;** they unthinkingly imitate others’ speech patterns without realizing how badly [*sic*] they sound. Is it just English teachers and editors that [*sic*] thank you? Hopefully [*sic*], others do too. (Just joking.)

Mainard Tom, Sunnyvale, California

*Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, C.S. Lewis was renowned for his respect for the English language. To him, all animals were “who,” not “that,” and either “he” or “she,” never “it.” Following his lead, I have always used “human” pronouns for animals, whether the animal is Aslan, Lewis’s noble Lion, or the spider merrily spinning a web by my desk.

Katrelya Angus, Sierra Madre, California

## We Want to Hear from You!

If we publish your letter—whether it’s to comment on our content, sing our praises, or take us to task—you’ll receive a free Reader’s Digest book or CD, courtesy of our Books and Music division. Send your submissions to [letters@readersdigest.com](mailto:letters@readersdigest.com).

## SPRING-CLEANING ... THE READER'S DIGEST VERSION

This month, our e-mail panel shared tips for spring-cleaning. Respondents split on whether they prefer to do a little bit at a time all year long (13 percent), nothing at all (13 percent), or hire help to get it done (7 percent). Here's what others had to say:

>> Don't waste time deciding whether to throw something out. If in doubt, throw it out. C. D., Clawson, Michigan

>> Clean window blinds in the shower: Spray with Windex and rinse with warm water. D. G., Oxford, Alabama

>> Keep a dust cloth tucked inside a drawer in each room so you can grab it and clean dust right away. A. W., Tampa, Florida

>> Use wet rubber gloves to pick up pet hair from the upholstery. R. S., Charlotte, North Carolina

>> Clean the windows and blinds on the same day. You'll feel better when all the windows are done. R. F., Fargo, North Dakota

>> Throw a party, and have a reason to clean. S. L., Lakewood, Colorado

>> Use a leaf blower for the patio and garage. D. L., Glen Ellyn, Illinois

>> Dust and clean with dirty items (towels, washcloths) on your way to the laundry room. C. N., Boise, Idaho

**Want your opinion heard?** Join Our Connection, the *Reader's Digest* Reader Panel, and take part in short surveys. Register to win \$30,000 at [readersdigestconnection.com](http://readersdigestconnection.com).

## Tail Wagger

I have a true story similar to that of Oscar, the cat who watches over dying patients at the Rhode Island nursing home ("An Animal's Instinct"). One Sunday evening, several relatives made a surprise visit. Instead of his usual enthusiastic greeting, our 11-year-old Labrador, Snooper, hung his head and barely wagged his tail. He crawled under a table next to my father's chair and stayed there until everyone left. As we walked our guests to their car, one of my aunts commented on Snooper's hangdog look. My father shrugged and said that the dog was getting old. Little did any of us realize that within half an hour, my 52-year-old father would be dead of a massive heart attack. There wasn't any doubt in our minds that Snooper had sensed my dad's impending death.

*Jacqueline Dyrke, Galena, Illinois*

## Whose Shame?

Hats off to Michael Crowley for exposing the shameless treatment of our brave veterans (Outrageous! "Vets Deserve Better"). How can a nation ignore the needs of those who protect its freedom? That's an appalling thank-you for serving your country, losing a limb, or losing your life. Joseph Klumpp, Mandeville, Louisiana

As a licensed psychologist who has conducted about a hundred evaluations for the Department of Veterans Affairs, I have a different



perspective. More than a few of the veterans I've tested for post-traumatic stress disorder come up as faking. When I consider the veterans who truly need and deserve disability benefits, I find it outrageous that so many of their healthy fellow service members are dishonestly seeking those same benefits.

*Gail Poyner, PhD,  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

## Joy of Worship

Stamp collecting? Perhaps Harvard psychologist Daniel Gilbert has never experienced what it means to worship (The Digest, "Joy: The Reader's Digest Version"). It has nothing to do with being part of a group that "would bring you soup if you got sick." I go to church to worship God, which gives me joy, peace, and purpose. Please don't put religion in a box with stamp-collecting clubs.

*Shay Lastra, Lowell, Arkansas*

*Editor's Note: Gilbert was emphasizing the relationship between happiness and membership in a group, not equating religion with stamp collecting. "Scientific data on human happiness confirm much of what our intuition tells us, but not everything," he adds, "and that's what makes science so important."*



## Your Donations Save Lives

**In the August 2009 issue, Reader's Digest** profiled Frank Buonotte, founder of 500 for Life, which provides thermal-imaging cameras to firefighters to help locate people in burning buildings. You responded with amazing support: \$65,000 in donations. One of the largest donations honored Capt. Donald K. Darrow, a retired firefighter from Indiana and Florida, who passed away in July. His partner, Barbara Porter, requested that memorial donations be made to 500 for Life. As a result, the organization has donated a thermal-imaging camera to the Huntington, Indiana, Fire Department.

Another generous donation, in the amount of \$57,550, came from a private family foundation; that money will fund more than seven thermal imagers for fire departments throughout the country.

## Don't Know From

I recently received a master's degree in literature, language, and learning. I'm rather proud of my new degree, and I suppose that's why a sentence in "Attack of the Late-Nite TV Gizmos!" caught my attention. It reads "We here at *Reader's Digest* were English majors, so we don't know from negatively charged dust particles." I thought maybe I had taken it out of context, so I went back and reread the whole paragraph, but it just doesn't work as a complete sentence.

*Patricia Syner, Edmond, West Virginia*

*Editor's Note: "Don't know from" is the Yiddish idiomatic equivalent of "don't know anything about." For more on the finer points of language, see Word Power, page 181. ■*



*Thurs. 5:18 p.m.  
Daughter's first roller coaster*

*Fri. 10:02 a.m.  
Son's first white water*



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Sat. 7:21 p.m.

My first doubleheader

Sun. 11:09 a.m.

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### *Easy Chicken & Cheese Enchiladas*

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- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1 can (10 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> oz.) Campbell's® Condensed Cream of Chicken Soup (Regular, 98% Fat Free or Healthy Request®) | 2 cups chopped cooked chicken         |
| 1/2 cup sour cream   | 1/2 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese |
| 1 cup Pace® Picante Sauce  | 6 flour tortillas (6"), warmed        |
| 2 tsp. chili powder  | 1 small tomato, chopped               |
|  | 1 green onion, sliced                 |
1. Stir the soup, sour cream, picante sauce and chili powder in a medium bowl.
  2. Stir **1 cup** picante sauce mixture, chicken and cheese in large bowl.
  3. Divide chicken mixture among tortillas. Roll up the tortillas and place seam side up in 2-qt. shallow baking dish. Pour remaining picante sauce mixture over filled tortillas. Cover baking dish.
  4. Bake at 350°F. for 40 min. or until enchiladas are hot and bubbling. Top with tomato and onion.

So many, many reasons it's so...**M'm! M'm! Good!**

*Campbell's*

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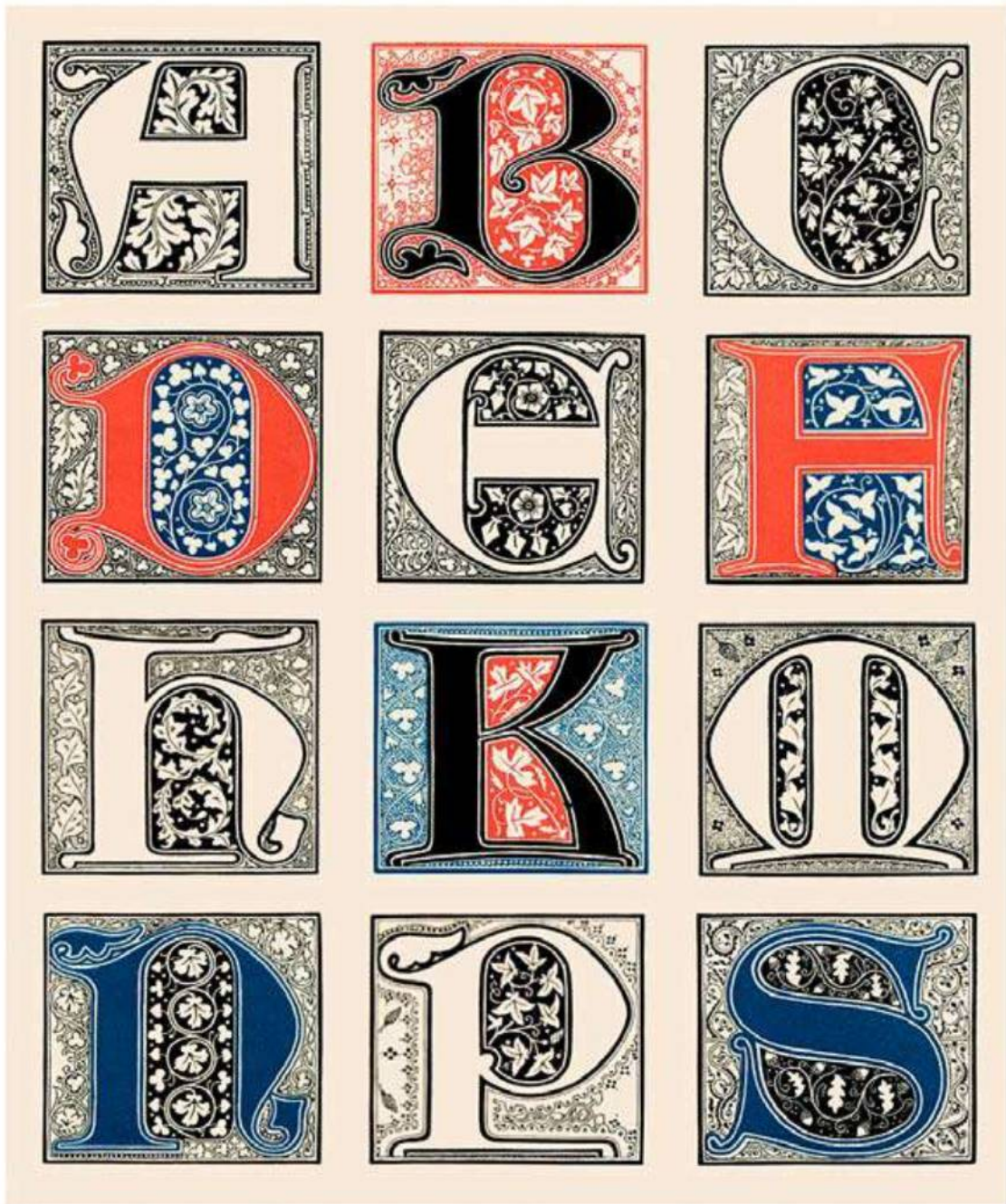
For hundreds of delicious recipe ideas explore [CampbellsKitchen.com](http://CampbellsKitchen.com)





# The Digest

the who ● the how ● the now



**Letters can be show ponies** (like these ornate Gothic initials), and letters can be workhorses (like the sleek Freight Sans font you're reading now). Survey the history of fonts and printed letters—and the artistry behind them—in *Type: A Visual History of Typefaces and Graphic Styles, 1901–1938, Volume 2* (Taschen, \$59.99).



# Make Up **Your Mind**

An expert helps choosy choosers choose more easily

**T**he choices we make define us. But these days, even picking, say, a breakfast cereal can be overwhelming. Whole grain or multi-grain? Oat bran? Nut flakes? Fiber? In her new book, *The Art of Choosing* (Twelve, \$25.99), Sheena Iyengar, a Columbia University business professor who was born blind, contemplates the ways choices can motivate, frustrate, paralyze, and ultimately transform us. Her ideas for choosing more easily, quickly, and smartly:

## **CHOOSE NOT TO CHOOSE**

“When my husband and I go out to eat, I let him pick the restaurant and even delegate him to decide what I should order. So much time is wasted in our culture on choices that don’t matter. Letting someone make small decisions for you can be extremely liberating—and it gives my husband and me more time to focus on each other.”

## **ASK FOR HELP**

“We can’t be experts in everything, so do what you do best and call in the professionals for other things. I will devote myself completely to a new research study, for example. But when it comes to

**Professor Sheena Iyengar: “Satisficing is being satisfied with what’s sufficient.”**





choosing investments, let's say, or making important medical decisions, I'm much better off listening to Warren Buffett or my doctor than speculating on my own."

### USE OTHERS AS A MIRROR

"It's important to know how our family, friends, colleagues, and strangers see us. These opinions can serve as a reality check. By paying close attention to how people react to our actions, we can decide if our behavior—our choices—needs to change to better align with how we'd like to be perceived. The best way to start that process is to ask. As a blind person, I will ask friends, Do I look better in this color dress or that color? And the reactions help me shape my choices."

### SET THE CLOCK

"Often, the best way to make a decision when faced with a bewildering array of options is to impose a time limit. If you're buying a new digital camera, you could spend all day poring over websites and talking to friends about which one to buy. Or you could stop agonizing and say, I'm giving myself exactly 30 minutes to research this. That way, you won't deplete your energies."

### GO WITH 'GOOD ENOUGH'

"Let's say you're buying toothpaste. There are literally dozens of options, and it's easy to get overwhelmed. Here's a trick: Just pick one. It doesn't have to be the best or have the most dazzling features. It just needs to be good enough. We call that *satisficing*—being satisfied with what's sufficient. It takes the pressure off."

Interview by *David Hochman*

## lists you can learn from

### 3 of the Best Movies of 2009 You Never Saw

In *151 Best Movies You've Never Seen* (HarperStudio, \$16.99), Leonard Maltin argues his case. The three 2009 releases that he recommends are:

#### The Great Buck Howard

John Malkovich is a mentalist, and Colin Hanks plays his assistant. (Cameo: Tom Hanks.)

#### The Merry Gentleman

Michael Keaton is a hit man in this "austere but stylish little film noir."

**Two Lovers** A romantic drama with Gwyneth Paltrow and Joaquin Phoenix and "the first great film I saw in 2009."

### 7 Wonders of the Everyday World

At his website, [1000awesomethings.com](http://1000awesomethings.com), Neil Pasricha catalogs the *really* little pleasures. He has collected 200 of them in *The Book of Awesome: Snow Days, Bakery Air, Finding Money in Your Pocket, and Other Simple, Brilliant Things* (Amy Einhorn/Putnam, \$22.95).

1. Wearing underwear just out of the dryer
2. When cashiers open up new checkout lanes at the grocery store
3. Intergenerational dancing
4. Paying with exact change
5. Fixing electronics by smacking them
6. High-fiving babies
7. The other side of the pillow

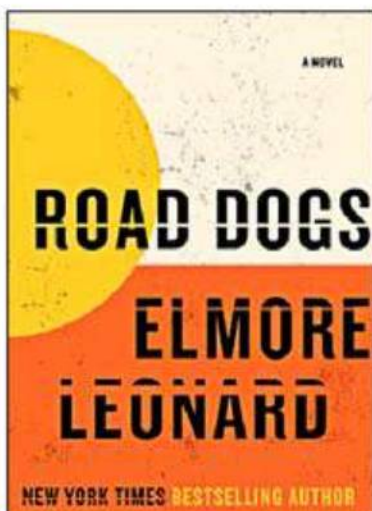




**James Taylor** has won five Grammy Awards and has sold more than 40 million albums.



**WHAT HE'S READING** "The mysteries of Elmore Leonard. I love his writing. It's so spare, and it puts you in a great place. I've been devouring everything he's written."



**WHAT HE'S WATCHING**

"The History Channel, the National Geographic Channel, and the Discovery Channel. I like the history pieces and the layman's science—all that technical stuff. We were solidly into *The West Wing*, then *Law & Order* and *NYPD Blue*. Now it's *House*."



ART STREIBER/FOX

**WHERE HE'S SURFING**

"I research lyrics, and I use iTunes. Recently I bought an embarrassing amount of camping equipment—we like to camp out." Taylor and his wife, Kim, have eight-year-old twin boys, Rufus and Henry; he also has two older children, Ben and Sally.



**WHAT HE'S PLUGGING**

His world tour with Carole King, which arrives in the U.S. next month. "She worked on my first album [*Sweet Baby James*], I worked on her *Tapestry* album, and we toured together in the early '70s. Over the years, we've said, 'When are we gonna travel again with the music?' We've finally put it together. We'll both be onstage the whole time."



JAMES O'MARA

ILLUSTRATED BY ZACH TRENHOLM

**IF I RULED THE WORLD ...** "I'd get money out of politics because it limits our ability to choose good leaders. It also makes it harder for civilian citizens to feel as though the government is theirs. And I'd have 50 kids. I love kids. They're our only crack at immortality."

Interview by *Maureen Mackey*



# Got a cough?



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## hello

### Skiers buried in avalanches.

The \$29,980 Noggin Rescue Radar can detect skiers under 50 feet of snow.

### Hackers and predictable passwords.

A cache of 32 million stolen computer passwords revealed a surprising lack of creativity, the *New York Times* reported. Web users' five most common passwords:

- 123456 ● 12345 ● 123456789
- password ● iloveyou



**Cheaper hooch in our hutch.** We're laying off the expensive stuff and buying more bottom-shelf brands of liquor, the Associated Press reports. Sales are off 5.1 percent for pricey brands and up 5.5 percent for bargain bourbons and the like.

## goodbye



### Waiters who don't write your order down.

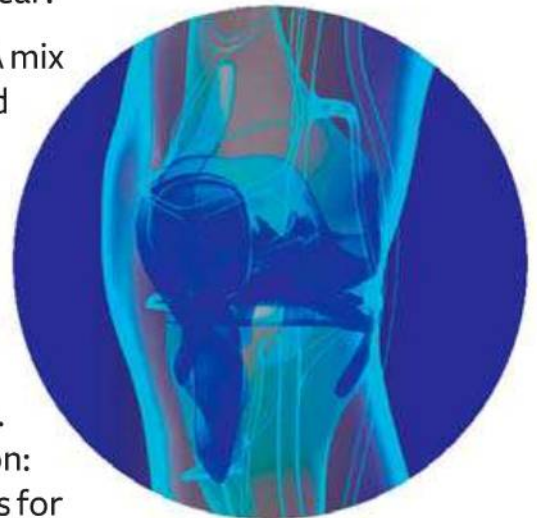
"The venerable waiter memory act is in serious

decline," notes the

*Washington Post*, "a result of increasingly complicated orders—customers who customize because of nutrition concerns or allergies real or imagined—people going out in larger groups, and a generation that seems less comfortable with memorization."

**Deadbeat friends who "can't" pay you back.** According to *BusinessWeek*, Americans may soon be able to send each other money (and return that \$10 they borrowed) using their cell phones—as early as this year.

**Bad knees.** A mix of protein and plastic gel, injected into a damaged knee, may help repair cartilage, *Esquire* reports. On the horizon: similar repairs for heart tissue and neurons.



## ● think about it

"Juliette Fairley, who wrote and performed *The Making of a Mulatto*, turned out to be an affable woman who wonders if what many of us see as **racism is just human cruelty looking for a place to land.**"

Anita Gates, *New York Times*





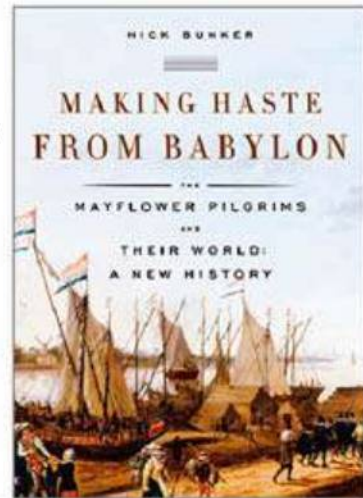
## Aqua Mist.™ Release the freshness of nature in your home.

New Air Wick® Aqua Mist™ is an air refresher that's unlike other aerosols. Its propellant-free trigger mists fragrances inspired by the freshest places on earth.

Join Air Wick's Fragrant Homes Club [www.airwickfhc.com](http://www.airwickfhc.com)

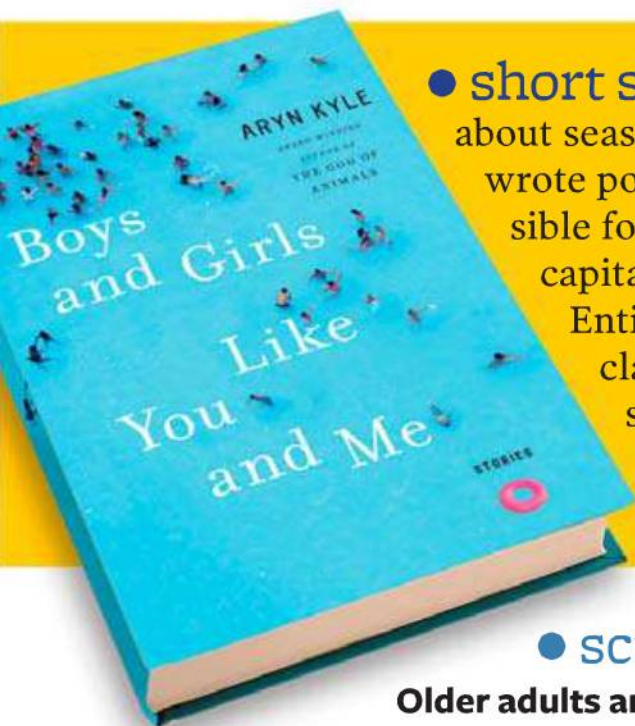


● **history** [Samoset] strode up to the Plymouth colonists, and he began to pour out a description of the coast, its people, its chiefs, and their military resources ... Samoset asked for beer, and so the Pilgrims gave him brandy: Doubtless they and the sailors had long since finished off the *Mayflower's* ale. That afternoon Samoset began to explain the politics of the hinterland, and the reasons why the native people had seemed so likely to attack. He told the Pilgrims that bitter recollections remained, arising from the activities of Thomas Hunt, an earlier visitor [who] almost destroyed New England before it began.



MAKING HASTE FROM BABYLON: THE MAYFLOWER PILGRIMS AND THEIR WORLD; A NEW HISTORY BY NICK BUNKER (KNOPF, \$30)

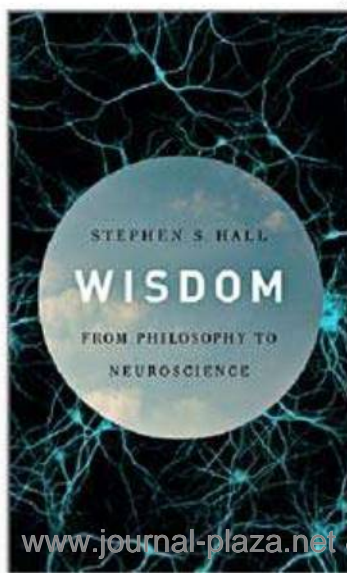
● **short stories** [In the second grade] they talked about seasons and birthdays and upcoming holidays. They wrote poems about their pets. The third grade was responsible for teaching multiplication, cursive, and state capitals—the second grade flew beneath the radar. Entire weeks passed in which she never taught a math class. “Practice being nicer to people,” she told her students for homework. “Watch cartoons,” “Eat a cookie,” “Ask your parents for a puppy.”



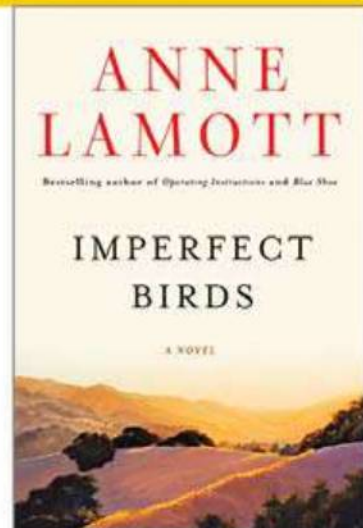
BOYS AND GIRLS LIKE YOU AND ME BY ARYN KYLE (SCRIBNER, \$24)

● **science** Older adults are more supple in their assessments of problems; they are able to perceive the social context of a situation better than younger adults, and to adjust their actions accordingly. And perhaps most important, when it comes to settling on a strategy of action, they display greater flexibility, guided in part by their ability to regulate their emotions.

WISDOM: FROM PHILOSOPHY TO NEUROSCIENCE BY STEPHEN S. HALL (KNOPF, \$27.95)



● **novel** Her long arms were crossed, eyes opaque with disbelief. “Look at her,” James whispered. Rosie looked up at them, and then slowly down at her watch with a hint of a smirk—she was not going to show anyone much of anything in this public place. “As if we all work for an airline, and her flight has been delayed,” he said. A police officer led them in.



IMPERFECT BIRDS BY ANNE LAMOTT (RIVERHEAD, \$25.95)

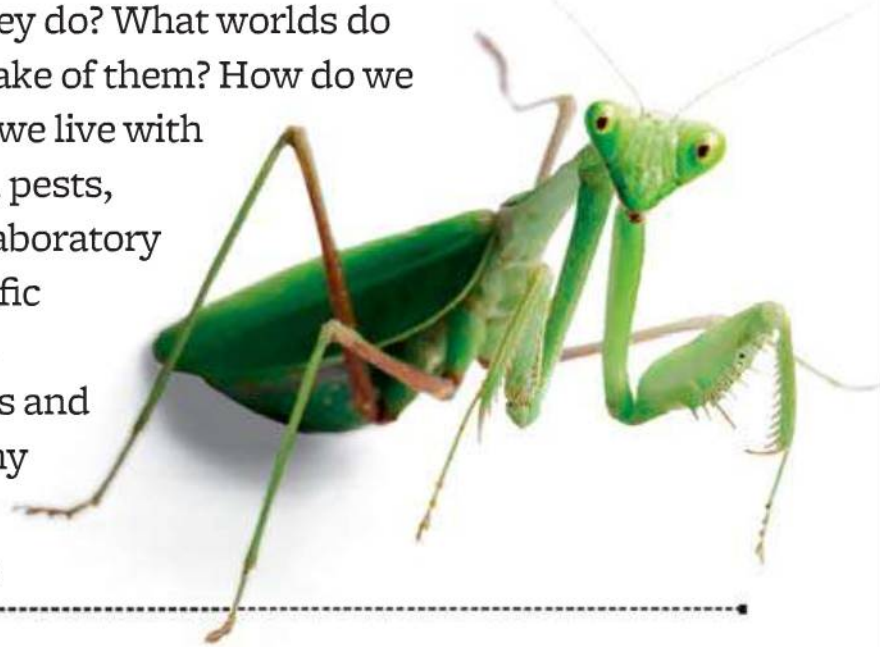


● **nature** For as long as we've been here, they've been here too. Wherever we've traveled, they've been there too. And still, we don't know them very well, not even the ones we're closest to, the ones that eat our food and share our beds. Who are they, these beings so different from us and

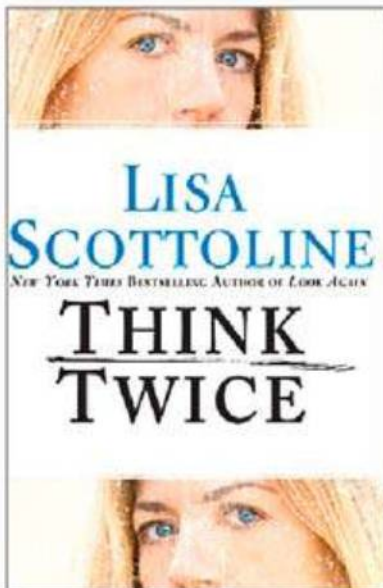


from each other? What do they do? What worlds do they make? What do we make of them? How do we live with them? How could we live with

them differently? ... Pollinators, pests, disease vectors, decomposers, laboratory animals, prime objects of scientific attention, experimentation, and intervention. The stuff of dreams and nightmares. The stuff of economy and culture.



**INSECTOPEDIA** BY HUGH RAFFLES (PANTHEON, \$29.95)

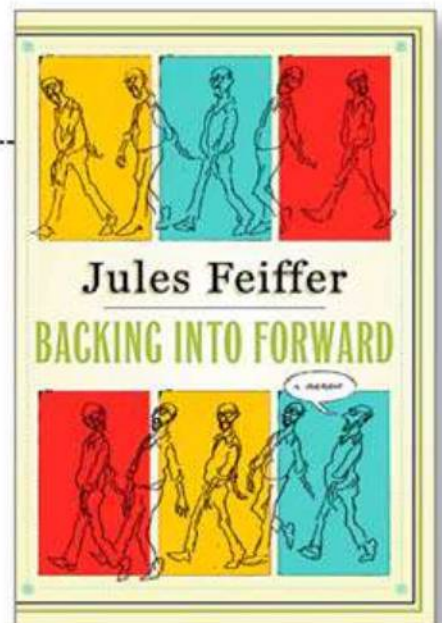


● **thriller** All she had to do was play Bennie on Monday and she could be on a plane to Nassau Monday night. She could pull it off, especially for one business day. She had paralegal training, and she was a scam artist, which was a lawyer without the student loans. She skimmed Bennie's Filofax, and saw that other than Rexco, there were no meetings, depositions, or other proceedings scheduled for Monday. Alice would sit behind the desk, move papers around, and duck most of the phone calls ... Hell, people faked being a doctor.

**THINK TWICE** BY LISA SCOTTOLINE (ST. MARTIN'S PRESS, \$26.99)

● **autobiography** [Dustin Hoffman] loved the 50 pages [of the script for *Popeye*]. Not since *The Graduate* had he seen a script this promising. It reminded him of Beckett, it reminded him of Kafka. On and on he went, and ... [Robert] Evans and Dick Sylbert joined in the praise. I floated back to New York, finished the first draft, sent it on to Evans and Sylbert. They loved it as much as the earlier pages, sent it on to Dustin, who asked for a new writer. He demanded that I be fired.

**BACKING INTO FORWARD** BY JULES FEIFFER (NAN A. TALESE/DOUBLEDAY, \$30)





## ...Your Plumber Won't Tell You

If you **need a recommendation**, call a plumbing-supply or fixture store. They don't tolerate bad plumbers.

Monday is **our busiest day**. That's the day wives call us to correct the "work" their husbands did over the weekend.

**A burst washing machine hose** is a top homeowner-insurance claim. I'd replace those flimsy rubber hoses with stainless steel ones.

No bricks in the toilet tank. They can keep your toilet from flushing correctly. No liquid drain cleaners either. They eat away at the pipes. **Try a plunger** or, better yet, a \$30 auger.

Know where **the main turnoff source** is. I can't tell you how many calls I get from people screaming and

crying that their house is flooding and they don't know what to do.

If you've got a Rapunzel at home (or even a rapidly balding man), buy a **drain strainer or a hair snare** or tell her to use a paper towel to clear the drain. (Soap can gum up the pipes, too, so use as little of that as you can.)

Those "flushable" baby wipes are one of **the main culprits for clogging pipes**. They don't break down the way toilet paper does.

Pay me by the job, **not by the hour**.

Yes, it's against

the rules to **remove flow inhibitors** from your showerheads, but some of us will do it if you ask.

I'm not a babysitter, a mover, or an auto mechanic. **Don't ask**.

Always jiggling the toilet handle? You need to **replace the flap valve**.

The part costs \$4, and it's an easy fix. I charge \$100 just to walk in the door.

There's often an Allen wrench that comes with the garbage disposal. I keep it under the sink. When the thing jams, **follow the directions** in the manual and I won't need to come out.

I was working in one bathroom while my client was using the whirlpool in another one. And blow-drying her hair at the same time. Her husband had told her it was fine. **I told her he was trying to get rid of her**.

Sources: Plumbers in California, Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Texas, and Wisconsin.

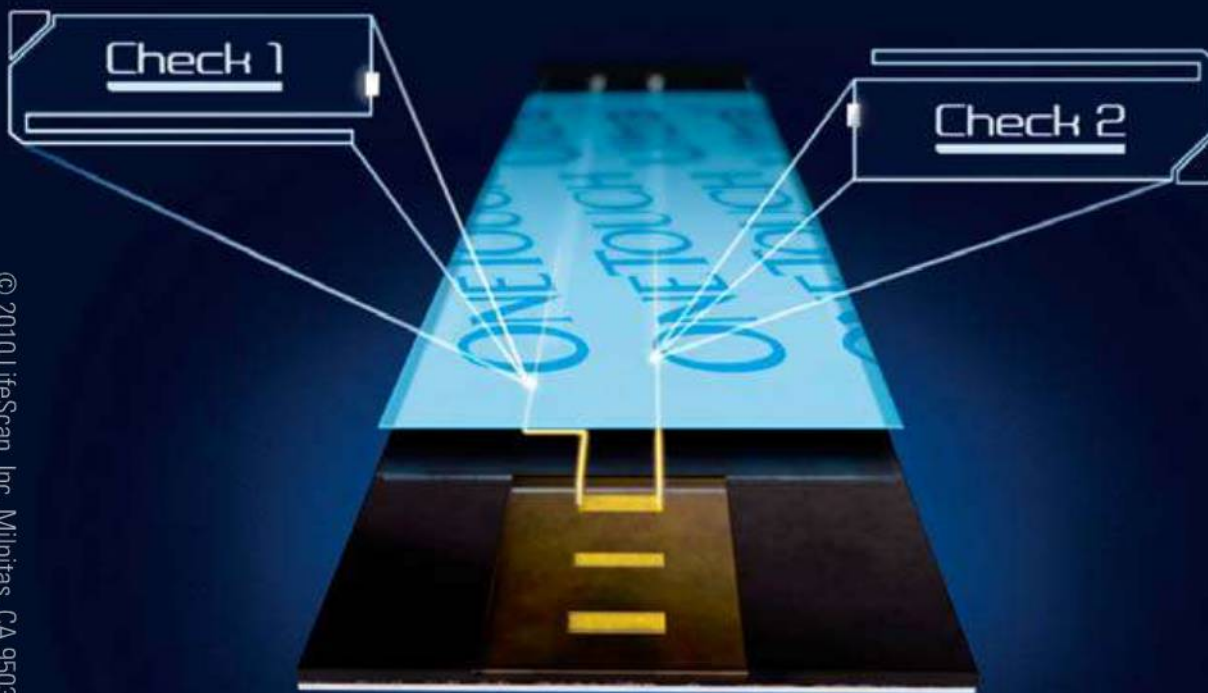
Interviews by *Tara Conry*



**More things your plumber won't tell you are at [readersdigest.com/plumber](http://readersdigest.com/plumber).**



The test strip with a  
second opinion built right in.



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DoubleSure™ Technology.  
In every OneTouch® Ultra® Blue Test Strip.

It measures each blood sample not once, but twice, to confirm your result. So you're not just sure about what's happening with your blood sugar—you're DoubleSure™.

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ONETOUCH®





## What Gives You the Most Earth Day Guilt?

**D**o you feel a twinge of remorse whenever you toss an empty bottle into the trash? If so, you're not alone. In 9 of the 15 countries we polled in our latest global survey, respondents felt the most green guilt for not recycling as much as they could. Wasting water ranked

second. Forty years after the first Earth

Day in the United

States, Americans

feel equally guilty about

not recycling and driving too much. No

wonder: We're the world's No. 1 trash

producer (1,609 pounds per person

per year), and we also have the highest

number of motor vehicles per capita of any nation on earth (844 per 1,000 people).

I do stupid things like running the tap while I brush my teeth.

*Cristian Arratia, 28,  
Blue Mountains, Australia*

Our society has become too rushed, and that's why we drive everywhere.

*Fran Musetti, 58,  
Clovis, California*



For more on our Around the World survey, watch CNN International and go to [readersdigest.com/worldquestions](http://readersdigest.com/worldquestions).

Sometimes, it's just plain laziness. It's much easier to throw out the trash.

*Haide Acuna, 32, Cebu City, Philippines*





## DRIVING TOO MUCH

The most votes in:

Who feels worse about driving a lot? In ten countries, respondents over 45 do. In China, France, India, the Philippines, and Russia, the younger set has more guilt.

U.S.  
**30%**

Germany  
**29**

U.K.  
**27**

## NOT RECYCLING ENOUGH

The No. 1 response in:



Brazil  
**42%**



**40**

Malaysia  
Russia



**35**

China  
Netherlands



**31**

France



**30**

Philippines  
U.S.

## LEAVING LIGHTS ON

Big guilt in only one country:



Australia  
**27%**

## WASTING WATER

The No. 2 choice in five nations and tops in three:

Spain

**49%**

India

**39%**

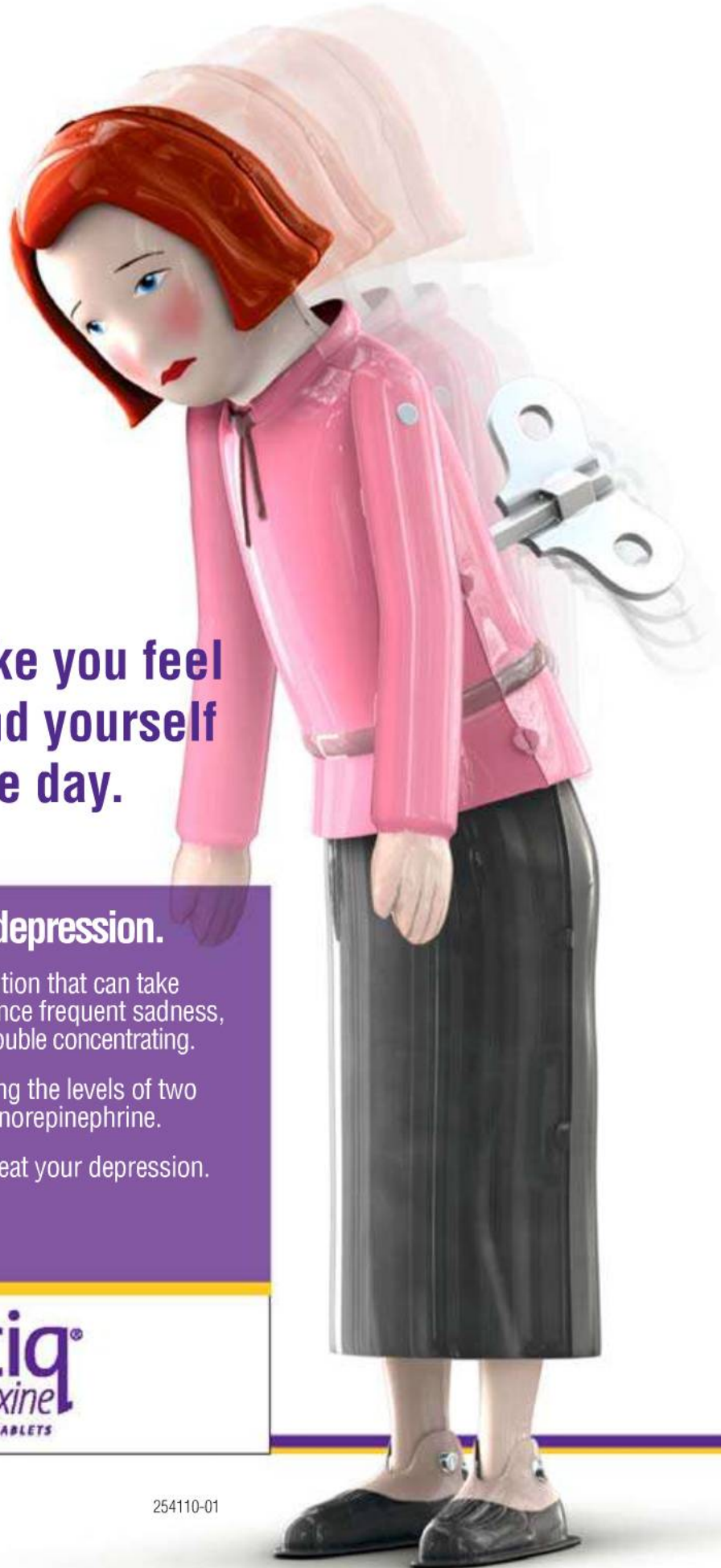
Italy

**30%**



The most guilt in our survey was felt by the water-worried Spaniards. Why? "In our arid country, we are all aware of the lack of water every day," says Cosme Ojeda, editor of Reader's Digest Spain.





**Depression can make you feel like you have to wind yourself up to get through the day.**

**PRISTIQ. Proven to treat depression.**

Depression is a serious medical condition that can take so much out of you. You may experience frequent sadness, a loss of interest, lack of energy, and trouble concentrating.

PRISTIQ is thought to work by affecting the levels of two chemicals in the brain, serotonin and norepinephrine.

PRISTIQ may be a key in helping to treat your depression. So ask your doctor about PRISTIQ.





## Important Safety Information

**PRISTIQ® (desvenlafaxine) is a prescription medication approved for the treatment of major depressive disorder in adults.**

**Suicidality and Antidepressant Drugs**  
**Antidepressants increased the risk compared to placebo of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in children, teens, and young adults. Depression and certain other psychiatric disorders are themselves associated with increases in the risk of suicide. Patients of all ages who are started on antidepressant therapy should be monitored appropriately and observed closely for clinical worsening, suicidality, or unusual changes in behavior. PRISTIQ is not approved for use in children under 18.**

- People taking MAOIs should not take PRISTIQ.
- All patients taking antidepressants should be observed closely for signs that their condition is getting worse or that they are becoming suicidal. This is very important when an antidepressant is started or when the dose is changed. Patients should be watched for becoming agitated, irritable, hostile, aggressive, impulsive, or restless. These symptoms should be reported to the patient's healthcare professional right away.
- Tell your healthcare professional about all prescription and over-the-counter medications you are taking or plan to take, including:
  - Medicines to treat migraines or mood disorders, to avoid a potentially life-threatening condition
  - Aspirin, NSAID pain relievers, or blood thinners because they may increase the risk of bleeding
- PRISTIQ may cause or make some conditions worse, so tell your healthcare professional about all your medical conditions, including if you:

- Have high blood pressure. Your blood pressure should be controlled before you start taking PRISTIQ and monitored regularly
- Have heart problems, high cholesterol or triglyceride levels, or a history of stroke
- Have glaucoma or increased eye pressure
- Have kidney or liver problems
- Have or had mania, bipolar disorder, seizures, or convulsions
- Have low sodium levels in your blood
- Are nursing, pregnant, or plan to become pregnant
- Discontinuation symptoms may occur when stopping PRISTIQ, especially when therapy is stopped suddenly. Talk to your healthcare professional before you stop taking or reduce the dose of PRISTIQ.
- Until you see how PRISTIQ affects you, be careful driving a car or operating machinery. Avoid drinking alcohol while taking PRISTIQ.
- Side effects when taking PRISTIQ 50 mg may include nausea, dizziness, sweating, constipation, and decreased appetite.

### **Please see Brief Summary of Prescribing Information on next page.**

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.

### **Visit [Pristiq.com](http://Pristiq.com) or call 1-800-PRISTIQ**

If you do not have prescription drug insurance and need help paying for PRISTIQ, Wyeth may be able to help. Visit us at [www.wyeth.com](http://www.wyeth.com) or call us at 1-800-568-9938 for more information.



**Wyeth®**

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## IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT



**Pristiq**  
desvenlafaxine  
EXTENDED-RELEASE TABLETS

(pris•teek')  
Pristiq® -  
(desvenlafaxine)  
Extended-Release  
Tablets

**Read the Medication Guide that comes with your or your family member's antidepressant medicine. Talk to your, or your family member's, healthcare provider about:**

- all risks and benefits of treatment with antidepressant medicines
- all treatment choices for depression or other serious mental illness

**What is the most important information I should know about antidepressant medicines, depression and other serious mental illnesses, and suicidal thoughts or actions?**

**1. Antidepressant medicines may increase suicidal thoughts or actions in some children, teenagers, and young adults within the first few months of treatment.**

**2. Depression and other serious mental illnesses are the most important causes of suicidal thoughts and actions. Some people may have a particularly high risk of having suicidal thoughts or actions.** These include people who have (or have a family history of) bipolar illness (also called manic-depressive illness) or suicidal thoughts or actions.

**3. How can I watch for and try to prevent suicidal thoughts and actions in myself or a family member?**

- Pay close attention to any changes, especially sudden changes, in mood, behaviors, thoughts, or feelings. This is very important when an antidepressant medicine is started or when the dose is changed.
- Call the healthcare provider right away to report new or sudden changes in mood, behavior, thoughts, or feelings.
- Keep all follow-up visits with the healthcare provider as scheduled. Call the healthcare provider between visits as needed, especially if you have concerns about symptoms.

**Call a healthcare provider right away if you or your family member has any of the following symptoms, especially if they are new, worse, or worry you:**

- thoughts about suicide or dying

- attempts to commit suicide
- new or worse depression
- new or worse anxiety
- feeling very agitated or restless
- panic attacks
- trouble sleeping (insomnia)
- new or worse irritability
- acting aggressive, being angry or violent
- acting on dangerous impulses
- an extreme increase in activity and talking (mania)
- other unusual changes in behavior or mood

**What else do I need to know about antidepressant medicines?**

• **Never stop an antidepressant medicine without first talking to a healthcare provider.** Stopping an antidepressant medicine suddenly can cause other symptoms.

• **Antidepressants are medicines used to treat depression and other illnesses.** It is important to discuss all the risks of treating depression and also the risks of not treating it. Patients and their families or other caregivers should discuss all treatment choices with the healthcare provider, not just the use of antidepressants.

• **Antidepressant medicines have other side effects.** Talk to the healthcare provider about the side effects of the medicine prescribed for you or your family member.

• **Antidepressant medicines can interact with other medicines.** Know all of the medicines that you or your family member takes. Keep a list of all medicines to show the healthcare provider. Do not start new medicines without first checking with your healthcare provider.

• **Not all antidepressant medicines prescribed for children are FDA approved for use in children.** Talk to your child's healthcare provider for more information.

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

## Important Information about Pristiq

Read the patient information that comes with Pristiq before you take Pristiq and each time you refill your prescription. There may be new information. If you have questions, ask your healthcare provider. This information does not take the place of talking with your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment.

### What is Pristiq?

- Pristiq is a prescription medicine used to treat depression. Pristiq belongs to a class of drugs known as SNRIs (or serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors).
- Pristiq is not approved for use in children and adolescents.

### Who should not take Pristiq?

**Do not take Pristiq if you:**

- are allergic to desvenlafaxine, venlafaxine or any of the ingredients in Pristiq.
- currently take, or have taken within the last 14 days, any medicine known as an MAOI. Taking an MAOI with certain other medicines, including Pristiq, can cause serious or even life-threatening side effects. Also, you must wait at least 7 days after you stop taking Pristiq before you take any MAOI.

### What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking Pristiq?

Tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including if you:

- have high blood pressure
- have heart problems
- have high cholesterol or high triglycerides
- have a history of stroke
- have glaucoma
- have kidney problems
- have liver problems
- have or had bleeding problems
- have or had seizures or convulsions
- have mania or bipolar disorder
- have low sodium levels in your blood
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if Pristiq will harm your unborn baby.
- are breastfeeding. Pristiq can pass into your breast milk and may harm your baby. Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby if you take Pristiq.



• **Serotonin syndrome or neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS)-like reactions**

Rare but potentially life-threatening, conditions called serotonin syndrome or Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome (NMS)-like reactions can happen when medicines such as Pristiq are taken with certain other medicines. Serotonin syndrome or NMS-like reactions can cause serious changes in how your brain, muscles and digestive system work.

**Especially tell your healthcare provider if you take the following:**

- medicines to treat migraine headaches known as triptans
- St. John's Wort
- MAOIs (including linezolid, an antibiotic)
- tryptophan supplements
- silbutramine
- tramadol
- medicines used to treat mood disorders, including tricyclics, lithium, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), or serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs)

Ask your healthcare provider if you are not sure whether you are taking any of these medicines.

Before you take Pristiq with any of these medicines, talk to your healthcare provider about serotonin syndrome. See "What are the possible side effects of Pristiq?"

**Pristiq contains the medicine desvenlafaxine. Do not take Pristiq with other medicines containing venlafaxine or desvenlafaxine.**

**What should I avoid while taking Pristiq?**

- Do not drive a car or operate machinery until you know how Pristiq affects you.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while taking Pristiq.

**What are the possible side effects of Pristiq?**

**Pristiq can cause serious side effects, including:**

- See the beginning of this page.
- Serotonin syndrome or neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS)-like reactions. See "What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking Pristiq?"

Get medical help right away if you think that you have these syndromes. Signs and symptoms of these syndromes may include one or more of the following:

- restlessness
- hallucinations (seeing and hearing things that are not real)
- coma
- nausea
- vomiting
- confusion
- increase in blood pressure
- diarrhea
- loss of coordination
- fast heart beat
- increased body temperature
- muscle stiffness

**Pristiq may also cause other serious side effects including:**

• **New or worsened high blood pressure (hypertension).** Your healthcare provider should monitor your blood pressure before and while you are taking Pristiq. If you have high blood pressure, it should be controlled before you start taking Pristiq.

• **Abnormal bleeding or bruising.** Pristiq and other SNRIs/SSRIs may cause you to have an increased chance of bleeding. Taking aspirin, NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs), or blood thinners may add to this risk. Tell your healthcare provider right away about any unusual bleeding or bruising.

• **Glaucoma (increased eye pressure)**

• **Increased cholesterol and triglyceride levels in your blood**

• **Symptoms when stopping Pristiq (discontinuation symptoms).** Side effects may occur when stopping Pristiq (discontinuation symptoms), especially when therapy is stopped suddenly. Your healthcare provider may want to decrease your dose slowly to help avoid side effects.

Some of these side effects may include:

- dizziness
- nausea
- anxiety
- irritability
- sleeping problems (insomnia)
- sweating
- abnormal dreams
- tiredness
- diarrhea
- headache

• **Seizures (convulsions)**

• **Low sodium levels in your blood.** Symptoms of this may include

headache, difficulty concentrating, memory changes, confusion, weakness, and unsteadiness on your feet. In severe or more sudden cases, symptoms can include hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not real), fainting, seizures and coma. If not treated, severe low sodium levels could be fatal. Contact your healthcare provider if you think you have any of these side effects.

Common side effects with Pristiq include:

- nausea
- headache
- dry mouth
- sleepiness
- dilated pupils
- insomnia
- constipation
- loss of appetite
- tremor
- diarrhea
- vomiting
- anxiety
- dizziness
- decreased sex drive
- delayed orgasm and ejaculation
- sweating
- tiredness

These are not all the possible side effects of Pristiq. Tell your healthcare provider about any side effect that bothers you or does not go away. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. For more information on these and other side effects associated with Pristiq, talk to your healthcare provider, visit our web site at [www.pristiq.com](http://www.pristiq.com) or call our toll-free number 1-888-Pristiq.

**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.**

**Contact Information**

Please visit our web site at [www.pristiq.com](http://www.pristiq.com), or call our toll-free number 1-888-Pristiq to receive more information. This product's label may have been updated. For current package insert and further product information, please visit [www.wyeth.com](http://www.wyeth.com) or call our medical communications department toll-free at 1-800-934-5556.

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254313-01



# Laugh! 😊

**A** woman is brought to court after stealing from a supermarket.

“Mrs. Krupnick,” says the judge, “what did you take?”

“Just a small can of peaches,” she answers. “There were only six peaches in the can.”

“Six peaches ... hmm ... I sentence you to six nights in jail, a night for each peach.”

The woman is crushed. She’s about to collapse to the floor when her husband, seated in the gallery, leaps to his feet.

“Your Honor,” he shouts, “she also stole a can of peas!”

**I wanted to buy** a candleholder, but the store didn’t have one. So I got a cake. *Comic Mitch Hedberg*

**Three guys are talking** about what constitutes fame. The first guy defines it as being invited to the White House for a chat with the president.

“Nah,” says the second guy. “Real fame would be if the red phone rang when you were there, and the president wouldn’t take the call.”

“You’re both wrong,” says the third. “Fame is when you’re in the Oval Office and the red phone rings, the president answers



it, listens for a second, and then says, ‘It’s for you.’” *Submitted by Patti Brown*

**My sister’s got asthma.** In the middle of an attack, she got an obscene phone call. The guy said, “Did I call you or did you call me?”

*Comic John Mendoza*

**I don’t get these people who, instead of buying a four- or an eight-pack of toilet paper, buy the single, individual roll. Are they trying to quit?** *Comic Brian Kiley*

**Louie’s friend Joe** leans slightly to the left, so Louie tells him to get his legs checked. Joe puts



## WHEN GOVERNMENT A-TAX

- > If you are truly serious about preparing your child for the future, don't teach him to subtract—teach him to deduct. *Fran Lebowitz*
- > The Eiffel Tower is the Empire State Building after taxes. *Anonymous*
- > I just did my taxes and I'm getting back \$150,000. And people say you can't do your own taxes. *Chantel Rae*

it off, but Louie keeps after him. Eventually, Joe goes to the doctor, who finds that his left leg is a quarter inch shorter than his right. One simple operation and he's cured.

"See?" says Louie. "You didn't believe me when I said a doctor could fix your leg."

Joe nodded. "I stand corrected."

Submitted by *Noah Hart*

**I'm still in my** first marriage. I know it's wrong to talk about it so temporary like that. My current husband hates it when I do that.

Comic *Ophira Eisenberg*

**A man in church** enters the confessional and is pleasantly surprised to see a fully stocked bar with Guinness on tap. On another wall is a dazzling array of the finest Cuban cigars and a high-definition TV set.

"Forgive me, Father," he says. "It's been a long time since I've been to confession. But I must say, the confessional box is much more inviting these days."

The priest replies, "Wait a minute! You're on *my* side!"

Submitted by *Judy Friedman*

**Whenever someone says,** "I'm not book-smart; I'm street-smart," all I hear is "I'm not real smart; I'm imaginary smart."

*Gwen Gsiner*, heard on comedysmack.com

## Plane Ridiculous

*With airlines adding fees to fees, The Week magazine asked its readers to predict the next surcharge they'll levy for something previously free.*

- In the unlikely event of loss of cabin pressure, oxygen masks will drop down. To start the flow of oxygen, simply insert your credit card ...
- \$100 On-Time Departure Fee; \$25 Delay Complaint Fee
- View seating (formerly window seats), \$10; Access seating (formerly aisle seats), \$10
- \$20 to use roll-away stairs to enter or exit the aircraft in lieu of no-charge rope-ladder alternative
- \$9 fee for bumping your head on the overhead bin as you take your seat; \$3 additional penalty for looking up at the bin after you bump into it

 **Your favorite new joke, funny anecdote, or crazy news story might be worth \$\$\$.**  
See page 71 for details.





If the bubbles in your coffee cup collect in the middle of the mug, the weather that day will be:

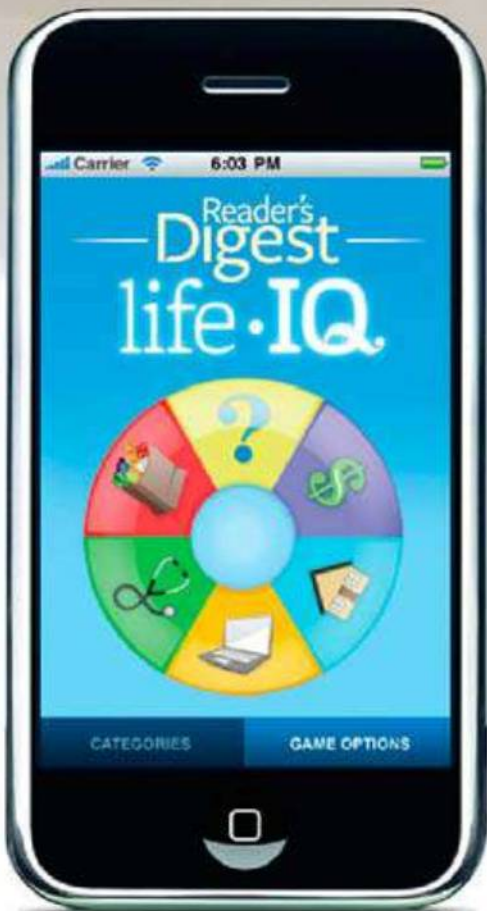
A. Fair



B. Hot

C. Cold

D. You've had way too much caffeine



## What's Your life·IQ?

Test your everyday smarts with life•IQ, the fun new iPhone app from the editors of Reader's Digest. From health and home to money, technology, and food, you'll get short, useful tips to help make your life simpler and better.

Get it for FREE in the iTunes App Store.

**Reader's  
Digest**

*Answer: A. The Reader's Digest Version: Stare into your coffee cup to get the forecast. High air pressure associated with fair weather will cause the surface of the coffee to become slightly concave so the bubbles will gravitate to the middle. For foul weather, you'll find the bubbles drifting to the edge.*



**“I knew I didn’t have much time,” says Steve Errebo.**

## **Into the Flames**

With her minivan on fire and its tank about to blow, a desperate mother sends a farmer into overdrive **BY JASON KERSTEN**

**O**n a hot, still day last July, Steve Errebo, 54, was headed down Grain Drive, a couple of miles outside the farming community of Westfall, Kansas. On his way to a grain elevator to drop off the last 20-ton load of the largest wheat crop he’d ever produced, he was feeling especially good.

As he drove, the air was thick with dust kicked up by combines collecting wheat crops on farms along the road. Approaching a turn, he couldn’t see more than a few yards in any direction. He slowed his flatbed to 20 mph.

Suddenly, the truck lurched forward, slamming Errebo into the steering wheel. Dazed, he pulled



over, thinking he had a mechanical problem. But as he stepped out of the rig, he saw a steaming minivan in a field in front of him, its hood smashed in. He realized the van had collided with his truck.

Then he heard someone yell: “Save my babies!”

## He went back to the van and pulled out a small boy, his face covered in blood.

**Michele Pasley’s husband**, Lonnie, was working late fertilizing fields. So Pasley, 31, had decided to head to the nearby town of Lincoln to pick up a pizza. She brought three of her seven children—three-year-old twins Danika and Justin and one-year-old Loni Marie—with her. On the way back, after strapping the kids into their car seats, she pulled onto Grain Drive. “I love you, Mommy,” Danika called out. Pasley glanced at her daughter and replied, “I love you, too, baby!” Then suddenly a truck’s red rear gate loomed up out of the dust and filled the windshield. It was too late to stop.

If the undercarriage of the wheat truck had been just two inches higher, Pasley would later recount with a shudder, she and her children would have been killed instantly. Instead, it demolished the van’s hood and pushed Pasley against the steering wheel.

**Through the smoke** and dust, Errebo tried to get inside the van. He tugged on the doors, but they were locked. Finally, he saw an opening in the broken glass on the passenger side and picked it loose from the frame. Within seconds he’d cleared enough of it to reach inside.

The driver unhooked a little girl from her car seat and handed her to Errebo. He pulled her through the window, carried her a few feet away, and set her down in the wheat stubble. Her head was drenched in blood.

He made his way back to the van to get another child he’d seen through the window. He pulled out a small boy, also covered in blood.

“Wake up!” he shouted at the boy, scared that he might have a concussion. “Wake up!”

The little boy opened his eyes. At the same moment, six-foot flames shot out from under the hood, igniting the wheat stubble around the car. Errebo clasped the boy in one arm and ran to the girl on the ground, scooping her up in his other arm. After setting them down across the road, he ran back to the van.

He had seen at least two other people inside—the mother and an infant girl. Reaching inside one more time, Errebo pulled out the baby and carried her across the road. Left alone in the van now, Pasley heard the crackle of the fire drawing nearer. “Help!” she cried. “Get me out of here!”





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But Errebo had a bad back. Did he have the strength to free her? I have to use my legs, he thought. He backed up to the window and bent low. “Put your arms around my neck and lock your fingers,” he told Pasley. He stood up and lunged away from the van, pulling her out.

The two adults ran to the kids and loaded them into Errebo’s truck. Seconds later, the gas tank blew and the van burst into flames.

**Neither adult** had a cell phone. So Errebo sped to Westfall, where he knew there was a firehouse. On the way, he spotted a farmer friend in a field. He pulled over, asked him to call 911, and continued driving.

Errebo kept looking over to check

on the kids. The baby seemed okay, but the twins were in bad shape. After asking the boy his name, Errebo tried to keep him awake: “Hey, Justin, wake up! You can do it.” Pasley, frantically trying to comfort her children, prayed that everyone would be okay.

By the time Errebo reached the firehouse, paramedics, a rescue helicopter, and Pasley’s husband were on the way. Danika, who had a severely fractured skull and internal bleeding, and Justin, who had lacerations from his scalp to his right cheek, were flown to Via Christi Medical Center in Wichita. Pasley and Loni Marie were both unharmed. After securing babysitters for Loni Marie and their other



children, Pasley and her husband drove the 100 miles to Wichita.

**After the family** was gone, there was nothing left for Errebo to do. So he drove over to the elevator and deposited his wheat. When he did, he noticed a strand of seashells stuck to his truck's bumper. He wondered if the necklace belonged to Pasley.

Justin was out of the hospital within 48 hours, Danika in about 10 days. Two weeks later, Errebo, a commissioner for Lincoln County, showed up for a meeting at the courthouse. He walked into a surprise party—for him. The Pasleys were there, along with state and local officials who'd come to give

Errebo a medal of valor. "He had tears in his eyes the whole time," recalls State Representative Elaine Bowers. "He was so humble, because he doesn't think of himself as a hero."

Michele Pasley does. "If it weren't for him, my children and I wouldn't be here," she says. "My husband and I thank God every day for that man."

At the party, Errebo asked Pasley about the seashell necklace. It was indeed hers—and had hung from her rearview mirror for years before it became hooked on Errebo's truck during the collision. "It was for good luck and protection," she said when he handed it to her. "I can't help thinking that it worked." ■

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# Osteoporosis:

**Q:** I always thought that postmenopausal osteoporosis was just something that happened to old ladies. But I found out that I have it, and I still feel young.

## **Dr. Hawruk:**

That is one of those myths about osteoporosis. It's not just an old ladies' disease. You should know that women can lose an average of 10% of their bone mass during the first 5 years after reaching menopause.

Ask your doctor if a prescription therapy like Once-a-Month Actonel is right for you. It's clinically proven to help reverse bone loss and can help increase bone strength to help prevent fractures.

Dr. Elizabeth Hawruk – Rheumatology  
North Jersey Center for Arthritis and Osteoporosis

*Doctor paid to appear in this ad.*



# Get The Facts

Actonel is a prescription medication to treat postmenopausal osteoporosis.

## **Important Safety Information for Actonel® (risedronate sodium) tablets.**

You should not take Actonel if you are allergic to any of the ingredients, if you have problems of the esophagus which delay emptying into the stomach, if you have low blood calcium (hypocalcemia), have kidneys that work poorly, or cannot stand or sit upright for 30 minutes. Stop taking Actonel and tell your doctor right away if you experience difficult or painful swallowing, chest pain, or severe or continuing heartburn, as these may be signs of serious upper digestive problems. Follow dosing instructions carefully to lower the chance of these events occurring.

Side effects may include stomach pain, upset stomach, or back, muscle, bone or joint pain, sometimes severe. Contact your doctor for medical advice about side effects, or if you have questions about Actonel.

Promptly tell your doctor if you develop dental problems, as serious jawbone problems have been reported rarely.

You are encouraged to report 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 see the Actonel Patient Information on the adjoining page.**



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Call 1-877-Actonel or visit [Actonel.com](http://Actonel.com)

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## Patient Information

### ACTONEL® (AK-toh-nel) Tablets

**ACTONEL (risedronate sodium) tablets 5 mg,  
ACTONEL (risedronate sodium) tablets 35 mg,  
ACTONEL (risedronate sodium) tablets 75 mg, and  
ACTONEL (risedronate sodium) tablets 150 mg for  
Osteoporosis**

Read this information carefully before you start to use your medicine. Read the information you get every time you get more medicine. There may be new information. This information does not take the place of talking with your healthcare provider about your medical condition or your treatment. If you have any questions or are not sure about something, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist.

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

ACTONEL may cause problems in your stomach and esophagus (the tube that connects the mouth and the stomach), such as trouble swallowing (dysphagia), heartburn (esophagitis), and ulcers. You might feel pain in your bones, joints, or muscles (See "What are the possible side effects of ACTONEL?").

**You must follow the instructions exactly for ACTONEL to work and to lower the chance of serious side effects. (See "How should I take ACTONEL?").**

### **What is ACTONEL?**

ACTONEL is a prescription medicine used:

- to prevent and treat osteoporosis in postmenopausal women.
- to increase bone mass in men with osteoporosis.
- to prevent and treat osteoporosis in men and women that is caused by treatment with steroid medicines such as prednisone.
- to treat Paget's disease of bone in men and women. The treatment for Paget's disease is very different than for osteoporosis and uses a different dose of ACTONEL. This leaflet does not cover using ACTONEL for Paget's disease. If you have Paget's disease, ask your healthcare provider how to use ACTONEL.

ACTONEL may reverse bone loss by stopping more loss of bone and increasing bone strength in most people who take it, even though they won't be able to see or feel a difference. ACTONEL helps lower the risk of breaking bones (fractures). Your healthcare provider may measure the thickness (density) of your bones or do other tests to check your progress.

### **Who should not take ACTONEL?**

#### **Do not take ACTONEL if you:**

- have problems of the esophagus which delay emptying
- have low blood calcium (hypocalcemia)
- cannot sit or stand up for 30 minutes
- have kidneys that work poorly
- have an allergy to ACTONEL. The active ingredient in ACTONEL is risedronate sodium. (See the end of this leaflet for a list of all the ingredients in ACTONEL.)

### **Tell your doctor before using ACTONEL if:**

- you are pregnant or may become pregnant. We do not know if ACTONEL can harm your unborn child.
- you are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed. We do not know if ACTONEL can pass through your milk and if it can harm your baby.
- you have kidney problems. ACTONEL may not be right for you.

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

ACTONEL can interact with other medicines. Keep a list of all the medicines you take. Show it to all your healthcare providers, including your dentist and pharmacist, each time you get a new medicine.

### **How should I take ACTONEL?**

#### **The following instructions apply to all patients taking ACTONEL:**

- Take ACTONEL exactly as prescribed by your healthcare provider.
- Take ACTONEL first thing in the morning before you eat or drink anything except plain water.
- Take ACTONEL while you are sitting up or standing.
- Take ACTONEL with 6 to 8 ounces (about 1 cup) of plain water. Do **not** take it with any other drink besides plain water.
- Swallow ACTONEL whole. **Do not chew** the tablet or keep it in your mouth to melt or dissolve.
- After taking ACTONEL you must wait at least 30 minutes

#### **BEFORE:**

- lying down. You may sit, stand, or do normal activities like read the newspaper or take a walk.
- eating or drinking anything except plain water.
- taking vitamins, calcium, or antacids. Take vitamins, calcium, and antacids at a different time of the day from when you take ACTONEL.
- Keep taking ACTONEL for as long as your healthcare provider tells you.
- For ACTONEL to treat your osteoporosis or keep you from getting osteoporosis, you have to take it exactly as prescribed. If you miss a dose of ACTONEL, call your healthcare provider for instructions.
- If you take more than your prescribed dose of ACTONEL, call your healthcare provider right away.
- Your healthcare provider may tell you to take calcium and vitamin D supplements and to exercise.

### **What is my ACTONEL schedule?**

ACTONEL tablets are made in 4 different dosages (amounts). How often you should take your tablet depends upon the dosage that your doctor has prescribed (recommended) for you.

- 5 mg tablets are yellow. One tablet should be taken every day in the morning.



- 35 mg tablets are orange. One tablet should be taken once a week in the morning.
- 75 mg tablets are pink. One tablet should be taken in the morning two days in a row every month.
- 150 mg tablets are blue. One tablet should be taken once a month in the morning.

If you miss your dose in the morning, do not take it later in the day. You should call your healthcare provider for instructions.

#### What should I avoid while taking ACTONEL?

- Do not eat or drink anything except water before you take ACTONEL and for at least 30 minutes after you take it. See "How should I take ACTONEL?"
- Do not lie down for at least 30 minutes after you take ACTONEL.
- Foods and some vitamin supplements and medicines can stop your body from absorbing (using) ACTONEL. Therefore, do not take anything other than plain water at or near the time you take ACTONEL.

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

##### Stop taking ACTONEL and tell your healthcare provider right away if:

- swallowing is difficult or painful
- you have chest pain
- you have very bad heartburn or it doesn't get better

Possible serious side effects may include:

- esophagus or stomach problems, including ulcers, pain, or trouble swallowing. Tell your healthcare provider if you have pain or discomfort in your stomach or esophagus.
- low calcium and other mineral disturbances. If you already have one (or more) of these problems, it should be corrected before taking ACTONEL.
- pain in bones, joints or muscles, sometimes severe. Pain may start as soon as one day or up to several months after starting ACTONEL.
- jawbone problems in some people, which may include infection and slower healing after teeth are pulled. Tell your healthcare providers, including your dentist, right away if you have these symptoms.

Common side effects include the following:

- back and joint pain
- upset stomach and abdominal (stomach area) pain
- short-lasting, mild flu-like symptoms, which are reported with the monthly doses and usually get better after the first dose.

Other possible side effects may include:

- **Allergic and severe skin reactions.** Tell your healthcare provider if you develop any symptoms of an allergic reaction including: rash (with or without blisters), hives, or swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat. **Get medical help right away if you have trouble breathing or swallowing.**
- **Eye inflammation.** Tell your healthcare provider

if you get any eye pain, redness, or if your eyes become more sensitive to light.

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

#### How should I store ACTONEL?

- Store ACTONEL between 68°F to 77°F (20°C to 25°C).
- **Keep ACTONEL and all medicines out of the reach of children.**

#### General information about ACTONEL:

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

#### What if I have other questions about ACTONEL?

This leaflet summarizes the most important information about ACTONEL for osteoporosis. If you have more questions about ACTONEL, ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist. They can give you information written for healthcare professionals. For more information, call 1-877-ACTONEL (toll-free) or visit our web site at [www.ACTONEL.com](http://www.ACTONEL.com).

#### What are the ingredients of ACTONEL?

ACTONEL (active ingredient): risedronate sodium.

ACTONEL (inactive ingredients):

All dose strengths contain: crospovidone, hydroxypropyl cellulose, hypromellose, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, polyethylene glycol, silicon dioxide, titanium dioxide.

Dose-strength specific ingredients include:

5 mg—ferric oxide yellow, lactose monohydrate;  
30 mg—lactose monohydrate; 35 mg—ferric oxide red, ferric oxide yellow, lactose monohydrate;  
75 mg—ferric oxide red; 150 mg—FD&C blue #2 aluminum lake.

ACTONEL® is marketed by:

Procter & Gamble Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

Cincinnati, OH 45202

and

sanofi-aventis U.S. LLC

Bridgewater, NJ 08807

DECEMBER 2009

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Because health matters

*The Alliance for Better Bone Health*

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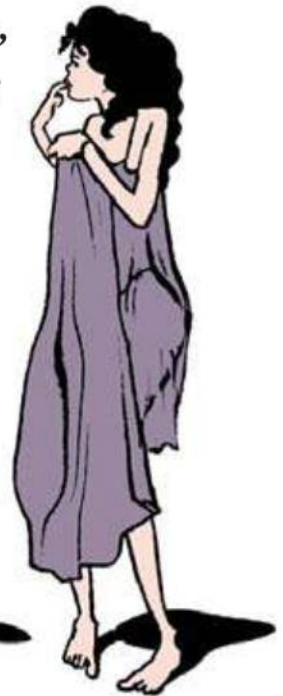
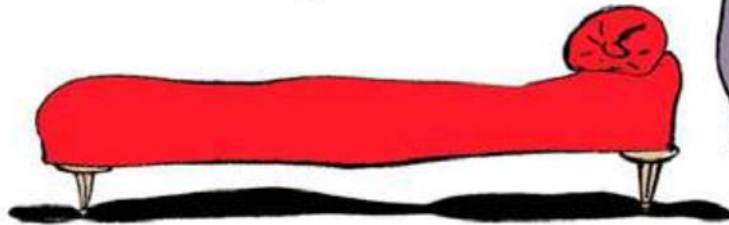




# Ask Laskas

JEANNE MARIE LASKAS

▶ **My husband and I have a great relationship.** After six years of marriage, we're still best friends. The only problem is that he hasn't touched me for almost three years. I've talked to, tried to seduce, cajoled, and, finally, begged him. But he says he's sick, he's stressed, he's tired—we'll do it soon, he promises. I'm so humiliated that I can't look at him. Yet I love him and want to do whatever it takes to make this marriage work. *Sad*



Dear Sad,  
If there's no physical problem, your husband may be suffering from loss of desire, an involuntary disappearance of interest in the partner as a sexual object. In other words, the problem is not you—it's him. Talk to a counselor (by yourself) to understand this difficult psychological condition. Can you be satisfied with a platonic life partner? Can you find a way to open a dialogue,

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

one that is neither threatening nor dismissive? Can you form a family without a sexual relationship? These are tough questions. It's time for some professional help.

▶ **Two months ago,** my brother invited our large family to his second wedding, a big to-do on a cruise ship. The \$3,000 was more than I could afford, but I felt guilty because none of my other siblings were going. My parents spent over \$7,000 for themselves and four teenage nieces to



attend. Now the bride is complaining that my parents did not give a wedding gift. (They gave my brother \$20,000 for his first wedding—a fact he hasn't revealed to his new wife.) Should my parents be expected to give them a gift? Should I? *Broke Bro*

Dear Broke,  
There is no “should” in gift giving. But listen—since your brother's new wife is already grouching about her in-laws not forking over enough stuff, and your brother is withholding information about them from his new bride, you and your parents might want to start saving for Brother's next wedding.

▶ **My wife and I have** *two dogs that we rescued from a shelter and love very much. They are well behaved, except that they bark at pretty much anything that moves. My next-door neighbors have never talked to us directly, but they've recently started to blow a loud whistle when the dogs bark and to yell at them to “shut up”—sometimes adding profanities. I've tried three different trainers, all of whom tell me, “Dogs bark.” We can't afford to build a privacy fence or to move. Is it worth trying to talk to the neighbors? Their reactions have been so hostile that I am afraid to go over there.* *Rescue Us*


Dear Rescue,  
Two words: *bark collar*. It's safe and humane and follows the same training principle as the popular

## Life's Little Etiquette Conundrums

▶ **My daughter's first baby is due in a few months, and I'll be giving her a shower in my hometown in New Mexico. Her husband's family lives in Delaware, and we don't expect them to attend. But what is the proper etiquette to let them know that she is registered? Do we send them invitations?**

Send the Delaware crew the same invitation you send to everyone else. Add a note saying how much you'd love for them to attend, how you'll understand if they can't, and how delighted you are that your families are being bound even closer by the new baby. (The gift registry is beside the point.)

invisible fence. When the dog barks, he hears a warning beep. If he continues barking, he gets a small “correction” in the form of an unpleasant jolt. (There's also a collar with a citronella spray instead of a shock.) It takes only a few times before he gets the message. I live with four dogs, and I would never recommend something harmful. We animal lovers need to be respectful of our neighbors. A constantly barking dog is like living next to a jackhammer. Do the responsible thing, for your dogs' sake.

 **Send questions about manners, parents, partners, or office politics to [readersdigest.com/laskas](http://readersdigest.com/laskas). Sending gives us permission to edit and publish.**



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I am a supermodel  
of health.

I am more than just a dog.

I am an **IAMS** dog

**IAMS with PreBiotics. Now in dry and wet.**  
IAMS with PreBiotics works inside the digestive tract to promote healthy digestion and strong defenses. Healthy inside. Healthy outside. See the power of IAMS with PreBiotics at [iams.com](http://iams.com)



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Life's Better on IAMS®







# Here's *the* Deal

JANICE LIEBERMAN

## Green Gadgets

Help your wallet—and the world—  
with these six ideas

**M**y husband and I used to run around the house unplugging everything—TVs, computers, cell chargers. We had no idea how much energy we were using. We didn't know if the house was leaking warm air in the winter or cool air in the summer, or where those energy vampires were hiding. But now that the rest of America wants to save money (and the earth), companies are stepping up with new advances that can help.

**First find out how much energy you use.** By identifying the power hogs, you can lower your electric bill by as much as 20 percent, experts say. To measure the cost of your

Janice Lieberman is the consumer correspondent on NBC's *Today* show.



energy usage throughout the house in real time, try the wireless TED 5000C (\$239.95; [theenergydetective.com](http://theenergydetective.com)). Yes, it's pricey, but with electric bills averaging \$103 a month, TED could pay for itself in as little as a year. Joe Hutsko, author of *Green Gadgets for Dummies*, tested it and found that turning on two outdoor

PHOTO-ILLUSTRATION BY SEAN MCCABE; INFINITYPHOTOGRAPHYINC.COM



lights cost about 2 cents per hour; his tankless instant water heater runs him \$2 per hour. Connect TED to your circuit breaker yourself, or call an electrician. To track weekly trends, pair the unit with Google's free PowerMeter energy tracker.

### **Check individual appliances.**

Plug the P3 Kill A Watt EZ Energy Monitor P4460 into the wall (\$27.99; [energysavinggadgets.net](http://energysavinggadgets.net)), enter your billing rate (it's on your utility bill), and then plug in the appliance. You'll see what it's costing you by the hour or year to run that appliance, whether it's on or off.

**Kill the vampires.** Electronic devices use standby power even when they're turned off. That's because some internal mechanism—a clock, a touch pad—continues to draw electricity. The biggest hogs? Cable and satellite boxes, DVRs, audio systems, laptops, microwaves, game consoles, and older TVs, VCRs, and DVD and CD players. You may not

want to turn off every device when you're not using it (the cable box, for instance, takes time to reboot). But you can cut back on some: The Belkin Conserve Surge Protector (\$49.99; [belkin.com](http://belkin.com)) is a "smart" power strip with a remote control that lets you turn off six devices completely and keep two on standby.

**Cut the TV ties.** If you just want to power off devices connected to your TV when it's not on (like that game console), try the TV TrickleSaver (\$24.95; [tricklestar.com](http://tricklestar.com)). Plug one of three cords into a wall socket, one into the TV, and one into a power strip to connect multiple accessories. Calculate your savings at [calculator.tricklestar.com](http://calculator.tricklestar.com).

**Reduce your water usage.** Low-flow aerators for faucets (about \$2) and showerheads (about \$15) can cut water-consumption and water-heating costs by 15 percent. Experts recommend Niagara Conservation products ([itseasybeinggreen.com](http://itseasybeinggreen.com)). Don't worry—they're easy to install.

**Find the drafts.** If your house is poorly sealed, your warm or cool air may be escaping. The Black & Decker Thermal Leak Detector (\$49.99; [bdonlinestore.com](http://bdonlinestore.com)) can help. Point the device, which uses infrared sensors, at windows, walls, and doors; when you hit a draft, the light changes color. Fix the leak and save up to 20 percent on your heating and cooling costs.

## **Sites for Savings**

- > **[energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov)** Find out if you're eligible for a federal tax credit for buying energy-efficient products and making upgrades to your home.
- > **[myemissionsexchange.com](http://myemissionsexchange.com)** Earn carbon credits (and money) for lowering your utility bills.
- > **[saveology.com](http://saveology.com)** Compare rates for cable, satellite TV, Internet, phone, moving services, and insurance.



Read Janice Lieberman's blog and submit your questions at [readersdigest.com/askjanice](http://readersdigest.com/askjanice).



If you can draw a map to every bathroom in town...



is the day to talk to your doctor about overactive bladder and TOVIAZ® – a pill that comes with a plan.

With Toviaz® (fesoterodine fumarate) and the plan, you're helping manage your overactive bladder (OAB) symptoms in two ways:

- with a pill created to help reduce symptoms all day and all night.\*
- and a plan that offers you practical tips, tools and resources to help you take an active role in your treatment.

Visit [Toviaz.com](http://Toviaz.com) or call 1-877-TOVIAZ-9

\*Results may vary.

The plan focuses on four core areas:

-  food & drink  
make more informed choices
-  teach your bladder  
train your bladder to "wait"
-  daily Toviaz®  
always take as directed
-  keep track  
share with your doctor

Toviaz® treats the symptoms of overactive bladder (leaks, strong, sudden urges to go, going too often).

#### Important Safety Information

If you have certain stomach problems, glaucoma, or cannot empty your bladder, you should not take Toviaz. Medicines like Toviaz can cause blurred vision, drowsiness, and decreased sweating. Use caution when driving, doing unsafe tasks, or in especially hot environments, until you know how Toviaz affects you. Drinking alcohol while taking medicines such as Toviaz may cause increased drowsiness. The most common side effects are dry mouth and constipation. Toviaz has benefits and risks. There may be other options. You're 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 see Important Product Information on back.

 **Toviaz®**  
fesoterodine fumarate  
extended release tablets 4mg and 8mg

FEU00183C



# IMPORTANT FACTS

**Toviaz**  
fesoterodine fumarate  
extended release tablets 4mg and 8mg

(TOH-vee-as)

## ABOUT OVERACTIVE BLADDER

Overactive bladder happens when the bladder muscle squeezes too often or when you don't want it to. You may have wetting accidents (urge urinary incontinence). You may have a strong need to urinate right away (urgency). You may also have to go too often (frequency).

## WHO IS TOVIAZ FOR?

Who can take TOVIAZ?

Adults 18 years and older with symptoms of overactive bladder. TOVIAZ has not been studied in children.

Who should not take TOVIAZ?

Do not take TOVIAZ if you:

- Are not able to empty your bladder (urinary retention).
- Your stomach empties slowly (gastric retention).
- Have an eye problem called "uncontrolled narrow-angle glaucoma."
- Are allergic to TOVIAZ or any of its ingredients.

## BEFORE YOU START TOVIAZ

**Tell your doctor about all your medical conditions, including:**

- Stomach or intestinal problems or problems with constipation.
- Problems emptying your bladder or if you have a weak urine stream.
- Treatment for an eye problem called narrow-angle glaucoma.
- Kidney problems.
- Liver problems.
- A condition called myasthenia gravis.
- If you are pregnant or trying to become pregnant. It is not known if TOVIAZ can harm your unborn baby.
- If you are breastfeeding. It is not known if TOVIAZ passes into your breast milk or if it can harm your baby.

**Before starting on TOVIAZ, tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins and herbal products.** TOVIAZ may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how TOVIAZ works. Especially tell your doctor if you are taking antibiotics or antifungal medicines.



## POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF TOVIAZ

The most common side effects are:

- Dry mouth
- Constipation

TOVIAZ may cause other less common side effects, including:

- Dry eyes
- Trouble emptying the bladder

These are not all of the possible side effects of TOVIAZ. For a complete list, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

## HOW TO TAKE TOVIAZ

- Take TOVIAZ exactly as your doctor tells you.
- Your doctor may give you the lower 4 mg dose of TOVIAZ if you have certain medical conditions, such as severe kidney problems.
- Take TOVIAZ with liquid and swallow the tablet whole. Do not chew, divide or crush the tablet.
- You can take TOVIAZ with or without food.
- If you miss a dose of TOVIAZ, begin taking TOVIAZ again the next day. Do not take two doses of TOVIAZ in the same day.

Things you should keep in mind when taking TOVIAZ:

- Use caution in driving, operating machinery, or doing other dangerous activities until you know how TOVIAZ affects you. Blurred vision and drowsiness are possible side effects of medicines such as TOVIAZ.
- Use caution in hot environments. Decreased sweating and severe heat illness can occur when medicines such as TOVIAZ are used in a hot environment.
- Drinking alcohol while taking medicines such as TOVIAZ may cause increased drowsiness.

## What is TOVIAZ?

TOVIAZ is a prescription medicine used in **adults** to treat symptoms of a condition called **overactive bladder**, including:

- Urge urinary incontinence—leaking or wetting accidents due to a strong need to urinate.
- Urinary urgency—having a strong need to urinate right away.
- Urinary frequency—having to urinate too often.

## NEED MORE INFORMATION?

- This is only a summary of important information. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for complete product information.
- Go to [www.Toviaz.com](http://www.Toviaz.com).
- Call **1-877-9-TOVIAZ**.



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# Outrageous

MICHAEL CROWLEY

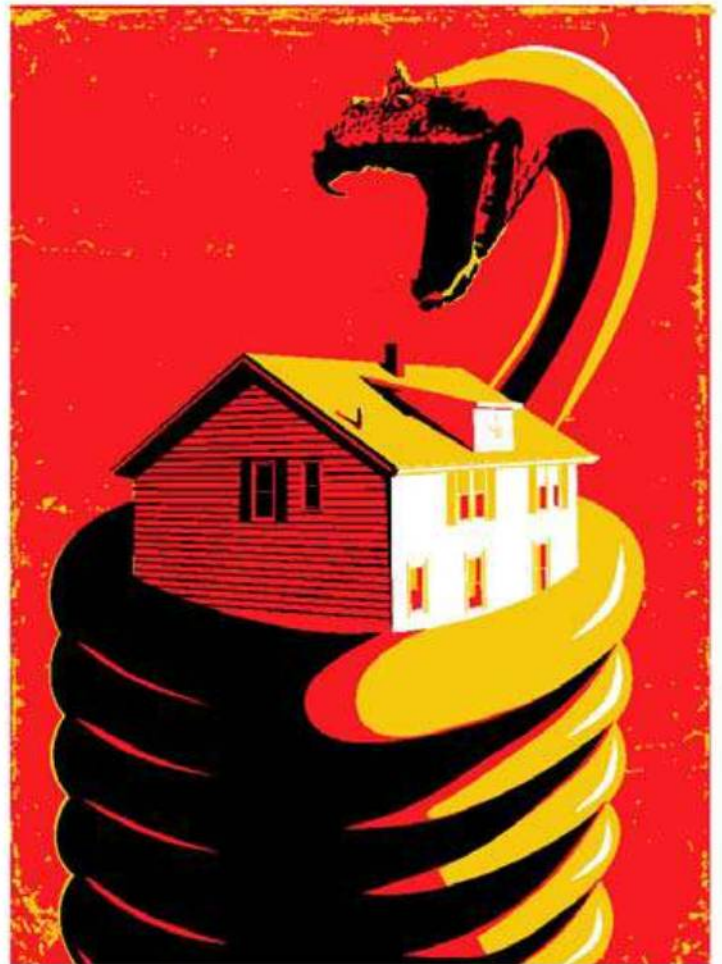
## Pets Gone Wild

Pythons, monkeys, and tigers? When will people learn that some animals don't belong at home?

In the early morning of July 1, 2009, Charles Darnell found his girlfriend's eight-and-a-half-foot Burmese python loose in their living room. He stuck it in a sack and dropped it back in its terrarium, attaching a quilt to the top with clothespins. But when Darnell and Jaren Hare awoke later that morning in their Oxford, Florida, home, they made a terrible discovery. Their pet had escaped the sack and slithered out of the terrarium and into Hare's daughter's crib. It had coiled itself around two-year-old Shaianna, sunk its fangs into her head, and slowly strangled her to death. "The baby's dead!" Darnell cried to a 911 operator. "Our stupid snake got out in the middle of the night and strangled the baby!"

Horrific scenes like this shouldn't happen. But pet pythons have killed 12 people since 1980—five of them children. And snakes

aren't the only dangerous pets kept by irresponsible owners. At least 100 people have been injured in the last decade by monkeys and other primates. Last year, a 300-pound Bengal tiger was roaming the



ILLUSTRATED BY DANIEL HERTZBERG; PHOTOGRAPHED BY KAREN BALLARD/REDUX

Michael Crowley is a senior editor at the *New Republic*.



streets near Irving, Texas. There are millions of wild animals inhabiting private homes around the nation. Every year, they kill two Americans, on average, according to Beth Price of the Humane Society of the United States. Hundreds more are injured.

## **Don't assume you're safe—wild pets often escape and ambush unsuspecting people.**

Do you know what kind of dangerous creatures are living in your neighborhood? Wildlife experts say we'd be stunned to find out the variety of exotic pets in our midst. The trade in these animals is a multi-billion-dollar global industry; in the United States, it's the second-largest black market, after illegal drugs. Crocodiles, lions, tigers, wolves, cougars, chimpanzees, lemurs, even the occasional elephant, can become household pets for the right price.

Take the case of Travis, a 200-pound, 14-year-old chimpanzee that shared a Stamford, Connecticut, home with Sandra Herold, a widow who treated it like her son. Perhaps you saw the damage caused by Travis's rampage, when Herold's friend, 56-year-old Charla Nash, unveiled her face on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* last November after massive reconstructive surgery. That month, an Indiana baby named

Brenna Nystrom was attacked by a relative's pet monkey, which grabbed her by the hood of her coat and banged her head repeatedly against his cage, sending her to the hospital with bruises and rope burn. A few months earlier, in Queens, New York, a toddler nearly lost a finger to a next-door neighbor's capuchin monkey.

"Wild and potentially dangerous animals should not be kept as pets where they can do grave harm to innocent victims," says Connecticut attorney general Richard

Blumenthal, who has been fighting to ban all exotic pets in his state. "If they are wild, they belong in nature, not in people's homes, where their natural instincts and great strength can be extraordinarily hazardous."

Don't assume you're safe just because you don't know anyone with an exotic pet. These animals can escape and ambush unsuspecting neighbors. That's what happened on August 14, 2005, when a Siberian lynx slipped away from its owner in Clackamas, Oregon. A woman returned home with her six-year-old daughter to find the wildcat lurking in the driveway. Before she could scare it away, the lynx pounced on the little girl, locking its jaws around her head. Miraculously, the child suffered only minor injuries. Just two months earlier, ten-year-old Russell Lala of Royalton, Minnesota, wasn't so lucky. A lion and a tiger owned by a car dealer escaped from



their cage and attacked Russell, severing his spinal cord and leaving him a quadriplegic. Though pet lions are relatively rare, animal-rights activists claim that tigers can be purchased for as little as \$300 and that as many as 7,000 tigers are kept as pets in the United States.

A 300-pound Bengal tiger showed up at the home of 79-year-old Mildred Crenshaw of Kerr County, Texas, one morning in January 2009. The tiger, which belonged to a neighbor, had escaped its pen and frightened Crenshaw half to death. “That’s a terrible feeling, to wake up with police surrounding your house with their lights on and to look out your window and see a tiger standing there,” said Crenshaw, who stayed inside and was unharmed.

Nonnative animals can also wreak havoc on the local environment. While it’s an urban myth that colonies of alligators live in sewers,

## Do More

- > **Don’t buy animals** meant to live in the wild, especially primates, big cats, and deadly snakes. If you already own any, call an animal shelter for advice.
- > **Contact your federal legislators** and ask them to support the Captive Primate Safety Act, which would ban interstate sales of primates.
- > **Check with the Humane Society** ([humanesociety.org](http://humanesociety.org)) to see if your state restricts ownership of exotic pets. Urge your legislators to follow the 29 states that have taken action.

the Florida Everglades are facing a very real infestation of as many as 150,000 aggressive pythons that are former pets and their offspring. Now the snakes are feasting on other animals, from deer to bobcats, and threatening the Everglades’ fragile ecosystem. “The crown jewel of our national park system has been transformed into a hunting ground for these predators,” said Florida senator Bill Nelson at a 2009 hearing. “It’s just a matter of time before one of these snakes gets to a visitor.”

The problem has become so severe that local officials have even proposed paying a bounty to people who catch snakes on their own.

One way to stop this insanity is through stricter laws. Congress is considering a bill to ban the transport of primates across state lines for the purpose of selling them as pets, while a number of state and local governments have cracked down on the ownership of exotic pets. But by the end of last year, only 29 states had bans covering such animals as primates, big cats, wolves, bears, alligators, and crocodiles.

Of course, you shouldn’t need a law to prevent irresponsible parents from keeping man-eating snakes near their babies. Last August, Hare and Darnell were charged with third-degree murder and involuntary manslaughter (they pleaded not guilty). Unfortunately, that’s not going to bring back little Shaianna.



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## From Refuse to Riches

Tom Szaky turns throwaways into shower curtains, clocks, and more

BY DONNA FENN

**W**hen Tom Szaky sees a discarded juice pouch, he doesn't see garbage; he sees a pencil case. An old vinyl LP cries out for new life as a clock. Candy wrappers? An awesome kite. But these are not the musings of an idealistic tree hugger. For the 28-year-old CEO of Trenton, New Jersey-based TerraCycle, they're a revenue model.

Perpetually ruffled and in need of a shave, the fast-talking Szaky (pronounced ZACK-y) is the passionate visionary spearheading the new industry of

**Szaky's new reality show, *Garbage Moguls*, will air this summer on the National Geographic Channel.**



upcycling. Instead of recycling (shredding, pulping, or otherwise breaking down materials and enabling them to be remanufactured as other products), TerraCycle takes packaging headed for landfills from companies like Kellogg's and Starbucks and resurrects it—more or

## **TerraCycle is a “second chance” employer. Show up, do the job, you stay.**

less whole. Yogurt containers become planters; snack wrappers are transformed into shower curtains. TerraCycle's 85 employees make nearly 200 products, sold at retailers such as Petco, Kmart, Whole Foods Market, and Target.

Szaky's \$7.4 million company, now also forging ahead in Mexico, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Brazil, is a far cry from the business he founded with classmate Jon Beyer in 2002 as a freshman at Princeton University. The two entered a business competition with a plan to sell an organic plant fertilizer made from worm waste. They lost the competition but started the business anyway, pooling their savings, tapping friends and family, maxing out credit cards, and bringing in serial entrepreneur Robin Tator.

With no money for packaging, Szaky and Beyer raided recycling bins for bottles—and were nearly

arrested (they didn't realize what they were doing was illegal). They discovered that the limited number of bottle sizes and the interchangeable screw tops meant they could fill the bottles on a high-speed production line.

With their mission—to make products entirely out of garbage—suddenly clear, Szaky knew the time was right to drop out of Princeton. TerraCycle's first product used dining-hall waste to feed the worms and discarded bottles to package the fertil-

izer. The result: a cheap, green breakthrough.

Word spread, and in 2004, Home Depot began carrying the fertilizer in its Canadian stores. Wider distribution followed, attracting the attention of Scotts, maker of Miracle-Gro. Scotts sued TerraCycle in 2007, claiming that the upstart's green-and-yellow packaging was too similar to Miracle-Gro's. TerraCycle changed its packaging, but Szaky says the lawsuit was “the best thing that ever happened to us.” The David vs. Goliath story popped up all over the news, and sales spiked 122 percent, fueling TerraCycle's growth and its new product lines.

One of their first successes was a pencil case made from Capri Sun juice pouches. Early on, Tator heard that British Columbia was storing 20 million of the used pouches, pressed into sticky, smelly blocks. He per-



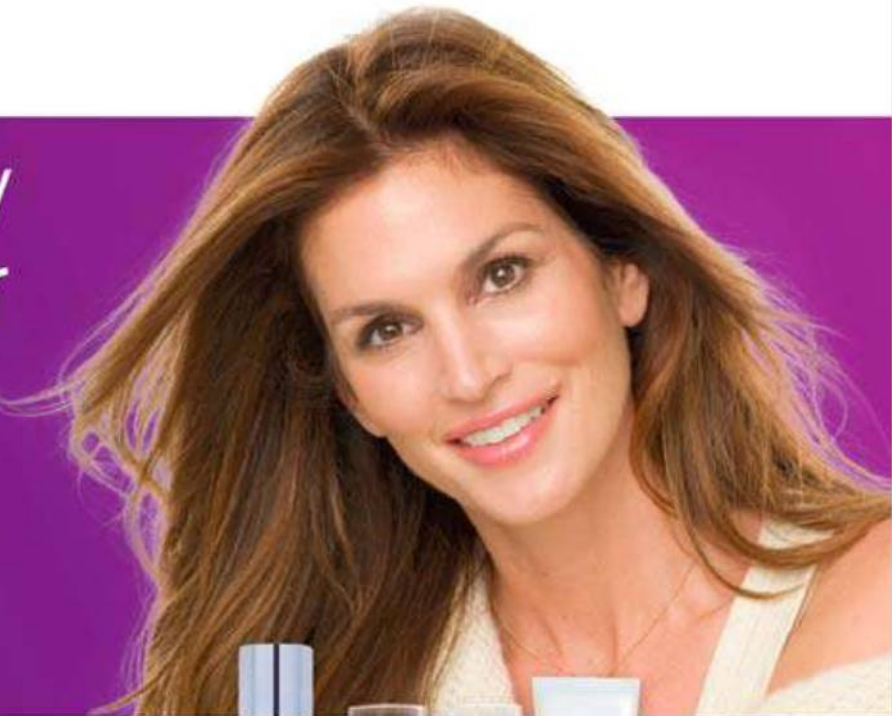
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suaded Canadian officials to let him have the whole mess: “They looked at me like I was on crack!” He then met with executives from parent company Kraft; they loved the idea of upcycling them.

Now, every week, two million units come into the warehouse from fund-raising “collection brigades,” operated by schools and nonprofit organizations and sponsored by packaged-goods companies like Frito-Lay. The



brigades get 2 cents for every item; for-profit companies' brigades must contribute their cut to charity.

Third-grade teacher Ellen Malissa organized a brigade at Sharon Elementary School in Robbinsville, New Jersey. In one school year, the children collected 20,000 juice pouches. “It was a lot of work for \$400,” Malissa concedes, “but the kids are

COURTESY TERRACYCLE

## Getting Ahead with TOM SZAKY

### When did you know you wanted to be an entrepreneur?

My family left Budapest in 1986, after Chernobyl, and settled in Canada, where a lot of my friends' parents were highly successful entrepreneurs. It seemed so cool. So I had the most badass lemonade stand, and in high school, I had a Web design company.

### How did you finance your company?

We've raised \$18 million from about 50 people. We're finally profitable. I own 6 percent of the company. All employees get stock options.

### What aspects of your life are green?

I'm only mildly green. I do the simple things: I recycle; I compost. And I'm a huge biker. I biked across Canada!

### Do you admit to doing anything “wasteful”?

My eco-sin is that I am not yet fully vegetarian. And I drive a very old, very used Acura sedan.

### What's the biggest mistake you've made?

We're always doing something wrong, but that's what allows us to learn and grow. When we first started out, we did all the manufacturing ourselves, but that was a mistake.

Now we work with contract manufacturers. We provide the raw materials, the product development, and the design. They provide the manufacturing expertise and pay us a licensing fee.

### Was it tough to negotiate partnerships with large companies?

It was easy because it's such a monstrous win for them. With big companies, if you create something unique that solves a problem, like what to do with tons of garbage, they'll make it happen.



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much more aware of the importance of recycling. And we bought every child a pencil case made from Capri Sun pouches.”

The sponsoring corporations benefit too: They get 5 to 7 percent of net sales of any product made with their packaging, plus bragging rights. Kraft’s Jeff Chahley says, “We’ve helped divert 500 tons of waste [more than 100 million packages] from going to landfill, and we’ve contributed over \$250,000.”

Today, everything in TerraCycle’s offices looks as if it’s on its second (or third or fourth) life. Where did all the shabby furniture come from? “Dumpsters,” says Szaky, who likes to point out that waste does not ex-

ist in nature. TerraCycle is a “second chance” employer too. The company doesn’t check criminal records: You show up, you do the job, you stay.

Szaky admits he is criticized all the time for working with companies that traditional environmentalists view as the enemy. “But 80 percent of Americans shop at big-box stores,” he says. “That’s not going to change. The biggest problem with most green, fair-trade, and organic products is that they tend to cost more. At TerraCycle, everything is made from garbage, and garbage is free. People should be able to protect the planet without having to pay a premium for that right.” ■

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# OffBase



*"You're the only one I know who gets excited about this stuff."*

It was eleven o'clock at night, and I was in the barracks talking on the phone with my wife. A familiar tune began to play.

"Hear that?" I asked her. "They're playing taps outside."

My wife grew quiet. "Oh," she said. "Well, you can go play with them if you want." *Grant Brandon*

**A brother of a student** of mine showed me a photo their father had sent from Iraq. In it, his dad is sitting atop a tank. On the back of the tank is this bumper sticker: "My son is an honor student at Clear Creek Elementary School." *Jennifer Curtis*

**My grandmother told** me how she ended up marrying Grandpa. She was in her 20s, and the man she was dating left for war. "We were in love," she recalled, "and wrote to

each other every week. It was during that time that I discovered how wonderful your grandfather was."

"Did you marry Grandpa when he came home from the war?" I asked.

"Oh, I didn't marry the man who wrote the letters. Your grandfather was the mailman."

*Sandra W., from the Classified Guys*

**Our elementary school** was honoring local veterans. The students were a bit intimidated and didn't know how to approach them.

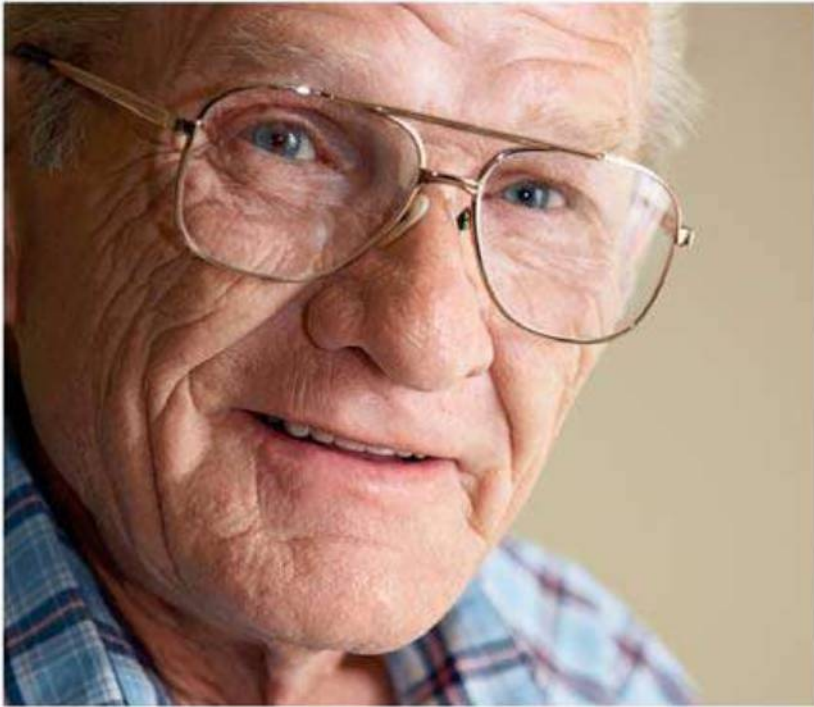
"Start by introducing yourself," I said. "Then ask what branch of the military they served in."

One student walked over to a vet and promptly asked, "What tree are you from?" *Lisa Waterman*

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# Is It **Just Me?**

## **To Forgive Is Good**

But sometimes I *want* to stay mad **BY BOB BRODY**

**S**ome years ago, a barrage of thumping, galloping noises routinely issued from the apartment upstairs as if baby elephants were competing in 50-yard dashes. I went up one day to politely inquire. “No, nobody’s making any noise here,” the husband and wife both insisted. “It must be coming from elsewhere in the building.” Two children about five years old, each holding soccer balls, stood right beside their parents. “Could the thumping be your kids running around, perhaps playing soccer?” I asked. “Oh, no, we never let the kids play in the house.” For months, the pattern continued: the thumping and galloping above, our delicate check-in, the denial. It got so that every time I saw the couple, I glared without a word of greeting. When they moved out of the building, the thumping stopped.

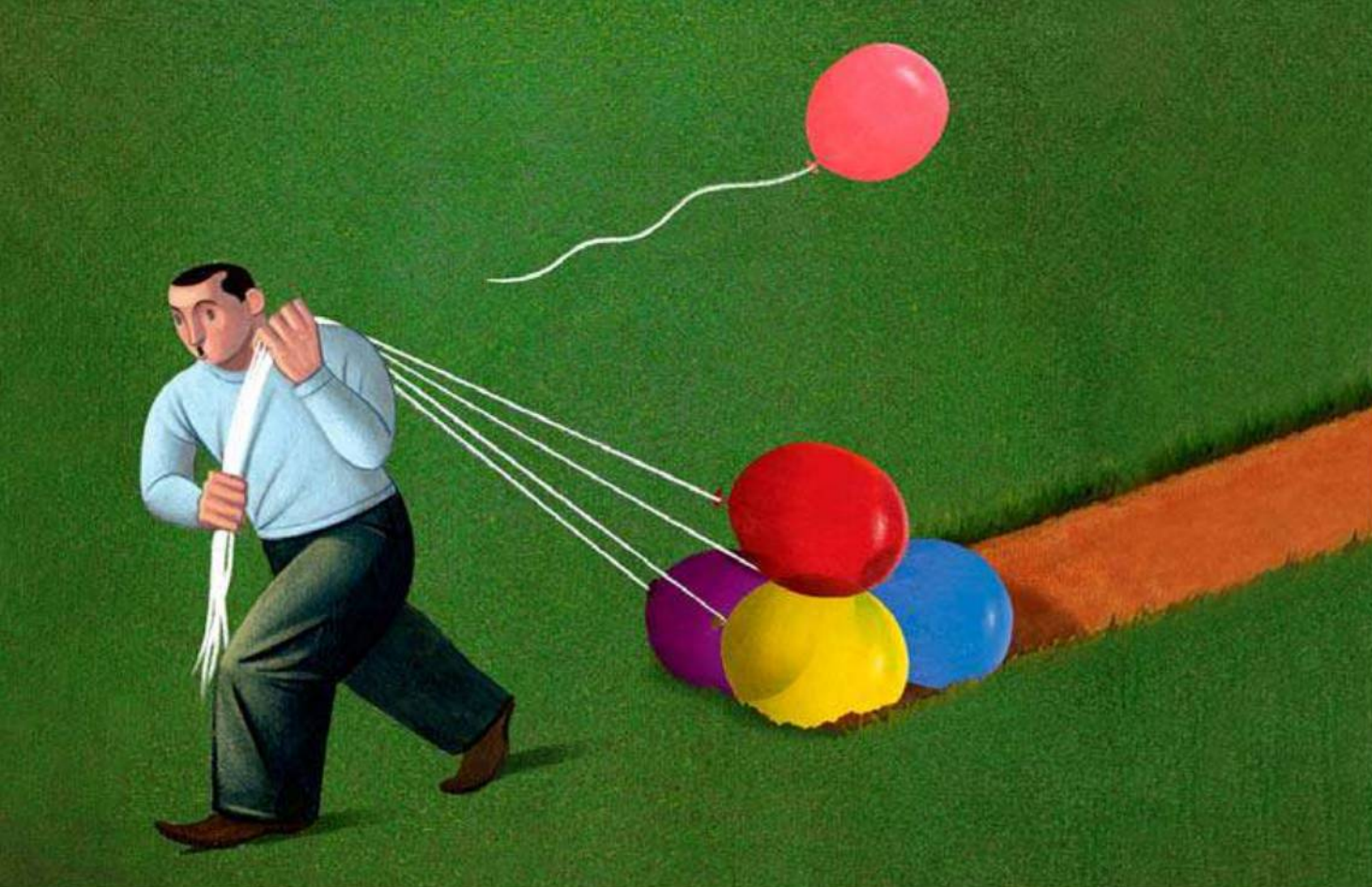
I suppose I could have forgiven my neighbors this infraction and spared them the glare. After all, forgiveness is in, a trend spawning bestselling books, foundations, and research institutes. The notion has gone well beyond spiritual leaders

advising that forgiveness is good for the soul and that hard feelings will turn us bitter and hostile. Now the medical community cites studies showing that forgiveness can prevent heart attacks, lower blood pressure, and even ease depression.

I may be outnumbered, but I still believe in the healing power of the grudge. I’ve deployed grudges with an equal-opportunity sense of fairness—against teachers and classmates, bosses and colleagues, family and friends. I’ve chosen to stop speaking to certain people permanently and occasionally even spoken ill of them—but more with incredulity than a sense of revenge. I’m neither proud nor ashamed. But I’ve discovered that nothing feels quite as satisfying as a grudge well nursed.

I had a boss who took a dislike to me from my first day on the job, even though she’d hired me. There were no complaints about my performance, but I later learned she’d lied to co-workers about me. Without explanation, she laid me off after only ten weeks, just before Thanksgiving. I





had a family to support. Was I to forgive her? Should I now? Give me one good reason. My grudge against her balanced out that injustice, somehow righted the universe. It has kept me warm on many a cold night.

**Is it just me?** Under the new mandate of blanket absolution, should I forgive the cousin who invited us to dinner only to make an Amway pitch? Or the friend who sent me a public relations client and then harassed me for months for a 10 percent finder's fee?

I'm not against forgiveness per se; I have forgiven people for rudeness as well as for deep misunderstandings and have done so without holding on to hard feelings. What I deplore is the propaganda about forgiveness. No longer an option, forgiveness is an edict. Forgiving so

democratically cheapens the very act.

A long-standing grudge suggests that we hold certain standards, that we respect ourselves enough to reject bad behavior. Failure to forgive can be just as righteous, just as honorable, as forgiveness itself.

When someone apologizes, however, with sincerity, not calculation, it can make a difference. I had a close friend in high school who ditched me after college and has avoided me for all the decades since. At our 15th high school reunion, I had the chance to ask him why. He said that I had always made him feel inferior, as if he gave offense. And he had a point: I'd made fun of him—I'd thought good-naturedly—until he withdrew. Face-to-face at our reunion, I apologized. He declined. I know how it feels to go unforgiven. And guess what? It feels deserved. ■



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The World.



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Smile Train provides free cleft surgery which takes as little as 45 minutes and costs as little as \$250.

It gives desperate children not just a new smile—but a new life.

**“...one of the most  
productive charities —  
dollar for deed —  
in the world.”**

*—The New York Times*

## Help children with clefts and other problems.

\$250 Surgery.  \$125 Half surgery.  \$50 Medications.  \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mr./Mrs./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ eMail \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expires \_\_\_\_\_

Visa  MasterCard  AMEX  Discover Signature \_\_\_\_\_

My check is enclosed. Z10041008ZSVY11

**Smile Train, P.O. Box 96211, Washington, DC 20090-6211**

Donate online: [www.smiletrain.org](http://www.smiletrain.org)  
or call: 800-932-9541



# SmileTrain

Changing The World One Smile At A Time.

**A Healthy Diet During Pregnancy Can Help Prevent Birth Defects And Clefts.** Diet is an important part of pregnancy. Eat a healthy diet that contains lots of fruits and vegetables and foods fortified with folic acid. According to the U.S. Government, women who plan to have a child should be sure to take sufficient levels of folic acid (400 micrograms per day) during pregnancy to help prevent neural tube defects and reduce the risk for cleft lip and palate. When folic acid is taken one month before conception and throughout the first trimester, it has been proven to reduce the risk for neural tube defects by 50 to 70 per cent. Be sure to receive proper prenatal care, quit smoking, and follow your health care provider's guidelines for foods to avoid during pregnancy. For more information, visit [www.SmileTrain.org](http://www.SmileTrain.org). Smile Train is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit recognized by the IRS, and all donations to Smile Train are tax-deductible in accordance with IRS regulations. © 2010 Smile Train.



**A**fter I reviewed engine parts, gears, and dashboard gauges, it was time for my nervous driver's-ed student to take the wheel for the first time. But as I reached for something in the backseat, I felt a pop in my shoulder.

"Do you know where the rotator cuff is?" I said, wincing.

"Under the hood?" he asked. *Debi Miles*

## Business of the Month

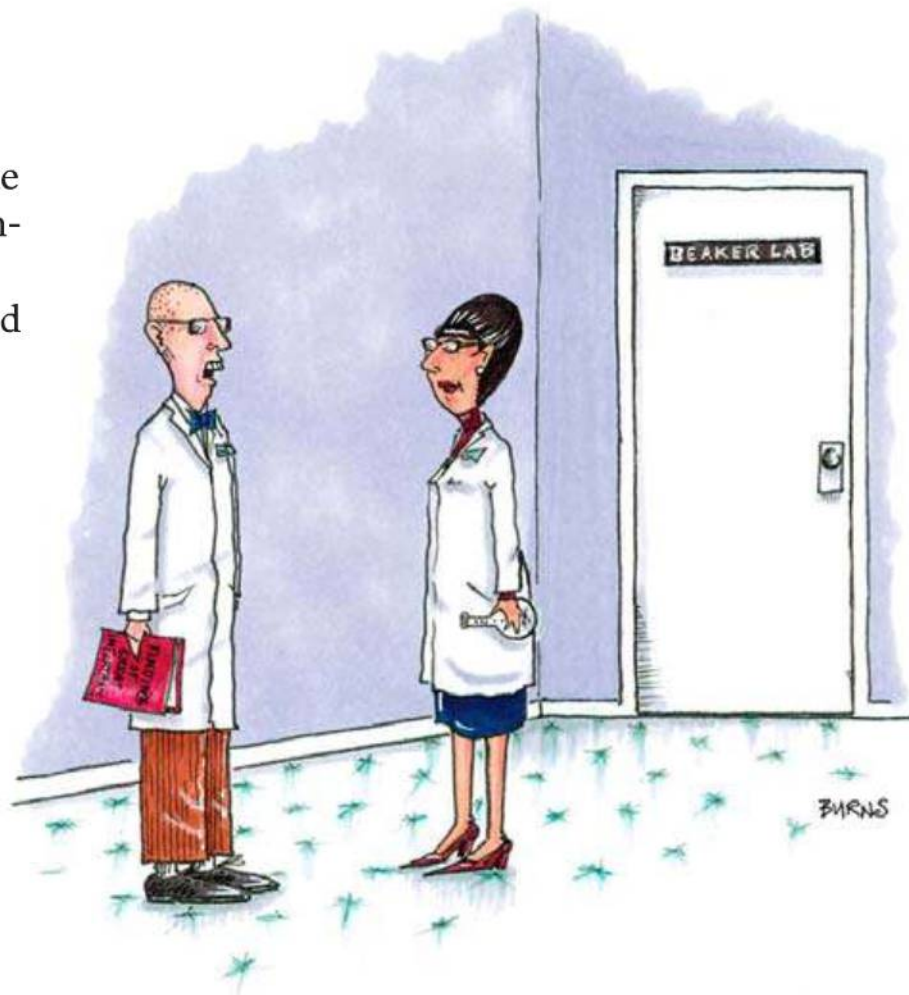
*Can't get enough of that just-left-a-bar smell? Then we've got the perfumery for you.*

*Demeter Fragrance believes its scents should mirror the real world, hence its popular Gin & Tonic fragrance. Here are a few more scents customers are splashing on:*

- Hot Fudge Sundae
- Laundromat
- Blueberry Muffin
- Play-Doh

## Medical transcription

requires a keen ear for technical jargon. But one appli-



*"We've just discovered that the universe is made up of billions of teeny-tiny cubicles."*

cant insisted she was singularly qualified for the position. After all, she wrote in her cover letter, "both of my sisters are nurses, and I watch the cable shows *Dr. G: Medical Examiner* and *Trauma: Life in the E.R.*"

*Donna Forrest*

**A customer who bought a book from me through Amazon.com left a poor rating. The reason: "The book was dated." The title of the book was *Victorian Fancy Stitchery*.** *Moirra Allen*

**Our school had just installed a new air-conditioning system, and a representative from the company wanted to make**



## WHAT'S MY MOTIVATION?

Humorist Phil Proctor does a lot of radio voice-overs. But his favorite part of the job is reading the character descriptions in the script:

- “We’re looking for the voice of God, but not a goofy God, a real God.”
- “Sounds good-looking.”

- (For a fast-food campaign) “This is not a bitter chicken, but he is having trouble coping with the modern world.”

- “Female voice. American. Sultry, like drinking chocolate from the back of a moose.”

From planetproctor.com

sure it was running smoothly. Poking his head into an empty classroom, he asked the teacher, “Any little problems here?”

“No,” she said, smiling. “All our little problems have gone home.”

*Rosalind Popov*

**When a body was** brought to her funeral home, my friend contacted the next of kin. Per previous instructions, the deceased would be cremated, she told him, so he needed to come in to identify the body.

Considering the task at hand, the relative asked, “Does this need to be done before or after the cremation?”

*Janice Pierson*

**I stole a couple** of minutes from work to give my wife a call. She put my two-year-old son on, and we chatted a while before he ended it with an enthusiastic “I love you!”

“I love you too,” I said, with a dopey grin plastered on my face. I was about to hang up when I heard him ask sweetly, “Mommy, who was that?”

*Matthew Terry*

**While we were** working at a men’s clothing store, a customer asked my coworker to help her pick out a tie that would make her husband’s blue eyes stand out.

“Ma’am,” he explained, “any tie will make blue eyes stand out if you tie it tight enough.”

*Alvin Benas*



## You Can Win \$30,000!

**Just send us** your true funny stories, jokes, quotes, and news items to enter the \$30,000 sweepstakes.

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No purchase necessary to enter or win. Sweepstakes closes 2/18/11. Open to U.S. residents.



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**SweetLeaf: the body friendly sweetener.™**

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



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## CT Scan CAUTION

**N**early 29,000—that’s how many Americans are projected to develop cancers because they got a CT scan in 2007. Doctors prescribe CT scans three times more often today than in 1993, but new data show that the exams sometimes expose patients to much more radiation than is needed. The cancers the scans cause could ultimately kill some 15,000 Americans, according to a new study from the National Cancer Institute.

But those dangers are outweighed by the exam’s benefits, right? Not always. “CT scans can be life-saving, but we know that many are not necessary,” says Rita F. Redberg, MD, editor of the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, which published the research.

**One CT scan  
can be the  
equivalent of  
442 chest  
X-rays.**



# → Health

Suspected kidney stones, minor head trauma, and abdominal pain are particularly likely to result in unwarranted scans.

To get all the advantages of this advanced technology without absorbing unnecessary radiation, follow these rules:

- > Ask the doctor whether the scan results will change the treatment plan—if not, why do the scan?
- > Check whether alternative tests involving less radiation could provide sufficient information for a diagnosis. Or you could just ask if

the proposed CT scan is based on established “decision rules,” which guide appropriate use, says David J. Brenner, PhD, director of the Center for Radiological Research at Columbia University Medical Center in New York City.

- > If your child needs a CT scan, ask the technician to double-check that the machine’s settings are adjusted properly for a pediatric exam. It takes less radiation to produce a good image on a child’s CT scan—and kids are more vulnerable to radiation’s effects. *Beth Howard*

## Trend Watch: A Sweetener Gets Hot

**CLAIM** Agave nectar or syrup—made from the sap of a succulent Mexican plant—is a “healthier” alternative to sugar. You can find agave in squeeze bottles at supermarkets next to the honey, or online in a huge array of flavors such as maple, blueberry, hazelnut, and cappuccino. It’s also used as an ingredient in beverages, energy bars, and baked goods.

**TRUTH** “Agave syrup is no better for you than other sweeteners,” says Nora Saul, RD, a certified diabetes educator and licensed dietitian at Joslin Diabetes Center in Boston. It has more calories—20 per teaspoon—than table sugar and actually ranks lower in disease-fighting antioxidants than many other natural sweeteners, including honey and maple syrup. What about the claim that agave is a better choice for diabetics? The Glycemic Research Institute in Washington, D.C., recently rescinded the “diabetic friendly” seal it had given to agave after studies revealed some products caused severe blood sugar swings. (Some were mixed with high-fructose corn syrup, which was not disclosed on the label.) So enjoy agave for its unique flavor, but “limit your intake for good health,” says Saul. *Janis Graham*





Never touch a germy soap pump again.



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**Introducing the new LYSOL® No-Touch Hand Soap System.**

A revolutionary way to help stop the spread of bacteria. It automatically senses your hands and dispenses soap that kills 99.9% of bacteria. Plus, it's enriched with moisturizing ingredients. All to help keep your hands healthy.



# → Health

## Spring-Clean for Your Health

**W**hen old computers and TVs are disposed of in landfills and incinerators, cancer-causing chemicals can escape into the water, soil, and air. But it's easier than ever to protect the planet's health and your own, thanks to the growing number of retailers willing to take these items off your hands and recycle them properly. Use this reverse-shopping list (see retailer websites for details):

**Best Buy** Drop your old CDs, DVDs, cell phones, or ink-jet cartridges into the free kiosk at any U.S. store. You can also ditch many larger items here, such as DVD players, computers, and televisions (32 inches and under). There's a limit of two large items per household per day. It costs \$10 to recycle TVs, computer monitors, and laptops, but you'll get a \$10 Best Buy gift card in return.

**Office Depot** Recycle your ink or toner cartridges and cell phones for no charge. To dispose of almost any other kind of device (like fax machines, computers, printers, scanners, digital and video cameras, DVD players, and small TVs), you'll need to purchase a small (\$5), medium (\$10),



or large (\$15) recycling box, which you fill up and leave at the store.

**Radio Shack** Trade in your unwanted MP3 players, cameras, phones, camcorders, gaming consoles, cell phones, and other small electronics. A sales associate will determine the value of your electronics and give you a gift card in exchange.

**Staples** You can get rid of empty ink or toner cartridges here—and receive \$3 in Staples coupons for each one. Recycle cell phones and any Dell product for free; you'll have to pay \$10 per piece to recycle non-Dell computers, fax machines, printers, and other large items.

*Lori Bongiorno*



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Diabetic Friendly

# Embarrassed in sandals?

## Take action now for more attractive feet this summer.

### All Natural **NONYX NAIL GEL** Exfoliant of Keratin Debris For Clear, Healthy-Looking Toenails

NonyX Nail Gel clears out discoloring keratin debris build-up for clear, healthy-looking toenails.



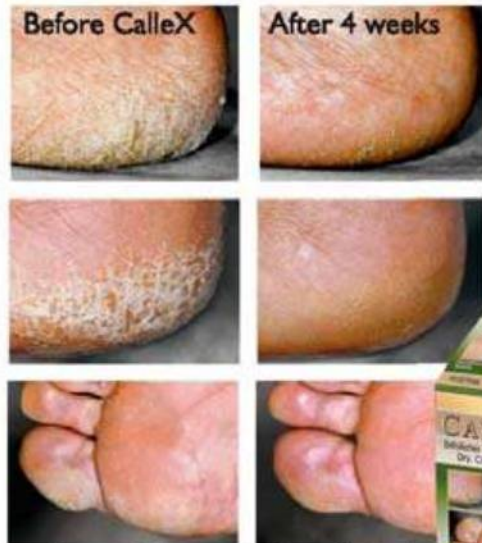
Nails with keratin debris

Nails without keratin debris



### Acid Free **CALLEX** Exfoliating Ointment for Dry, Cracked Feet

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Dry, cracked heels and toes

Feet exfoliated with natural enzymes



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Refund Offer, Xenna Corp., 33 Witherspoon St., Suite 200, Princeton, NJ 08542

In the FOOTCARE aisle at grocery stores and



With us, it's personal. SHOPKO, Giant Eagle, Marsh, Spectra

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## **GERM ALERT:** **Can Your Doctor's Watch** **Make You Sick?**

**B**eware the bling-bearing doc. Researchers at Royal Hallamshire Hospital in the United Kingdom recently found that hospital workers who wore wristwatches harbored more bacteria on their wrists—

roughly a thousand times more—than those who went watchless. Other

studies have shown that health care workers' neckties, rings, and stethoscopes also play host to potentially harmful pathogens, which could increase the risk of spreading infections to patients. England's

Department of Health implemented a "bare below the elbow" dress code in 2007.

And last June, members of the American Medical Association

resolved to study

the issue further. In the meantime, no matter

how many accessories your doctors

or nurses sport, it

never hurts to

ask if they've

washed their

hands since

they saw their

last patient.

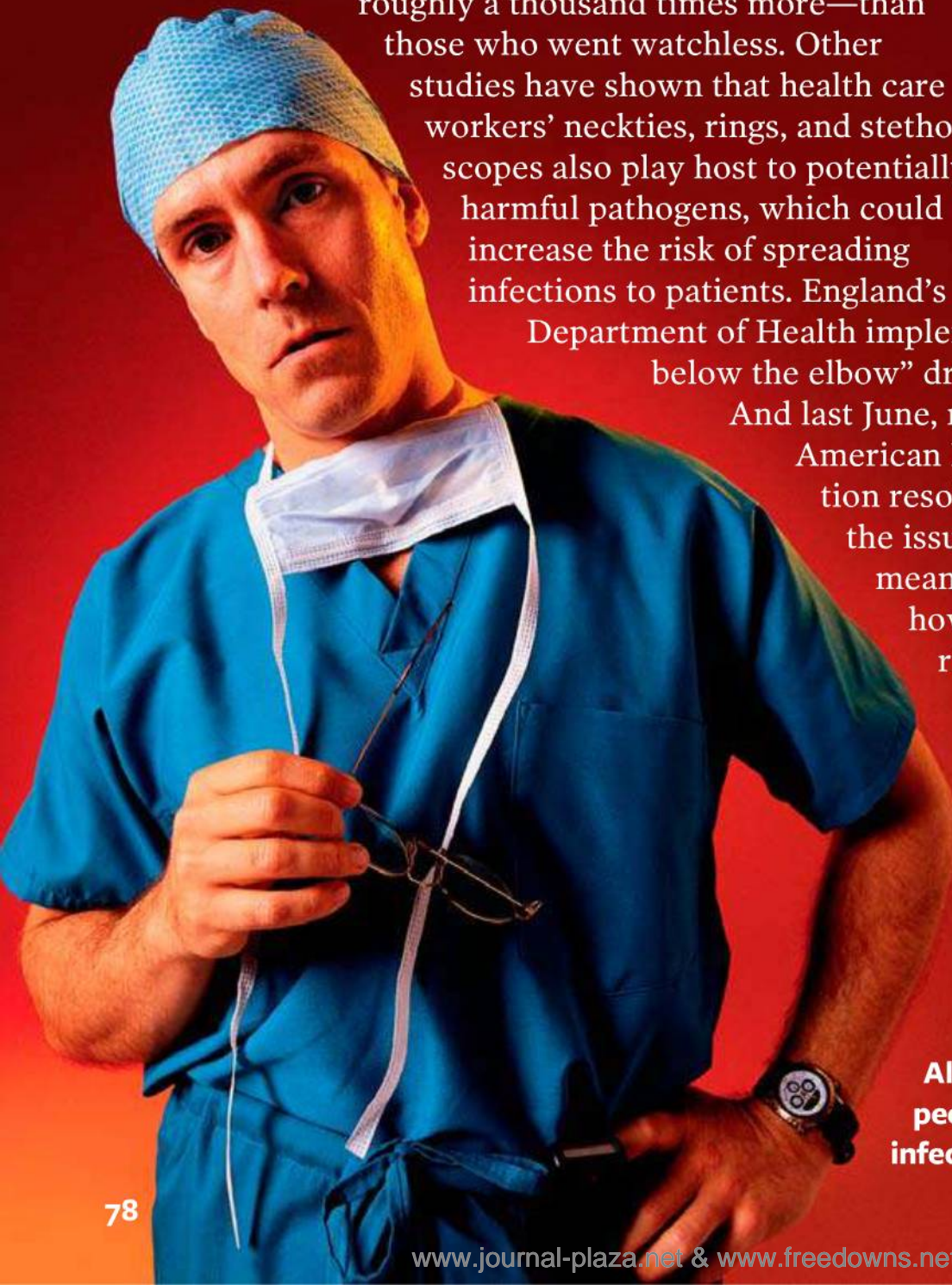
B. H.

**Almost 2 million**  
**people develop hospital**  
**infections every year.**

**Numbers**  
**That Count**

**50%**

**Reduction**  
**in pain medi-**  
**cation** needed  
after surgery  
if patients are  
visited by pets





Very high triglycerides  
is a medical term for  
something serious:

# TOO MUCH FAT IN YOUR BLOOD.

Treat it with the only medication made  
from omega-3 fish oil: **LOVAZA**

If you have high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or diabetes, you may also have very high triglycerides, which is a serious medical condition. LOVAZA, along with diet, has been clinically proven to effectively lower very high triglycerides\*, but it hasn't been shown to prevent heart attacks or strokes. LOVAZA is the only FDA-approved medication made from omega-3 fish oil. It's purified. It's concentrated. And you can't get it at a health food store. Ask your doctor about LOVAZA—the prescription that starts in the sea.

\*Individual results may vary.

## Important Safety Information for LOVAZA

LOVAZA, along with diet, helps to lower very high triglycerides ( $\geq 500$  mg/dL) in adult patients. Tell your doctor if you are allergic to fish or shellfish as LOVAZA may not be right for you. Talk to your doctor about any medical conditions you have and any medications you are taking, especially those that may increase your risk of bleeding. In some patients, LDL-cholesterol levels may increase. Your healthcare provider should do blood tests before and during treatment with LOVAZA to check your cholesterol and triglyceride levels. If you have liver disease, you may require additional monitoring.

Possible side effects include burping, infection, flu-like symptoms, upset stomach and change in sense of taste.

How supplied: 1-gram capsule

Please see important Patient Information on the next page.

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 if LOVAZA is right for you  
Visit **LOVAZA.com** or call **1-877-LOVAZA1**

**LOVAZA**  
omega-3-acid ethyl esters

LOVAZA is a registered trademark  
of GlaxoSmithKline.



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Capsule shown not actual size



## PATIENT INFORMATION

**LOVAZA® (lō-vā-zā)**  
(omega-3-acid ethyl esters) Capsules



Read the Patient Information that comes with LOVAZA before you start taking it, and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This leaflet does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your condition or treatment.

### What is LOVAZA?

LOVAZA is a prescription medicine, called a lipid-regulating medicine, for adults. LOVAZA is made of omega-3 fatty acids from oils of fish, such as salmon and mackerel. Omega-3 fatty acids are substances that your body needs but cannot produce itself.

LOVAZA is used along with a low-fat and low-cholesterol diet to lower very high triglycerides (fats) in your blood. Before taking LOVAZA, talk to your healthcare provider about how you can lower high blood fats by:

- losing weight, if you are overweight
- increasing physical exercise

### Treatment with LOVAZA has not been shown to prevent heart attacks or strokes.

LOVAZA has not been studied in children under the age of 18 years.

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

Tell your doctor about all of your medical conditions and all the medicines you take, including prescription and non-prescription medicine, vitamins, and herbal supplements. LOVAZA and certain other medicines can interact causing serious side effects.

Especially tell your doctor if you take medicines:

- To reduce clotting—known as anticoagulants or blood thinners. These include aspirin, warfarin, coumarin and clopidogrel (PLAVIX®).

Tell your doctor if you are allergic to fish and/or shellfish. LOVAZA may not be right for you.

### Who should NOT take LOVAZA?

Do not take LOVAZA if you:

- are allergic to LOVAZA or any of its ingredients.

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

The most common side effects with LOVAZA are burping, infection, flu symptoms, upset stomach and change in sense of taste.

### LOVAZA may affect certain blood tests.

#### It may change:

- One of the tests to check liver function (ALT)
- One of the tests to measure cholesterol levels (LDL-C)

Talk to your doctor if you have side effects that bother you or that will not go away.

These are not all the side effects with LOVAZA. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for a complete list.

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December 2009



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Ask More  
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**FIBER**

\*Diets low in saturated fat and cholesterol that include 7 grams of soluble fiber per day from psyllium husk may reduce the risk of heart disease by lowering cholesterol. One serving of Metamucil psyllium powder or capsules has at least 2.1 grams of this soluble fiber. Use as directed. © Procter & Gamble, Inc., 2010 GPAD09239





## Nearsighted Nation

**C**an you see any progress here? Back in the early 1970s, about 25 percent of Americans were diagnosed as nearsighted, but a new study shows that between 1999 and 2004, that number grew to nearly 42 percent. Our society's focus on "near work"—from sewing and reading to peering at computers all day—may be responsible, says Susan Vitale, PhD, of the National Institutes of Health's National Eye Institute. Recent research from the University of Sydney in Australia also suggests that nearsightedness can sometimes be prevented in teenagers if they spend more time outdoors, possibly because natural light may produce a sharper image on the retina.

That's still a theory—there's no proven way to avert myopia. But nearsighted or not, you can help ease eyestrain while doing near work by giving your eyes an occasional rest. How often? Experts recommend using the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, look up from what you're doing and focus 20 feet in front of you for 20 seconds. *B. H.*

## Do your heart good

### 3 reasons to love METAMUCIL®

- 1** The fiber in Metamucil is proven to help lower cholesterol.\* Clinical studies show that, taken daily, 7 grams of soluble fiber from psyllium husk (the amount in 3-4 servings of Metamucil), may help reduce heart disease risk by lowering cholesterol.
- 2** Sugar-free Metamucil Powders and all Capsules have a low glycemic index. Plus, if you're on a low-carb diet, you'll love the fact that Metamucil Capsules contain zero net carbs and 100% natural fiber.
- 3** Metamucil Strong Bones Capsules provide not only the fiber of Metamucil, but also as much calcium as an 8-ounce glass of milk (nondairy source) for strong bones.



Visit [Metamucil.com](http://Metamucil.com) for more reasons to do your heart good with Metamucil.

\*Diets low in saturated fat and cholesterol that include 7 grams of soluble fiber per day from psyllium husk may reduce the risk of heart disease by lowering cholesterol. One serving of Metamucil psyllium powder or capsules has at least 2.1 grams of this soluble fiber. Use as directed.



## Tiny, Tasty, and Worth a Try

It may be the smallest seed in the health food store, but flax's disease-fighting credentials just got bigger: A new analysis of 28 studies found it reduces total and LDL "bad" cholesterol, especially in postmenopausal women. Other recent research shows flaxseed may help slow the growth of breast tumors in women and prostate cancer in men. Most studies indicate you need two to three tablespoons a day to reap benefits—an amount easy to eat given flaxseed's versatility, says Cynthia Sass, RD, nutritionist and bestselling author. Her tips:

**Keep it handy.** Have a jar on the kitchen counter so it's convenient to sprinkle a tablespoon on your morning cereal, between the peanut butter and jelly in a sandwich, and on



salads. Ground seeds are best; buy them at your local health food store.

**Add it to recipes.** Sneak one to two tablespoons into pasta and rice casseroles and homemade cookies, muffins, and breads.

**Try an enriched food.** Some tasty ones: Kashi GoLean Crunch Honey Almond Flax cereal, Trader Joe's Multigrain & Flaxseed Water Crackers, and Nature's Path Flax Plus cereals.

J. G.

## The hidden message of gum disease

If your dentist says you have periodontal disease, you may have an even more serious problem: diabetes. In a recent study of 2,923 adults from New York University's Colleges of Dentistry and Nursing, 93 percent of those who had periodontitis were at high risk for diabetes, compared with just 63 percent of those without it. The culprit may be inflammation, says lead researcher Shiela M. Strauss, PhD. If you're diagnosed with gum disease, get a blood sugar test. Diabetes is often symptomless, but the earlier it's discovered, the easier it is to prevent long-term complications.



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U.S. and keep laughing—all the way to the bank.

**GEICO**



**Still relying on vitamins to keep you healthy? Learn these**

# VITAMIN TRUTHS & LIES

**BY CHRISTIE  
ASCHWANDEN**

**Once upon a time**, you believed in the tooth fairy. You counted on the stability of housing prices and depended on bankers to be, well, dependable. And you figured that taking vitamins was good for you.

Oh, it's painful when another myth gets shattered. Recent research suggests that a daily multi is a waste of money for most people—and there's growing evidence







that some other old standbys may even hurt your health. Here's what you need to know.

## **MYTH: A MULTIVITAMIN CAN MAKE UP FOR A BAD DIET**

An insurance policy in a pill? If only it were so.

Last year, researchers published new findings from the Women's Health Initiative, a long-term study of more than 160,000 midlife women. The data showed that multivitamin-takers are no healthier than those who don't pop the pills, at least when it comes to the big diseases—cancer, heart disease, stroke. “Even women with poor diets weren't helped by taking a multivitamin,” says study author Marian Neuhouser, PhD, in the cancer prevention program at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, in Seattle.

Vitamin supplements came into vogue in the early 1900s, when it was difficult or impossible for most people to get a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables year-round. Back then, vitamin-deficiency diseases weren't unheard-of: the bowed legs and deformed ribs of rickets (caused by a severe shortage of vitamin D) or the skin problems and mental confusion of pellagra (caused by a lack of the B vitamin niacin). But these days, you're extremely unlikely to be seriously deficient if you eat an average American diet, if only because many

packaged foods are vitamin-enriched. Sure, most of us could do with a couple more daily servings of produce, but a multi doesn't do a good job at substituting for those. “Multivitamins have maybe two dozen ingredients—but plants have hundreds of other useful compounds,” Neuhouser says. “If you just take a multivitamin, you're missing lots of compounds that may be providing benefits.”

That said, there is one group that probably ought to keep taking a multivitamin: women of reproductive age. The supplement is insurance in case of pregnancy. A woman who gets adequate amounts of the B vitamin folate is much less likely to have a baby with a birth defect affecting the spinal cord. Since the spinal cord starts to develop extremely early—before a woman may know she's pregnant—the safest course is for her to take 400 micrograms of folic acid (the synthetic form of folate) daily. And a multi is an easy way to get it.

## **MYTH: VITAMIN C IS A COLD FIGHTER**

In the 1970s, Nobel laureate Linus Pauling popularized the idea that vitamin C could prevent colds. Today, drugstores are full of vitamin C-based remedies. Studies say: Buyer, beware.

In 2007, researchers analyzed a raft of studies going back several decades and involving more than 11,000 subjects to arrive at a disappointing conclusion: Vitamin C didn't ward



off colds, except among marathoners, skiers, and soldiers on subarctic exercises.

Of course, prevention isn't the only game in town. Can the vitamin cut the length of colds? Yes and no. Taking the vitamin daily does seem to reduce the time you'll spend sniffing—but not enough to notice. Adults typically have cold symptoms for 12 days a year; a daily pill could cut that to 11 days. Kids might go from 28 days of runny noses to 24 per year. The researchers conclude that minor reductions like these don't justify the expense and bother of year-round pill-popping (taking C only after symptoms crop up doesn't help).

## **MYTH: VITAMIN PILLS CAN PREVENT HEART DISEASE**

Talk about exciting ideas—the notion that vitamin supplements might help lower the toll of some of our most damaging chronic diseases turned a sleepy area of research into a sizzling-hot one. These high hopes came in part from the observation that vitamin-takers were less likely to develop heart disease. Even at the time, researchers knew the finding might just reflect what's called the healthy user effect—meaning that vitamin devotees are more likely to exercise, eat right, and resist the temptations of tobacco and other bad habits. But it was also possible that antioxidant vitamins like C, E, and beta-carotene

could prevent heart disease by reducing the buildup of artery-clogging plaque. B vitamins were promising, too, because folate, B<sub>6</sub>, and B<sub>12</sub> help break down the amino acid homocysteine—and high levels of homocysteine have been linked to heart disease.

Unfortunately, none of those hopes have panned out.

An analysis of seven vitamin E trials concluded that it didn't cut the risk of stroke or of death from heart disease. The study also scrutinized eight beta-carotene studies and determined that, rather than prevent heart disease, those supplements produced a slight *increase* in the risk of death. Other big studies have shown vitamin C failing to deliver. As for B vitamins, research shows that yes, these do cut homocysteine levels ... but no, that doesn't make a dent in heart danger.

Don't take these pills, the American Heart Association says. Instead, the AHA offers some familiar advice: Eat a varied diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

## **MYTH: TAKING VITAMINS CAN PROTECT AGAINST CANCER**

Researchers know that unstable molecules called free radicals can damage your cells' DNA, upping the risk of cancer. They also know that antioxidants can stabilize free radicals, theoretically making them much less dangerous. So why not take some ex-



tra antioxidants to protect yourself against cancer? Because research so far has shown no good comes from popping such pills.

A number of studies have tried and failed to find a benefit, like a recent one that randomly assigned 5,442 women to take either a placebo or a B-vitamin combo. Over the course of more than seven years, all the women experienced similar rates of cancers and cancer deaths. In Neuhouser's enormous multivitamin study, that pill didn't offer any protection against cancer either. Nor did C, E, or beta-carotene in research done at Harvard Medical School.

## MYTH: HEY, IT CAN'T HURT

The old thinking went something like this—sure, vitamin pills might not help you, but they can't hurt either. However, a series of large-scale studies has turned this thinking on its head, says Demetrius Albanes, MD, a nutritional epidemiologist at the National Cancer Institute.

The shift started with a big study of beta-carotene pills. It was meant to test whether the antioxidant could prevent lung cancer, but researchers instead detected surprising *increases* in lung cancer and deaths

among male smokers who took the supplement. No one knew what to make of the result at first, but further studies have shown it wasn't a fluke—there's a real possibility that in some circumstances, antioxidant pills could actually promote cancer (in women as well as in men). Other studies have raised concerns that taking high doses of folic acid could raise the risk of colon cancer. Still others suggest a connection between high doses of some vitamins and heart disease.

Vitamins are safe when you get them in food, but in pill form,

## HOW TO GET YOUR VITAMINS: EAT THEM

These foods hit a sweet spot: They're vitamin-rich *and* easy to enjoy. Add them to your next shopping list.

### Vitamin C

Broccoli  
Red bell pepper  
Brussels sprouts  
Papaya

### Vitamin E

Almonds  
Sunflower seeds  
Hazelnuts  
Sunflower oil  
Peanut butter

### Beta-carotene

Carrots or carrot juice  
Canned pumpkin  
Frozen spinach  
Sweet potato

### Folate

Lentils  
Garbanzo beans  
Asparagus  
Black beans  
Orange juice

### B<sub>6</sub>

Potato  
Banana  
Garbanzo beans  
Chicken

### B<sub>12</sub>

Clams  
Rainbow trout  
Sockeye salmon  
Beef



they can act more like a drug, Albanes says—with the potential for unexpected and sometimes dangerous effects.

## **TRUTH:** **A PILL** **THAT'S** **WORTH** **TAKING**

As studies have eroded the hopes placed in most vitamin supplements, one pill is looking better and better. Research suggests that vitamin D protects against a long list of ills: Men with adequate levels of D have about half the risk of heart attack as men who are deficient. And getting enough D appears to lower the risk of at least half a dozen cancers; indeed, epidemiologist Cedric Garland, MD, at the University of California, San Diego, believes that if Americans got sufficient amounts of vitamin D, 50,000 cases of colorectal cancer could be prevented each year.

But many—perhaps most—Americans fall short, according to research by epidemiologist Adit Ginde, MD, at the University of Colorado, Denver. Vitamin D is the sunshine vitamin: You make it when sunlight hits your skin. Yet thanks to sunscreen and workaholic (or TV-aholic) hab-



its, most people don't make enough.

How much do you need? The Institute of Medicine is reassessing that right now; most experts expect a big boost from the current levels (200 to 600 IU daily). It's safe to take 1,000 IU per day, says Ginde. "We think most people need at least that much."

So here's the Reader's Digest Version of the truth about vitamins: Eat right, and supplement with vitamin D. That's a no-brainer coupled with a great bet—and that's no lie. ■



REAL-LIFE DRAMA

# 'DAD'S OVER BOARD!'

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**WHEN A FATHER FALLS OFF  
A SAILBOAT, HIS SON FACES  
THE TOUGHEST OF  
ALL CHOICES BY JOHN DYSON**







**B**y the last week of summer, Robin Evertsson, 16, was bored and grumpy. He had nothing to do but sleep or watch TV in his family's house near Gothenburg, Sweden.

Even worse, his father, Leif, was also at home on vacation from his IT job. He nagged Robin for staying in bed while there was work to be done.

Robin also felt adrift because his world was changing. In a few days, he'd start college. Strongly built and already taller than his dad, Robin had one ambition—to be a police officer.

Leif, 43, was quietly furious at the way Robin and his brother, Patrik, 18, lazed around. But he didn't want to start a feud. Instead, he made a suggestion. "Let's get out of the house," he said. "Do you want to go sailing for a few days?"

Their boat, *Ariel*, with its cozy cabin and four bunks, had been in the family even longer than the boys. They'd started sailing with their parents as babies and spent weekends exploring channels between the rocky islands along the coast.

Robin jumped at the idea. "Cool—can we go to Laesø?" he asked.

The pretty Danish island between Denmark and Sweden, with its long beaches and flat lanes made for inline skating, was Robin's favorite place, and the 35-mile voyage took them out of sight of land.

Paula, the boys' mother and Leif's

lifelong partner, didn't feel up to a sail, and Patrik had a driving test. "Looks like it's just you and me," Leif told Robin.

"Sounds good," the teenager said. It'll be nice to hang out with Dad, he thought. They'd get pizza and play cards, and he knew his father would be happy as long as he was sailing.

"We'll go tomorrow," Leif decided.

The wet morning of August 12 turned into a sunny afternoon. Father and son bought food for the trip, then set sail from Näset Marina. The breeze was strong and on the nose but was forecast to swing around to the north; it would give them a fast trip. With luck, they'd berth in Østerby Havn around midnight.

**As always,** the 22-foot cruising yacht attracted surprised looks from passing boats, because the skipper had only one arm. Leif had lost his left arm in a motorcycle accident when he was 20, ending his dream to sail around the world. But he had adapted well. One-handed, he could tie shoelaces, peel potatoes, and climb slippery ladders in ports. On the boat, he could do every job, even if it meant holding ropes in his teeth.

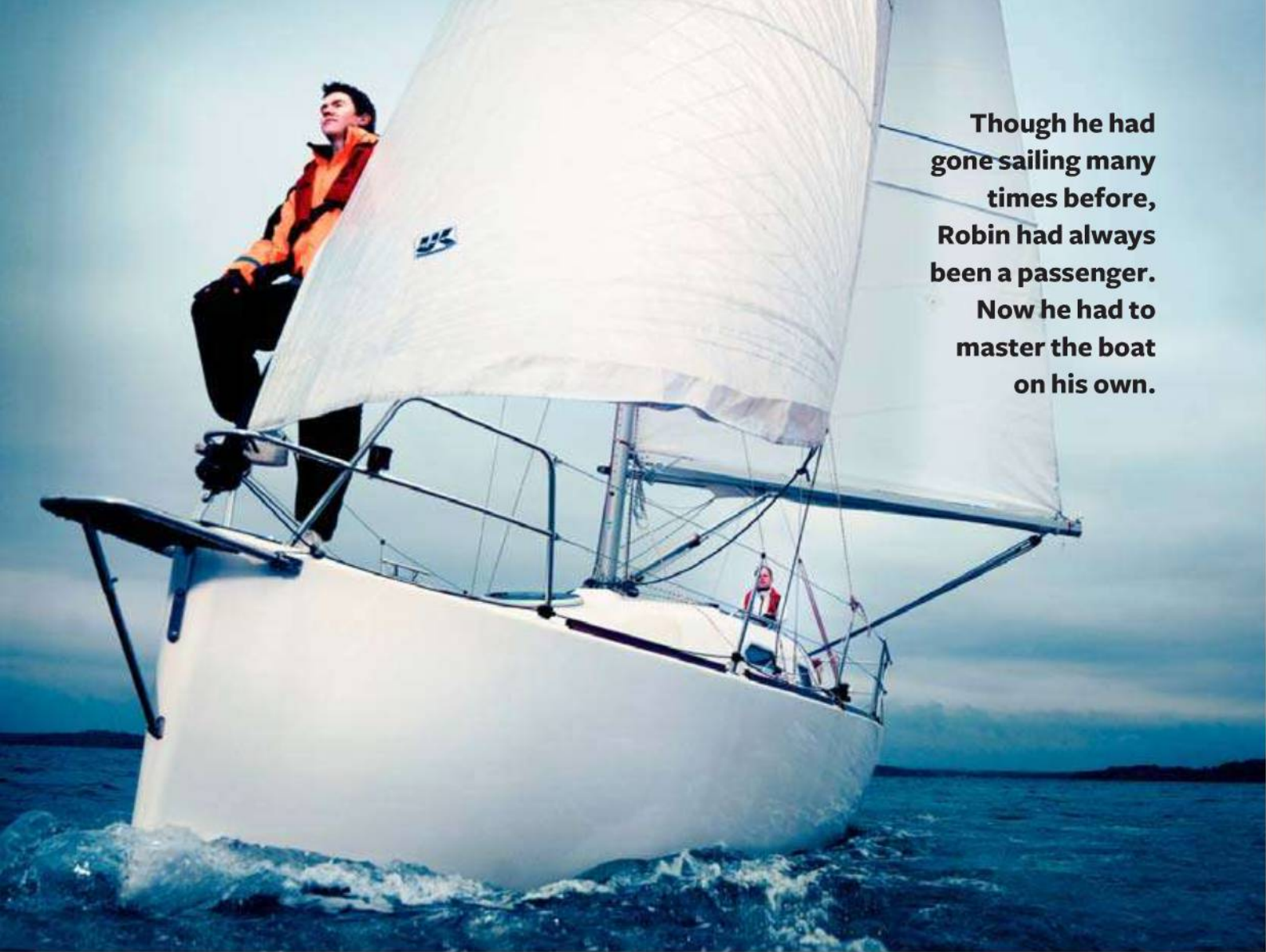
But Robin knew his dad suffered searing pain. His missing arm burned as if pressing down on a hot stove, and the agony never let up. He fought it with constant activity. Even steering the boat out between the rocky islands, he didn't relax.



**Robin Evertsson  
was looking forward  
to having his dad,  
Leif, to himself  
for a few days.**







**Though he had gone sailing many times before, Robin had always been a passenger. Now he had to master the boat on his own.**

As young as 12, Leif had sailed to islands in a dinghy and camped with a friend. Later, he'd studied for a coastal skipper's certificate and crewed on bigger yachts. Now it struck him that despite his many trips in the boat, Robin had always been a passenger. He was old enough now to learn some seamanship. "It's time you were a real crew member," Leif told him.

Robin listened as his father explained how to use their handheld GPS to find their position on the map. But as the boat cleared the shelter of land and hit the bigger waves in the open sea, the boy felt queasy and stretched out on a bunk.

Gazing at his son, Leif wondered

how Robin would ever achieve anything if he was so laid-back. What sort of cop would he make?

**The weather worsened** around 10:30 p.m., and the wind did not go around to the north as forecast. Any hope of reaching port by midnight had evaporated. Now they'd be lucky to make it before dawn.

Recovered from his seasickness, Robin joined his father. Leif pointed out the flashing green light of a navigation buoy off the tip of the island, and Robin found it on the GPS.

The boat battled through the night. Just before 11:30, the wind was blasting at 30 knots, nearly a gale. They took



down the mainsail to reduce strain on the rig. Spray from 10-foot waves slammed along the deck, hitting their faces like buckets of nails.

In the dim glow cast by the red and green navigation lights, Leif spotted the remaining sail bellying strangely. Horrified, he saw that the whole mast was rocking. The wire between the masthead and the front of the boat had come undone. Now the mast was supported only by the thin rope sewn into the front of the sail.

Leif knew the mast could topple over the side at any moment and possibly punch a hole in the boat—or hit

visible in the lights, he saw his father, his white face squeezed between the inflated tubes of his red life jacket. “Dad, what should I do?” Robin shouted.

Leif was already being left behind. Abruptly he went over a wave and was hidden from view. Struggling to turn the boat, Robin was able to make out his father’s words: “Get telephone!”

Robin saw his father rise up on a wave. “Keep going, Dad!” he yelled. “You’ll make it!” He grabbed his father’s new Xperia phone from the cabin and tapped 112, the emergency number. All he got was an automatic answer in

## **THE BOY’S HUNT THROUGH THE TOOLBOX WAS INTERRUPTED BY A SCREAM. “ROBIN! HELP ME! I’M IN THE WATER!”**

them on their heads. He panicked. Instead of turning the boat away from the wind to take the pressure off the sail, he made a bad decision. “I have to fix it,” he said.

Slithering along toward the bow, hanging on with just one hand, Leif straddled the heaving deck in front of the mast. Cursing himself, he remembered he hadn’t brought tools. “Get the pliers!” he yelled over his shoulder.

In the cabin, the boy’s hunt through the toolbox was interrupted by a scream. “Robin! Help me! I’m in the water!”

From the lurching cockpit, Robin peered along the deck. In the water,

Danish. Robin grabbed his own cell phone and dialed again, but he was too far from Sweden to get a signal.

Outside, Robin frantically scanned the dark sea. His father had disappeared into the night. “Dad, where are you?” he called over and over.

**The sail collapsed** with a noise like thunder. Remembering his seamanship lessons just a few hours earlier, Robin pushed the tiller over. The sail filled again, driving the boat ahead. Shouting hoarsely, he sailed in wide circles.

After 20 minutes, it dawned on him that sailing around in the dark was futile. He had to do something, but what? The yacht had no VHF radio



to call for help and no distress rockets. Suppressing panic, Robin forced himself to think it out: If help won't come to me, I have to go find it. The decision was agonizing. How could he abandon his dad? But how could he get help unless he sailed away?

Robin gazed at the screen of the GPS. Zooming out, he saw the coast of Sweden come into the picture, and that made up his mind. He swung the boat around, heading east, toward Sweden.

The wind punched the sail into a hard curve and the boat took off. Steering was tough. Robin sensed that if he let the boat turn broadside-on, it would roll over. His legs trembled violently from cold and shock. Every few minutes, he checked his phone. Still no bars. Seeing ships' lights in the distance, Robin dialed 112 for the sixth time. Startled, he heard a woman answer: "Emergency service."

It took him a moment to find his voice. "Dad's overboard!" he stammered. Then he calmed himself and said, "Dad went into the sea about five miles before Laesø."

The call was relayed to the Marine Rescue Coordination Centre in Gothenburg, where Cecilia Wegnelius, on night duty, caught the fear in the boy's voice. "When did he go over?"

"About two hours ago," Robin said. "I've been sailing toward Sweden."

"Okay," Wegnelius said. "Where are you?" Robin pushed the nav button on the GPS as his dad had instructed but found no reference to the yacht's latitude and longitude. "What do you see around you?" the coordinator asked.

"The lights of Sweden are coming in sight. There are ships behind me and a big white ferry."

Robin heard a ping. One of the remaining wires holding up the mast swished past his head. The mast fell along the deck, its top half spearing into the sea. The boat turned sideways. Robin crawled into the cabin.

"Stay calm," Wegnelius told him. "We're sending a helicopter and rescue boats."

**T**he ferry that Robin could see was the *Crown of Scandinavia*, which soon sighted the sailboat.

A Swedish helicopter flew to the scene. Lowered into the water, rescue swimmer Patrik Nilsson, 35, raced to the yacht. "Are you okay?"

Robin nodded. "We have to save Dad," he said.

"Don't worry. Lots of people are searching for him," Nilsson said.

Moments later, Robin was in the helicopter. It was 3:19 a.m., and his father had been in the water for nearly four hours.

**Tossing in the wild**, dark sea, Leif had kicked off his boots and pants to make himself lighter. The life jacket kept slipping over the stump of his missing arm, so he held it in place with his remaining hand. Waves crashed into him.

He faced a desperate challenge, but Leif knew how to fight. Losing my arm has prepared me for this, he thought.



Then he noticed something strange. For the first time since his accident, the pain from his missing arm had disappeared.

Thoughts of Robin swirled through his head. How could I do such a stupid thing? I can't die in a way that makes him feel guilty. Leif wasn't sure how far Robin's rudimentary seamanship would take him. And what if he were injured by the mast?

Cramps stung the muscles in Leif's legs. To ease the pain, he put the life jacket whistle in his mouth and bit down hard.

It was a long time before Leif realized the lights he'd been watching in the distance were from vessels that were coming closer. Five boats about 650 feet apart were advancing toward him in a line, their lights sweeping the sea. They were looking for him. Robin must have made it!

Leif worried that the nearest boat would run over him. With desperate kicks, he reached its pool of light

and shouted. A Danish helicopter descended out of the dark sky. At 4:57 a.m., its pilot radioed to shore: "The man is in the helicopter, cold but alive."

"How's Robin?" Leif asked.

"Robin is fine," the crew told him.

Leif let his head fall back and closed his eyes. Thank God.

**A few minutes later**, as Robin was being driven home in a police car, a message came over the radio: "Tell Robin his dad is alive and well."

Leif was taken to a hospital, where he was treated for hypothermia. He was released the next afternoon and took the ferry back to Gothenburg, where his family waited on the wharf. Leif grabbed his son in a strong hug. "You're my hero," he said.

The rescuers praised Robin's self-control and courageous decision to sail away for help. Leif's admiration is unstinting. "Robin is a wonderful kid who grew up that night," he says. "He'll make a great police officer."



### I'LL JUST BRING A BOOK

**In case you're going** abroad and want to see a good movie, here are translated titles of some American and British films:

<b>Film</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Translation</b>
<i>The Full Monty</i>	China	<i>Six Naked Pigs</i>
<i>Get Smart</i>	Taiwan	<i>Is the Spy Capable or Not?</i>
<i>American Pie</i>	Hong Kong	<i>American Virgin Man</i>
<i>Grease</i>	Argentina	<i>Vaseline</i>
<i>As Good As It Gets</i>	China	<i>Mr. Cat Poop</i>



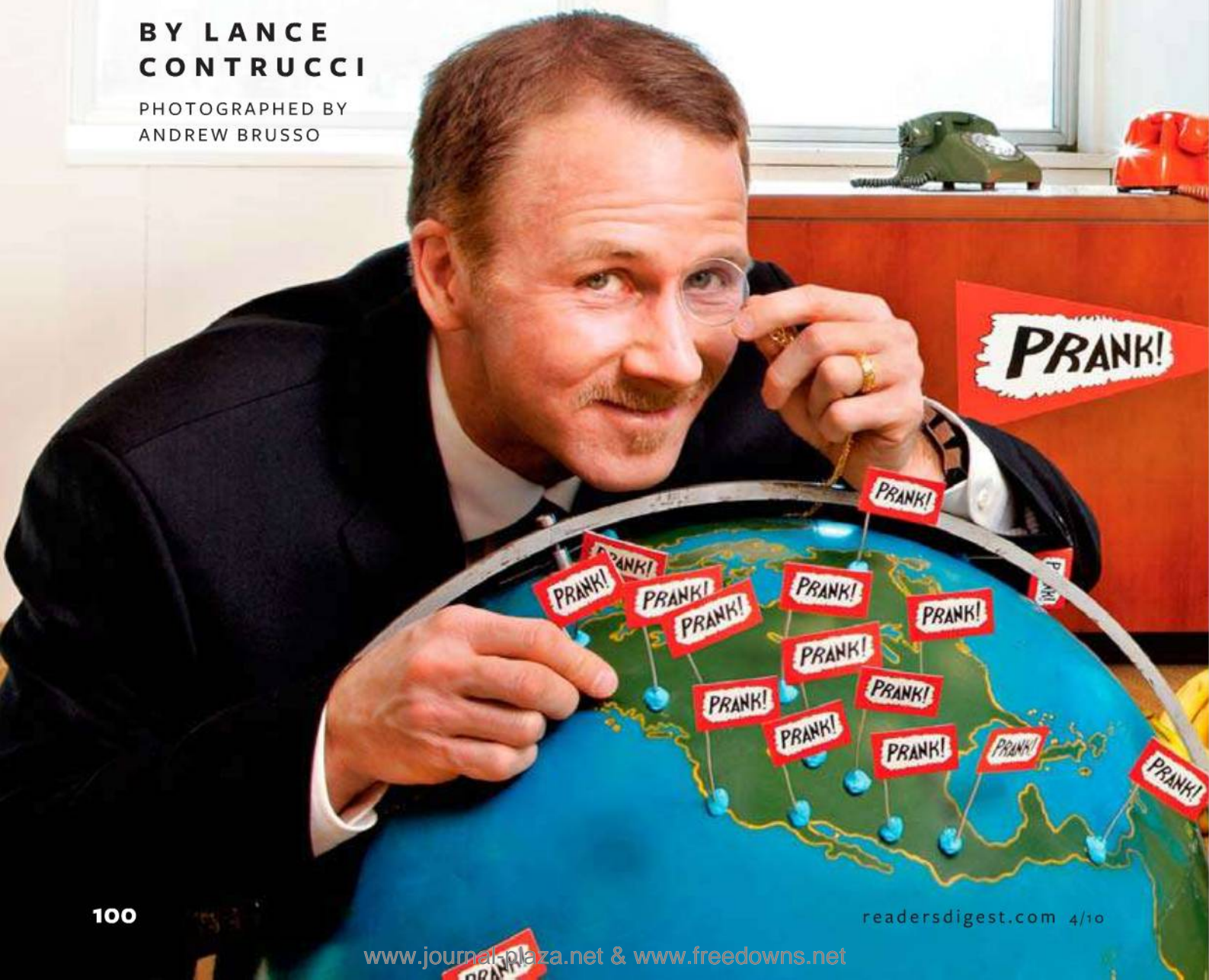
**Insane  
Hoaxes!  
Outrageous  
Stunts!!**

# Meet the Madmen of **Pranks Inc.**

**Walk into Jerry Stepani's office** and you'll see vestiges of the practical jokes of yore. There's a whoopee cushion on the couch, a dollar tied to a string on the floor, even fake vomit on his desk. But Stepani, president of Pranks Inc., a subsidiary of Bloomberg, isn't looking back. The golden age of pranks is here. "There are big bucks in yucks," he says as he jolts me with a joy buzzer.

**BY LANCE  
CONTRUCCI**

PHOTOGRAPHED BY  
ANDREW BRUSSO







Never turn your  
back on (from  
left) John  
Hargrave, Tom  
Mabe, Streeter  
Seidell, and  
Charlie Todd.



Stepani and company are busy establishing the U.S. Prank Exchange, which lets investors buy and sell shares in hoaxes. According to an article in the *Wall Street Journal*, “blue-chip pranks, like those involving whoopee cushions, are expected to have moderate growth, whereas tech and online pranks are expected to be highly volatile but ...”

Okay, we’re lying. There is no Pranks Inc., no Prank Exchange, no *Wall Street Journal* article, not even a Jerry Stepani as far as we know. Too bad—we could make a mint, what with all the pranks being perpetrated on an unsuspecting public. Just last year, the world was introduced to bottled organic air (courtesy of Whole Foods Market), animal gyms (Virgin), and a new breed of sheep sporting tartan-patterned wool (the *London Daily Mail*), to name but a few. Bears may have decimated the stock and housing markets, but there’s still a lot of bull in the bull business. Here, four of the best pranksters tell us what makes them trick.

## Gag Reflex

Forty-two-year-old comedian Tom Mabe was a prank prodigy, having executed his first when he was only eight. He had just made a snowman on the front lawn of his Louisville, Kentucky, home when he watched helplessly as teenagers in a car ran over it. He made another, with the same result. The third snowman he built was on a fire hydrant. “There I was with their wrecked car and water gushing out everywhere, and I acted like, Gee, I didn’t think anyone would hit it with his car,” he says. “I had to do something. I was just a little guy. So I came up with this kind of cowardly way of getting revenge.”

Mabe grew up to be six feet four inches tall, but he never lost the little-guy attitude. His specialty is torturing telemarketers. He once checked into a Washington, D.C., hotel that was hosting a telemarketing convention, and spent the night making phony phone calls, trying to sell the sellers insomnia medicine at three o’clock in the morning. The front desk manager

(WELLES) BETTMAN CORBIS; (HORSE) COURTESY WWW.ABELRAISESCAIN.COM

## A Long History of Pranking

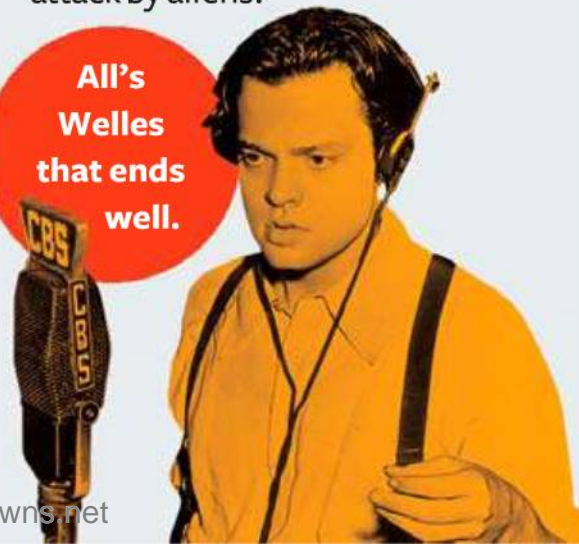
**1400s** Thomas Betson, the prankster-monk, pulls off one of the earliest documented practical jokes when he hides a beetle inside a hollowed-out apple and fools his fellow monks into believing that the mysteriously rocking apple is possessed.

**1835** The Great Moon Hoax is the first big media trick. The *New York Sun* prints an article claiming that astronomers have discovered life on the moon. More articles appear over the next few weeks, and the country is gripped by moon fever.

**1938** Orson Welles’s radio broadcast of *War of the*

*Worlds* convinces millions of listeners that earth is under attack by aliens.

All’s  
Welles  
that ends  
well.





## The Phone Prank

A telemarketer's call to Tom Mabe goes wildly off script.

Hello?

**Yes, can I speak with Tom Mabe?**

Who's calling?

**This is Mike \_\_\_\_\_. You've been selected to receive a free digital satellite system. With this—**

Let me ask you something. Were you a friend of Mr. Mabe?

**No, I'm just calling to offer—**

Hold that thought. [Speaking to someone else.] Get pictures of the body, and dust for prints. [Back to caller] Mike, you there? Let me bring you up to speed. You've called a murder scene. Mr. Mabe is no longer with us. I'm Officer Clark. I'm conducting a homicide investigation. What was the nature of your business with Mr. Mabe?

**I... I had no business with him. I'm sorry to have bothered you—**

I want to ask you to stay on the phone. This

call has already been traced, and we may need you to come in for questioning.

**No, you don't understand. I'm just—**

No, you don't understand—unless you want to be charged with obstruction of justice, it is imperative that you keep your \*\*\* on the phone.

**How about you just talk with my supervisor—**

We'll get to your supervisor. First, give me your whereabouts.

**Forty West \_\_, Littleton, Colorado.**

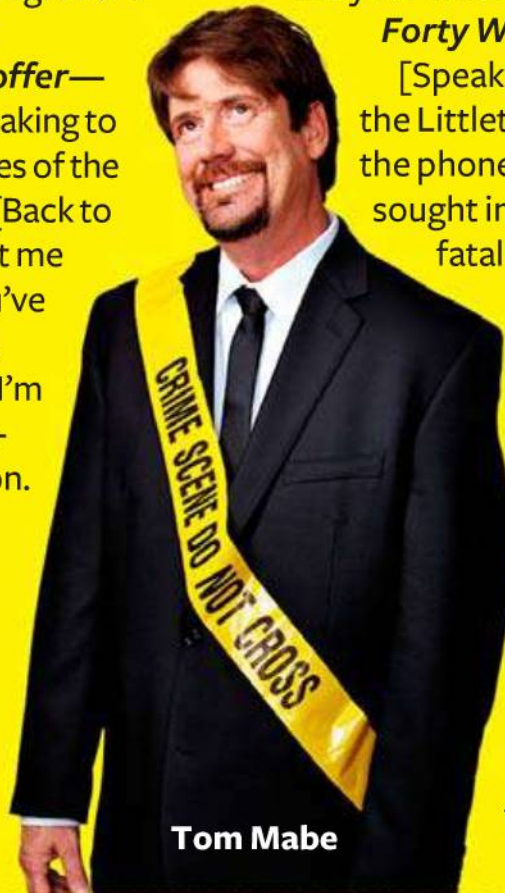
[Speaking to someone else.] Get the Littleton Police Department on the phone. Tell them that he's being sought in connection with a fatal shooting.

**You're calling the Littleton Police? I'm hundreds of miles away! I don't even know the guy.**

It's just a formality. Now, where were you last night between the hours of eight and ten?

**I'm not feeling comfortable about any of this.**

For more pranks, go to [tommabe.com](http://tommabe.com)



Tom Mabe

Many flee their homes, pray in houses of worship, and, eventually, curse Welles's name.

**1957** A BBC News documentary about the Swiss Spaghetti Harvest depicts farmers pulling strands of spaghetti from trees. The network is deluged with callers asking where they

can buy a spaghetti tree.

**1959** Prankster extraordinaire Alan Abel dreams up a campaign calling for animals to wear clothing, and the Society for Indecency to Naked Animals is born. Spokesperson G. Clifford Prout appears on *Today*



to promote the group's catchy slogan: "A nude horse is a rude horse." Eventually, 50,000 concerned citizens



finally begged him to stop because one of the guests was so outraged. Mabe promised to fix the situation. He phoned the guest and identified himself as the manager. "Sir, I'm sorry about your losing sleep," he said. "I believe we can make it up to you."

"Thank God," the man said.

"Here it is ... *Rock-a-bye, baby, in the treetop ...*"

**Why do you pull pranks?** "Revenge and fun. If some salesman is going to call my house, it's game on."

**Best gag you've pulled off:** "One time there were a couple of homeless guys in front of a McDonald's. I called the restaurant impersonating a policeman and pretended that the men were actually undercover cops. I persuaded the manager to bring them burgers and coffee."

**Best gag someone else pulled off:** "My buddy Jim Clark took his family to the zoo, and upon exiting, he and his family ran past the people entering screaming, 'Run, run! It's right behind us!' People were taking cover, jumping up on picnic tables!"

**Any pranks you regret pulling?** "I once saw a dead deer by the side of the road. I ran back to my house, put on a Santa suit, and then I lay down beside the deer—just in time for a school bus to drive by. Freaked the kids right out."

**Pearls of wisdom:** "If you're a revenge prankster like me, remember: Not everyone is evil, not even telemarketers. Every year around Christmas, when one of them calls, I'll always say something like, 'Hmmm, that transmission insurance policy sounds like something I could really use, but it's kind of expensive, and it is Christmas. Hmmm ... Do you think—do you think that if I put my kid on the phone, you could pretend to be Santa Claus and tell him you're not coming this year?' So far, no one has taken me up on this. Score one for humanity."

## Sir Pranksalot

Sir John Hargrave got into the pranks business honestly: He was born on April 1. With that head start, he

sign its petition, and even Walter Cronkite gets hoodwinked—until it's discovered that Prout is actually comedian Buck Henry.

**1962** Dick Tuck, the grandfather of political high jinks, arranges for an adoring crowd, holding signs in Chinese,

to greet gubernatorial candidate Richard Nixon in Los Angeles's Chinatown.

Halfway through his speech, Nixon is informed that

the signs read "What about the huge loan"—a reference to a controversial loan Howard Hughes had made to Nixon's brother.

**1962** The broadcasting technician for Sweden's lone television station appears on the news to announce that, thanks to a new technology, viewers





founded one of the premier prankster sites on the Web, zug.com, which stands for “zug is utterly great.” The 41-year-old embarked on world hoax domination some years ago when, posing as a ten-year-old, he wrote to every U.S. senator asking them to send him a joke as part of a homework assignment. Many senators responded, including Maryland’s Barbara Mikulski, who contributed this: “Why didn’t the skeleton cross the road? Because he didn’t have any guts!”

By the way, don’t let Hargrave’s lofty title fool you. He’s from Boston. He added “sir” to his legal name when Buckingham Palace refused to knight him for “honourable pranking.”

**Why do you pull pranks?** “It’s a sport for thrill seekers. The moment before you pull off something, it’s pure adrenaline.”



**Sir John Hargrave**

**Best gag you’ve pulled off:** “I once filled out my tax forms using Roman numerals. The IRS was not amused.”

**Best gag someone else pulled off:** “Mat Benote, a graffiti artist, hung one of his paintings at the Brooklyn Museum in New York. It took two days before they realized it didn’t belong.”

**Any pranks you regret pulling?** “No, but I do regret having been punked myself. Before my book *Mischief Maker’s Manual* was published, I solicited celebrity blurbs on my website. I got an e-mail from a kid who said Eric Idle of Monty Python was his uncle. So the next thing I know, I was e-mailing with Eric Idle, and having conversations with his assistant. A year later, I saw this article, ‘How I Pranked John Hargrave.’ It was the kid—he played all the parts in the prank: Eric Idle, the assistant, everyone.”

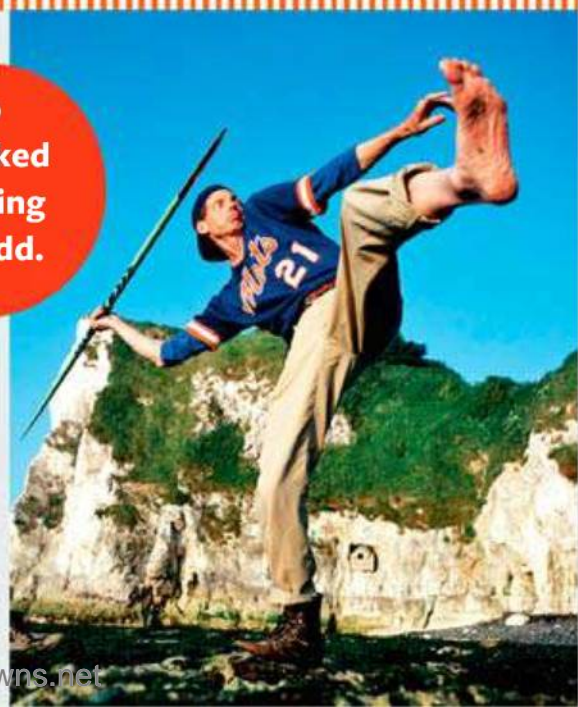
**A gag anyone can pull**

can convert the existing black-and-white broadcasts into color. All they have to do is pull a nylon stocking over their TV screen. Thousands try it.

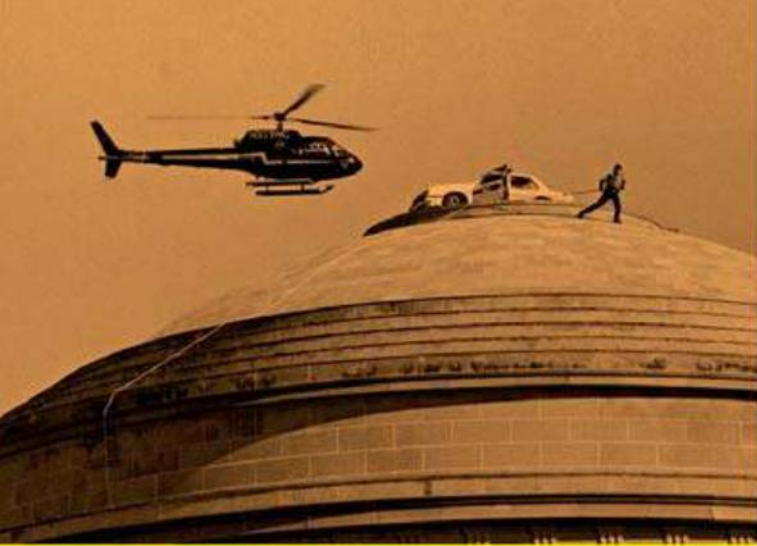
**1985** *Sports Illustrated* runs a story about Sidd Finch, a Mets rookie pitcher with odd training methods who can throw a baseball

168 mph with pinpoint accuracy, even though he’s never played the game before. Instead, he mastered the “art of the pitch” in the mountains of Tibet. In reality, Finch exists only in the mind of the author George Plimpton.

**No one liked catching for Sidd.**







## Revenge of the Nerds

A self-described nerd's paradise, MIT has a long tradition of hoaxes. The students' favorite target is the school's Great Dome, home to the engineering library. Over the years, the dome has been dressed up like R2D2, accessorized with a solar-powered subway car that moved along a track, and crowned with a beanie. But in 1994, the ante was upped when students awoke to find a police car, with blinking lights, parked 150 feet high. Closer investigation revealed a parking ticket tucked under the windshield wipers and a dummy dressed as a campus policeman, a box of doughnuts at his side.

**off:** "Stick someone's toothbrush in a Dixie cup of water, and put it in the freezer overnight. Put it back in its normal place in the morning."

**Pearls of wisdom:** "Pranks and practical jokes should never be confused. A practical joke is something you pull on coworkers, like the guys in Utah who transformed their vacationing colleague's cubicle into a small cottage, complete with a working doorbell, mailbox, and ceiling fan. A prank goes after the *man*. For example, there's a video where Tom Cruise is being interviewed. The interviewer is holding a trick microphone and squirts water in Cruise's face. Cruise starts chewing him out, and we crack up because, well, Tom Cruise is the *man*."

## Getting Schooled

Tension fills the halls of collegehumor.com. Two of the humor site's writers are at war, a prank war to be precise. The small-scale gags that Streeter Seidell and Amir Blumenfeld first pulled on each other have ballooned into elaborate productions.

(FRANKLIN) DONALD NAUSBAUM/GETTY IMAGES; (TACO BELL) DAVID BLUMENFELD/GETTY IMAGES; (DOME) COURTESY MIT MUSEUM

Give me liberty or give me ... tacos?

1996 Taco Bell announces it

has bought the Liberty Bell and is renaming it the Taco Liberty Bell. Outraged citizens complain to the Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia, where the bell is housed.

1997 The chemical compound DHMO

is "colorless, odorless, and kills thousands of people every year" through "accidental inhalation," reads a widely circulated e-mail, calling for a ban. Furthermore, it's now "a major component of acid rain" and is "found in almost every stream, lake, and reservoir in America." One California town becomes





In one, Blumenfeld arranged for Seidell and his girlfriend to go to a Yankees game. Unbeknownst to Seidell, Blumenfeld also arranged for the scoreboard to display a bogus wedding proposal. A hidden camera recorded the couple's reaction. It's painful to watch. Seidell's girlfriend is understandably startled. Seidell is even more startled when she accepts. "I did not put that up!" he exclaims. "I don't want to marry you." She slaps him and leaves. For good.

Seidell, 27, says his friendly war with Amir has only escalated since then.

**Why do you pull pranks?** "It began as a fun way to kill boredom. Now I'm just trying to top the one before."

**Best gag you've pulled off:** "I arranged for Amir to be selected to take a halftime half-



**Streeter Seidell**

court shot for a half-million dollars at a college basketball game. While Amir was led to a secluded office 'to sign forms,' I let the crowd in on the gag and requested their help. When Amir came back, we blindfolded him, and he took his shot ... missing by at least 20 feet. But on cue, the crowd went crazy, as if he sank the shot. Amir did a victory lap around the court, yelling and punching the air. It lasted right up to the presentation of the fake check ... which was presented by me. That's when he realized he'd been had."

**Best gag someone else pulled off:** "The lottery ticket prank.

Videotape a lottery drawing. The next day, buy a ticket, asking for the same numbers that won the day before. Give that ticket to a friend and watch the 'live' drawing together. When he 'wins,' he will leap for joy like Amir did ... until you turn off the tape."

so alarmed that residents debate banning foam cups, which are shown to contain DHMO. They nix the idea upon learning that DHMO is actually water.

**1998** Burger King introduces a new item to its menu: the Left-Handed Whopper, specially designed for southpaws.

According to the company, the new Whopper includes the same ingredients as the original version, but all the condiments are rotated 180 degrees.

**2004** On the 20th anniversary of the Bhopal, India, chemical plant disaster that killed thousands,



The new "Lefty"

Jude Finisterra, a representative from Dow, tells a BBC audience that the company finally accepts full responsibility



**Agag anyone can pull off:** “Bet someone that you can make it so they cannot lift a glass of beer off the table with their thumbs. When they’ve agreed to the bet, have them place their thumbs on the table next to each other. Now balance the full glass of beer on their thumbs. Unless they want to take a beer bath, they’re stuck.”

**Pearls of wisdom:** “You need a bit of meanness to be funny, but too much and you make people uncomfortable.” Like what Amir did to your ex-girlfriend? “Yeah.”

## Prank You Very Much

On a freezing January morning, New York City commuters boarded subways from various lines and braced themselves for the day. They could not have expected this: Fellow passengers—businesspeople and college kids alike—removed their pants



Charlie Todd

and skirts and nonchalantly rode to their destination, Union Square, in their underwear. Riders gawked, leered, and laughed their heads off. The ninth annual No Pants Subway Ride was another successful gag perpetrated by Charlie Todd and his New York Prank Collective, Improv Everywhere.

Todd has a curiously upbeat mission for a guy trying to pull a fast one on the populace: “Cause scenes of chaos and joy in public places.” They stage such scenes about ten times a year. There was the impromptu wedding reception for an unsuspecting couple getting married at City Hall, and Frozen Grand Central, in which 200 “agents” (the preferred term for participants) milled about Grand Central

for the tragedy and plans to compensate victims to the tune of \$12 billion. Only after Dow’s stock plummets does the BBC or anyone else realize that Finisterra is not connected with Dow, but with the Yes Men, a political prankster group.

**2004** At the annual Yale-Harvard football game,

Yale students, dressed as the Harvard pep squad, distribute placards to their rival’s fans. On cue, the Harvard faithful lift them up and unwittingly spell “We Suck.”

**2007:** Google introduces TiSP

(Toilet Internet Service Provider), which supplies free broadband via the sewer system. A user flushes one end of a





Terminal's Main Concourse before unexpectedly freezing in place during rush hour.

Todd, 31, grew up in Columbia, South Carolina, and moved to New York City in 2001. It was there, in an East Village bar, that something changed his life for good—he pretended to be the alternative rock singer Ben Folds. “People were posing for photographs with me, the bartender gave me free drinks, a girl gave me her number,” he says. “But what I liked about it was that it was a positive experience for everybody, even though they were being fooled. When it was over, I didn’t smirk, Ha-ha, you’ve been pranked. I just thanked everyone and left. It gave them something they could tell their friends. Even if they Googled Ben Folds and found out he’s, like, ten years older than me, they’d still have a wonderful story: ‘This guy, for some reason, pretended to be Ben Folds!’”

**Why do you pull pranks?** “I get excited about pulling pranks that make people smile.”

**Best gag you’ve pulled off:** “The fake U2 concert in 2005. We assembled a group of musicians—with me dressed as Bono—and played a rooftop concert in New York. It was a crazy 20 minutes for the crowd watching ... especially when the police arrested us for unreasonable noise.”

**Best gag someone else pulled off:** “Rob Cockerham posted a fake T.G.I. Friday’s menu page on his website cockeyed.com and encouraged people to insert it inside a real T.G.I. Friday menu. It parodied the Atkins Diet and had really disgusting stuff, like Bacon Churner with Faux-tatoes: two whole sticks of fresh Dutch dairy butter on a bed of crisp bacon.”

**A gag anyone can pull off:** “Here’s one my college roommates pulled on me: They covered every object and surface in my bedroom with tin foil. All the windows and lightbulbs were blacked out. I needed a flashlight to even figure out what was going on.”

**Pearls of wisdom:** “Anyone can pull pranks. Look at Frozen Grand Central. All you have to do is freeze in place.”

fiber-optic cable down his toilet; an hour later, it’s recovered and connected to the Internet by a team of Plumbing Hardware Dispatchers. Chat rooms are filled with interested parties asking, “Can this be true?”

**2008** Days before the U.S. presidential election, a Canadian disc jockey is able

to reach vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin by phone and convince her that he is French president Nicolas Sarkozy. Palin fails to pick up on any of the hints that the conversation is a joke, even when he says, with an exaggerated, Pepé Le Pew-style accent, “From my ’ouse,

I can see Belgium.”

Ya got me, you betcha!





The earthquake that devastated Haiti failed to crush its people's spirit. Six remarkable stories from inside the global relief effort.

# heroes & hope



Dunic (lower left) and Kiki as he bursts forth from the rubble of an apartment building.

## The Rescuers

**The afternoon had not gone well.** Chris Dunic and the men of a FEMA search and rescue team from New York had met with a series of frustrations and futile leads as they combed through collapsed structures around Port-au-Prince for survivors. They had found no one. Eight days after the January 12 earthquake in Haiti, Dunic, a Green Beret and a veteran of 9/11, knew that time was running out for any survivors still clinging to life under the ruins.

Then a report came in: A woman rummaging through the remains of her apartment building had heard faint cries under the rubble.

Dunic and his teammates rushed to the site. A FEMA crew from Virginia was already at the scene. The two res-







days, the Danish national lived underneath a mountain of twisted debris. It was so dark, it didn't matter if his eyes were open or closed. He used the light from his mobile phone to see around him. "I looked for anything I could use," he said. He found, among other items, a jar of instant coffee. "I had no food or water, only the coffee to suck on if I needed it."

Kristensen would not accept that he'd never see his loved ones again. As the days passed, though, he "began to think about places in the world I would have liked to see. I started to wonder how long I could survive. Would I go into a coma? What is there after this life?"

At about 6:30 on the morning of January 17, an oil leak silenced the building's generators, and Kristensen was able to hear muffled voices above where he was buried. "I thought, No, I'm too tired to bang and shout. But then I realized, You have to take every chance. This could be the one." So he called out. Six hours later, Kristensen saw his rescuers' faces. "It was so amazing. It was like I had received a second birthday," he recalls. Dehydrated and sore but with only a bruise and a scratch, Kristensen took three days to recover and then was back working 14-hour days coordinating crucial deliveries of food, water, and other supplies. The UN lost more than 90 people in Haiti. But Kristensen says that the outpouring of love helps heal the pain: "The genuine happiness of people toward me here has been wonderful. You feel part of a larger family."

*UN News Centre (January 25, 2010)*

PHOTOGRAPHED BY Q. SAKAMAKI/REDUX

## The Scout

**Hundreds of women**, many hurt, all hungry, streamed down a dirt road toward a truck in a barren field outside Léogâne. The city of 134,000, nearly 20 miles from the epicenter of the earthquake, had been flattened. By some estimates, as many as 3,300 of the townspeople had perished.

Now, eight days on, word had gone

**Scout Joanie Estin (center) lost her dad and her house and still volunteered.**





out that the relief organization CARE was distributing hygiene supplies. Women, seeking a bit of soap to wash their children, stood waiting in the hot sun until a group of girl Scouts guided them into a line under the shade of a few sparse trees. One of the Scout leaders, Joanie Estin, 22, gently led the elderly, wounded, and pregnant women to the front of the line. She knew their anguish. She also was a woman of Léogâne.

When the temblor struck, Estin had

been in the street outside her house talking to neighbors in the evening air. “My mother and I stood in the middle of the road for 15 minutes, until the earth calmed down,” she recalled. All around them were shattered shops, crushed cars, fallen telephone wires, and smoking buildings. Their house, too, was rubble. Her father, who had been inside, was dead.

All Estin could salvage from the ruins of her home was a dress or two





and her Ste. Rose de Lima Scouts of Léogâne uniform. There was no time for mourning the death of her father and the destruction of her home. Estin put on her uniform and, with 94 other local Scouts and Girl Guides, offered her services to humanitarian groups ministering to those who had survived.

Now Estin and other Scouts moved among the women, comforting them as they waited anxiously in line, clutching vouchers for precious health kits. Then, together with relief workers

and boy Scouts, Estin and her team formed an “aid bucket brigade.” Into the hands of each woman, they placed a five-gallon bucket containing soap, toothpaste, towels, sanitary napkins, packets of water-purifying powder, and other basic health necessities.

“These young people are the future of Haiti,” affirms Sophie Perez, CARE Haiti director. “They give me hope.”

To Estin, this work is a family affair. “We are all brothers and sisters,” she says.

Gary Sledge

## The Guardian

*After the earthquake destroyed the BRESMA orphanage in Port-au-Prince, Jamie McMurtrie, 30, and Alison McMurtrie, 21, sisters from a Pittsburgh suburb who ran the orphanage, camped out with the children in the facility’s driveway for nearly a week. The McMurtries used a borrowed cell phone to send Twitter and Facebook messages to family and friends in the United States, pleading for help. Their plight reached the office of Pennsylvania governor Ed Rendell, who flew with about 20 other Americans to rescue the children on January 18. Marjorie Rendell, a federal judge and the governor’s wife, was aboard the plane and recounts her experience.*

**As soon as we landed** in Port-au-Prince, we texted Jamie and Ali: “We’re on the ground. Help is on the way.”

While the medical supplies we’d brought were being unloaded, we zoomed through the streets to the U.S. embassy. There we found them: two

women waiting in a bus with 54 children, ages 10 months to 9 years, and a laundry basket full of paperwork.

We were concerned that only 47 children were cleared for foreign adoption—37 in America, five in Canada, and five in other countries. The other seven had not been matched with families, and we knew we might not be able to get them out. But Jamie was adamant: If all of them can’t leave, none of them will.

At the airport, we were changing diapers and passing out lollipops. Nobody was crying; everybody was in good spirits. Suddenly, I heard, “Come on—we’re getting them on the plane.” I knew that not all the children’s visas had been processed, so I was incredulous. But someone had talked to White House officials, and they said, “Okay, do it.”

As we loaded the kids, there was a commotion. Jamie and Ali counted only 53 children. Two-year-old Emma was missing. Jamie stayed behind to find her while everyone else flew home.





**Judge Rendell (front) and other Americans carry orphans off the plane in Pittsburgh.**

The scene on the plane was incredible. Imagine all these kids in a C-17 military cargo plane. Ed gave out the crayons and stuffed animals he'd bought the night before we left. We later said it was the best \$450 we'd ever spent.

When we got to Florida, we had no idea what would happen. Customs officials came aboard. Ed was talking to them very seriously and then told us we're getting off. It was cold, and the kids were wearing sandals and sundresses. People started bringing us blankets, and I realized: They're here to help us, not arrest us.

We spent the night in the airport and were able to get humanitarian visas for the undocumented children. The president of the airport was rocking the kids to sleep. One guy who had six grandchildren was holding kids in his arms.

We flew to Pittsburgh the next day. Jamie had located Emma at the embassy—safe, thank God—and arrived with her. Most of the children were united with their adoptive families; some went to a children's home, where they'll stay until families can be found for them.

This trip changed my life and reinforced my belief in America. In this country, we take risks and we do the right thing, and so many people pulled together to make this happen.

Of course, the most amazing part was the children themselves—smiling, sitting on our laps, falling asleep in our arms. On the way to the airport in Port-au-Prince, they were singing in the bus. When all is said and done, they're kids—sweet, wonderful kids who have their whole lives ahead of them.

*As told to Andrea Barbalich*





**Daniel Thelusmar (left) flew from his home in Tampa, Florida, to search for his brother Fenel in Port-au-Prince.**

## The Brother

Three days after the earthquake in Haiti, Daniel Thelusmar flew out of Tampa, Florida, to the Dominican Republic. He left behind his job at a health insurance company, his ministry, and his wife and three young children, promising to call them—if he could. He was on a mission to find his brother.

Fluent in six languages and born in Haiti, Thelusmar, 31, was immediately tapped to assist first responders once

he reached Port-au-Prince, translating for hospital staff and aiding relief workers to navigate the city. “All the people trapped in buildings,” he said. “I had to help.” On the third day, he hired a driver to take him to the neighborhood where he’d grown up to track down his older brother, Fenel.

Their route took Thelusmar past the place where he had been kidnapped by a gang just four years earlier. While he was on a church mission to Port-au-Prince in late 2005 to deliver food and





clothing to an orphanage, his car was fired on, and he was captured. One companion's arm was severed, and two other hostages were shot in the head. He was released only after a \$10,000 ransom was paid by friends in Florida. "Some things are too traumatic to get past," Thelusmar says. Still, he has kept returning to Haiti on relief work.

The SUV passed a slum of tin lean-tos where his mother had once sold rice and beans. As they drove by the marketplace, Thelusmar remembered a people's revolt that had taken place there

February 7, 1986, the day President Jean-Claude Duvalier fled to France. He and Fenel had watched in horror as an angry mob of Duvalier supporters hacked a salesman to pieces with machetes, then threatened 13-year-old Fenel. "My brother has not been right since," said Thelusmar.

A little farther on, the SUV stopped outside the family church, for, before he left Florida, Thelusmar had promised his mother to see about her friends. As people ran to him, he mentally checked off six survivors from his mother's list. Eight churches have collapsed, he was told, and five children in the orphanage were killed. Thelusmar handed out

juice, milk, water, and bread, saving some for his brother and his family, and vowed to come back.

Next, the SUV turned into the Pavée district, close to where he hoped to find Fenel. All he could see was ruins. On a street of lean-tos, Thelusmar jumped out of the car and ran toward one house, then another. All empty.

Finally, he swung open a door, and there was Fenel's wife. She whooped with joy and wrapped him in her arms. "Where is my brother?" he said.

A thin man stepped into the light. "You are safe!" shouted Thelusmar.

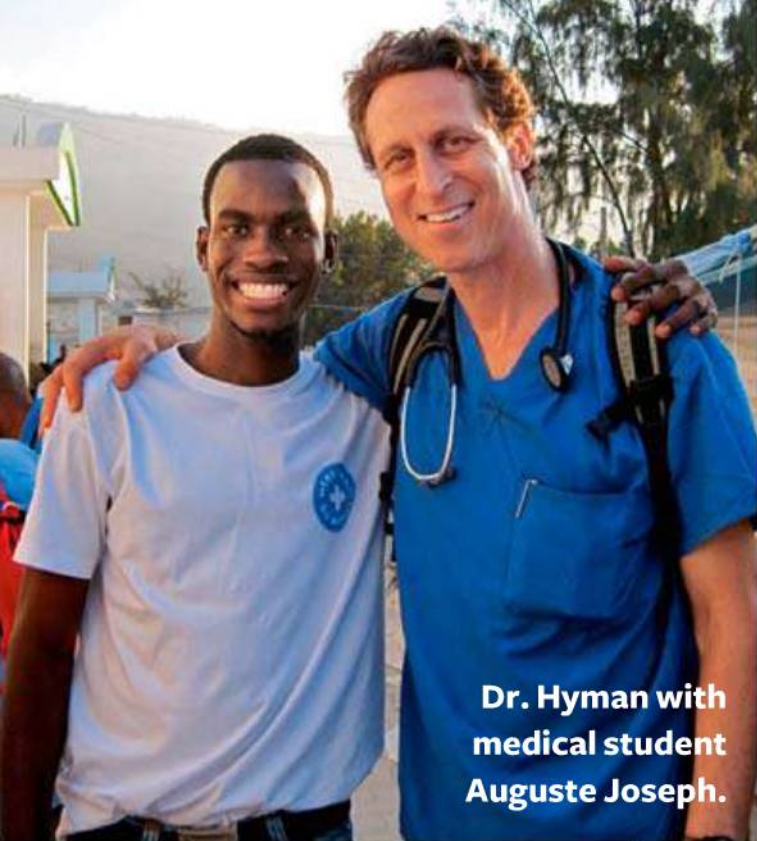
**"Haitian Americans, so blessed to be in the U.S., must do what we can for our beloved Haiti."**

The brothers hugged each other for a long time. "I had no way to call," Fenel said, adding, "We have a new baby!" He pushed his two-month-old daughter into his brother's arms. "There is still life," Thelusmar said.

Now Thelusmar has another mission: to save Haiti's children. He has set up base in the Dominican Republic, working without pay with the Haitian consulate to establish a service to identify children separated from their families. "We want to be able to track the children so we know that they'll be helped," he says. "We Haitian Americans—so blessed to be in the U.S.—must do what we can to help our beloved Haiti."

*Meg Laughlin,  
St. Petersburg Times, January 24, 2010*





**Dr. Hyman with  
medical student  
Auguste Joseph.**

## The Doctor

**Physician Mark Hyman** was on a plane to Haiti with his wife, an orthopedic surgeon, three days after the earthquake hit. Dr. Hyman immediately started publishing an online diary. “I would come home from the hospital at ten o’clock at night and not be able to sleep. Writing was a way for me to process what had happened,” he says from his home in West Stockbridge, Massachusetts. His blog describes damaged bodies and undefeated spirits. “There’s a Creole expression: ‘I’m still standing,’” he says. “A lot of people said that after the earthquake. And then they started trying to rebuild their lives.”

### *Day 1: January 15, 2010*

At the hospital, we exited our air-conditioned Land Cruiser, then emptied the trucks and sorted the surgical supplies. Using our headlamps, we triaged the patients—attending to the sickest, decid-

ing who would be first in the morning. We hoped for water, electricity, and more supplies to help us save the wounded, but there were none at the hospital yet—perhaps they were still at the airport or circling over it.

Tomorrow we will start our first surgeries—the first amputation with nothing but a hacksaw and a bottle of vodka to sterilize the equipment. But we will do it because it has to be done, and there is no one and nowhere else to do it.

### *Day 4: January 18, 2010*

In three days, we have gone from a nearly deserted to a partially functioning surgical hospital. Our small team of seven has performed 75 operations—the patients lie behind me, exhausted and asleep. There is calm and gratitude pouring from every pair of eyes that look at me as I walk by. As I enter a room of patients, I hear songs of darkness. They and their families sing songs of prayer for strength and courage. The singing fills the darkness. My heart and soul fill with light. How can a people be so full of love and patience and kindness, and be that way in the midst of unimaginable loss and suffering?

*Mark Hyman, MD,*  
huffingtonpost.com (January 15–23, 2010)





## Do More

An estimated one million Haitians are homeless, many in tent cities like the one below that Vanessa Alfronse, 12, lives in. To help Haiti relief efforts, contact:

- > The American Red Cross, [redcross.org](http://redcross.org)
- > Lambi Fund of Haiti, [lambifund.org](http://lambifund.org)
- > CARE, [care.org](http://care.org)

For a more complete list of groups, go to [readersdigest.com/haiti](http://readersdigest.com/haiti).



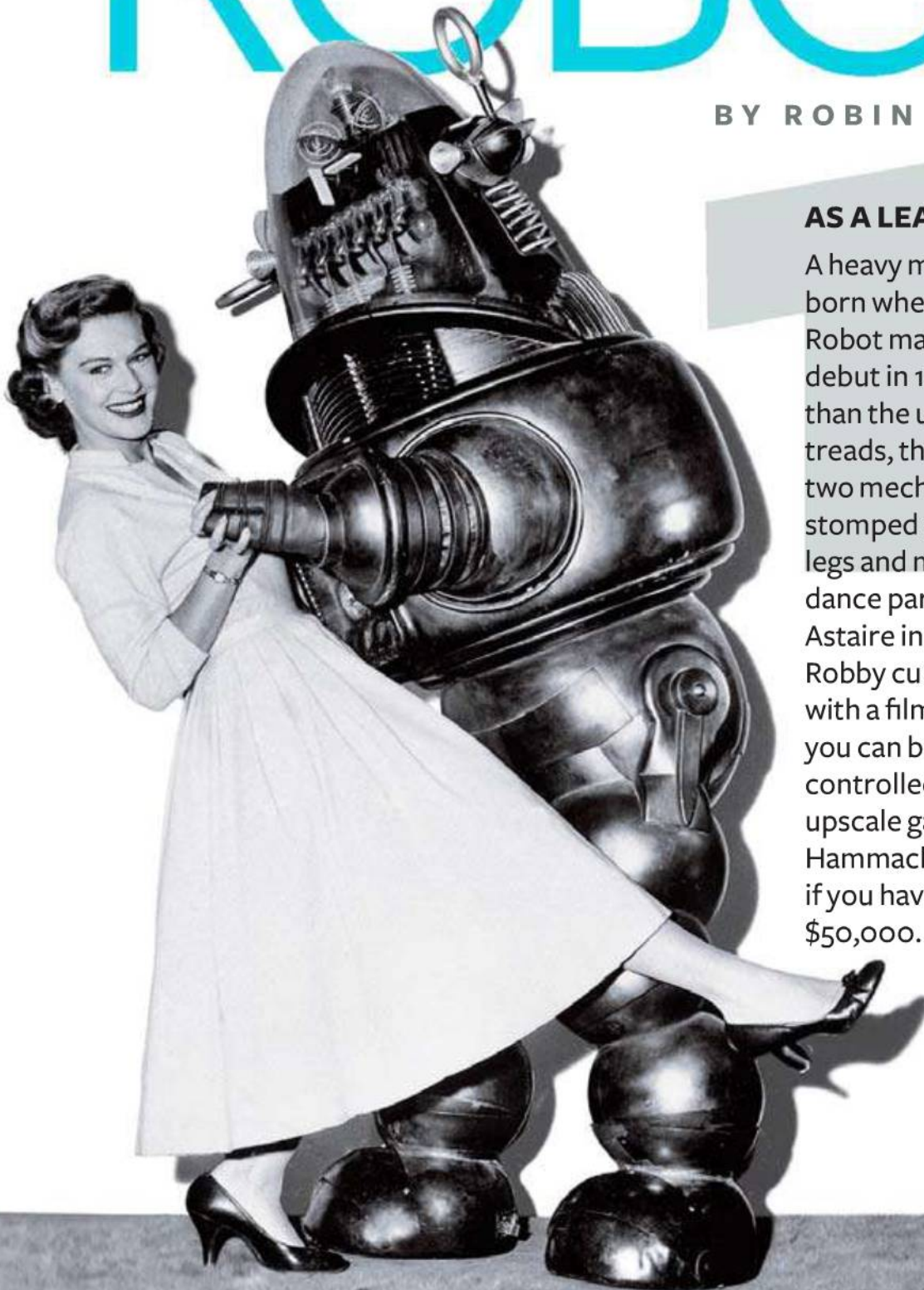


# FOUR WAYS OF LOOKING AT A ROBOT

BY ROBIN SAYERS

## AS A LEADING MAN

A heavy metal star was born when Robby the Robot made his movie debut in 1956. Rather than the usual motorized treads, the seven-foot-two mechanical suit stomped around on two legs and made a decent dance partner—Fred Astaire in hardware. Robby currently resides with a film director, but you can buy a remote-controlled replica at upscale gadget store Hammacher Schlemmer—if you have a spare \$50,000.



(DANCING ROBOT) TOPFOTO/THE IMAGE WORKS; (HUMANOID) YOSHIKAZU TSUNO/AFP/GETTY IMAGES





## AS A RUNWAY MODEL

Developed by Japanese engineers for about \$2 million, the HRP-4C was all the rage during Fall Fashion Week in Tokyo last year. At five feet two, the android boasts the same height and proportions as the average young Japanese woman. This blinking, talking marvel can mimic both human motions and emotions thanks to eight motors in its head and 34 in its body. Now, with new voice synthesis software, the robot takes song requests via iPhone and sings along to an auto-play piano. However, robotics researcher Shuuji Kajita estimates that it will take decades for the she-bot to move gracefully—with or without stilettos.



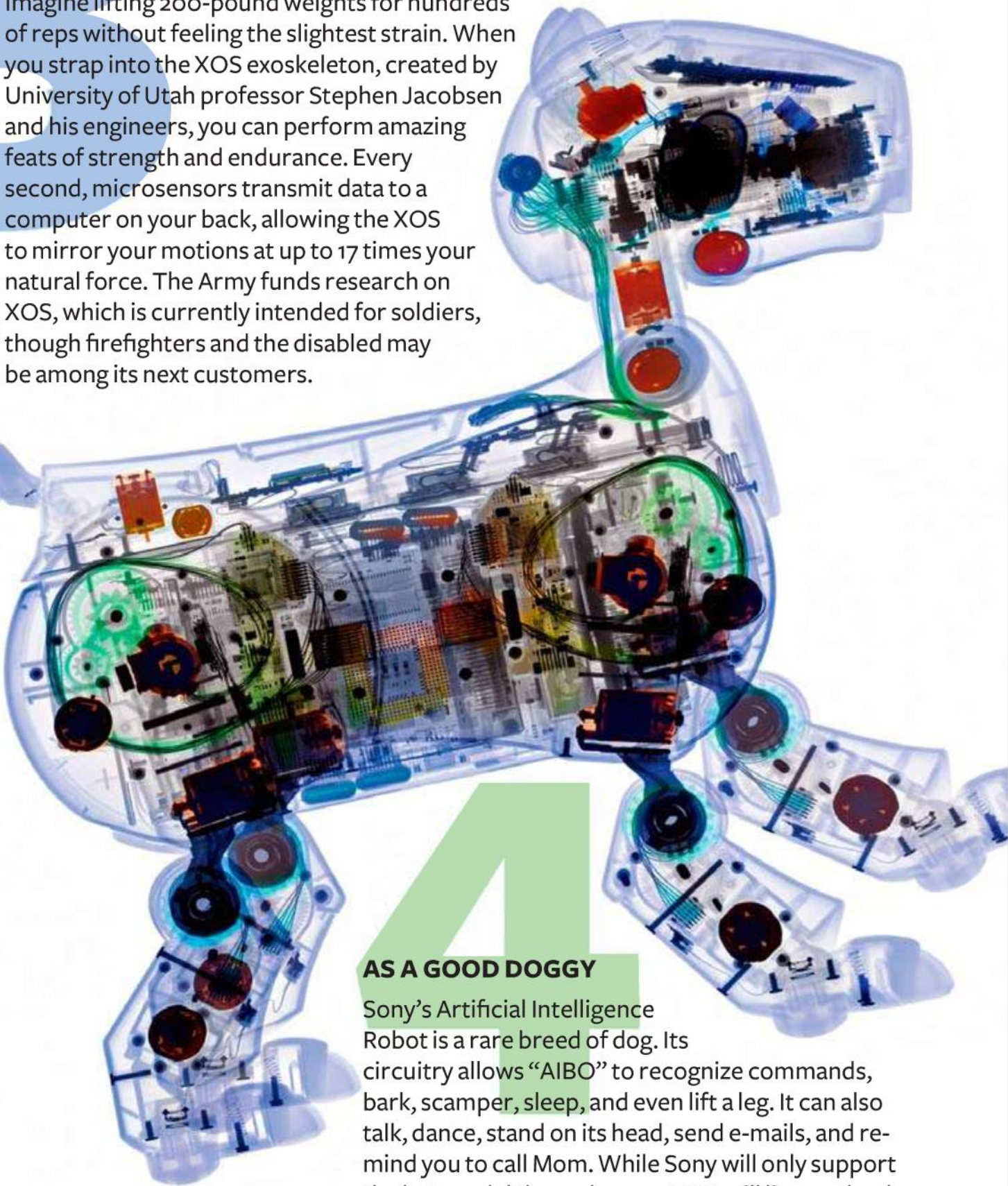




## AS A POWER SUIT

Imagine lifting 200-pound weights for hundreds of reps without feeling the slightest strain. When you strap into the XOS exoskeleton, created by University of Utah professor Stephen Jacobsen and his engineers, you can perform amazing feats of strength and endurance. Every second, microsensors transmit data to a computer on your back, allowing the XOS to mirror your motions at up to 17 times your natural force. The Army funds research on XOS, which is currently intended for soldiers, though firefighters and the disabled may be among its next customers.

(SOLDIER SUIT) COURTESY RAYTHEON; (DOG) GUSTOIMAGES/SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY



## AS A GOOD DOGGY

Sony's Artificial Intelligence Robot is a rare breed of dog. Its circuitry allows "AIBO" to recognize commands, bark, scamper, sleep, and even lift a leg. It can also talk, dance, stand on its head, send e-mails, and remind you to call Mom. While Sony will only support the last model through 2013, AIBO will live on thanks to hackers, eBay, and the Smithsonian and the Museum of Modern Art, both of which have admitted the versatile pup into their permanent collections.



# THE BEST WORST DEADLIEST ROADS

A special report on the nation's highways

**PLUS**

How to survive your drive (and your fellow drivers)



BEST ROADS

**America is spending** more money to build, maintain, and improve the roads, and it's paying off—give or take a few stretches of pavement and a few bridge spans. Rural interstates are shaping up, for instance, but their heavily traveled urban counterparts are getting worse. The percentage of deficient bridges has increased for the first time in 25 years, and as almost any driver will attest, congestion isn't going away. But these trends are more than offset by good news about fatalities—sharply down year over year from 2006 to 2008 (though in 2008, 37,261 Americans died in accidents—more than double the number who died from homicides). To quantify how America's roads and drivers are doing, we factored in the latest data for spending, congestion, road and bridge condition, and safety to see how our states rate. Here's what you, your legislators, and your local highway officials can do to fix things and how you can stay alive while you drive.

RANK	STATE
1	KANSAS
2	WISCONSIN
3	MONTANA
4	NEW MEXICO
5	UTAH
6	NORTH DAKOTA
7	WYOMING
8	NEBRASKA
9	VIRGINIA
10	OREGON
11	ILLINOIS
12	WASHINGTON
13	GEORGIA
14	ARIZONA
15	INDIANA
16	DELAWARE
17	MINNESOTA
18	COLORADO
19	TENNESSEE
20	FLORIDA
21	OHIO
22	MAINE
23	IDAHO
24	NEVADA
25	VERMONT
26	SOUTH DAKOTA
27	MICHIGAN
28	ALABAMA
29	TEXAS
30	ALASKA
31	ARKANSAS
32	IOWA
33	MASSACHUSETTS
34	KENTUCKY
35	SOUTH CAROLINA
36	NORTH CAROLINA
37	NEW HAMPSHIRE
38	MISSISSIPPI
39	CONNECTICUT
40	RHODE ISLAND
41	NEW YORK
42	MARYLAND
43	WEST VIRGINIA
44	MISSOURI
45	NEW JERSEY
46	OKLAHOMA
47	PENNSYLVANIA
48	CALIFORNIA
49	HAWAII
50	LOUISIANA



## How We Did the Rankings

### BEST ROADS

Using the latest data from the Federal Highway Administration, we factored in safety, congestion, and the condition of roads and bridges, ranking each state in each category. The average of the ranks was used to determine the final scores.

### DEADLIEST

This is a simple ranking of fatalities per 100 million miles driven. Although Montana appears at No. 3 on the Best Roads list (good infrastructure, little congestion), it tops the Deadliest list in part because of drivers who drink, drive recklessly, or shun seat belts.

Edward A. Sylvestre of Quantitative Insights in Rochester, New York, supervised the calculations in consultation with David T. Hartgen, PhD, of the Reason Foundation, a public-policy think tank. Fran Lostys of *Reader's Digest* coordinated the project.

 For complete results and a full description of our methodology, go to [readersdigest.com/roadcalculations](http://readersdigest.com/roadcalculations).

# DEADLIEST

OVERALL STATE

- 1 MONTANA
- 2 LOUISIANA
- 3 SOUTH CAROLINA
- 4 WEST VIRGINIA
- 5 ARKANSAS
- 6 MISSISSIPPI
- 7 KENTUCKY
- 8 WYOMING
- 9 ALABAMA
- 10 NEVADA
- 11 OKLAHOMA
- 12 IDAHO
- 13 ARIZONA
- 14 FLORIDA
- 15 TENNESSEE
- 16 TEXAS
- 17 NORTH CAROLINA
- 18 MISSOURI
- 19 NEW MEXICO
- 20 GEORGIA
- 21 PENNSYLVANIA
- 22 DELAWARE
- 23 IOWA
- 24 NORTH DAKOTA
- 25 SOUTH DAKOTA
- 26 KANSAS
- 27 ALASKA
- 28 OREGON
- 29 INDIANA
- 30 COLORADO
- 31 OHIO
- 32 NEBRASKA
- 33 MARYLAND
- 34 NEW HAMPSHIRE
- 35 MAINE
- 36 UTAH
- 37 WISCONSIN
- 38 CALIFORNIA
- 39 HAWAII
- 40 VIRGINIA
- 41 VERMONT
- 42 ILLINOIS
- 43 MICHIGAN
- 44 WASHINGTON
- 45 NEW YORK
- 46 CONNECTICUT
- 47 NEW JERSEY
- 48 RHODE ISLAND
- 49 MINNESOTA
- 50 MASSACHUSETTS

### TOP 10 DEADLIEST FOR DUI

Montana  
South Carolina  
Louisiana  
Wyoming  
West Virginia  
Mississippi  
North Dakota  
Texas  
Alabama  
Arkansas

### TOP 10 DEADLIEST FOR SPEEDING

Alabama  
Mississippi  
South Carolina  
Wyoming  
Alaska  
Montana  
Pennsylvania  
Missouri  
Arizona  
Texas



# THE BEST ROADS

Safe, scenic, sensible **BY MICHELLE CROUCH**

*We asked experts to nominate their favorite stretches of road in some of our top-ranked states:*

► **I-35 through Kansas (and Kansas roads in general)** “It’s well maintained and open and offers an extremely smooth ride. They have rest areas that are easy in, easy out. It has wide-open spaces, and you don’t feel the pressure of constant interaction with traffic. Actually, in Kansas, all the highways are very good. Even the two-lane roads are great: smooth, with shoulders.”

*Walmart driver Gary Leu,  
Shelbina, Missouri*

► **Montana interstates** “They don’t call it Big Sky Country for nothing. You can see for miles. You’ve got trees and mountains and different terrain. You see lakes and a lot of wildlife, like elk and antelope. Plus, they keep their roads pretty decent considering the harsh weather they have out there.” *Trucker Clarence Jenkins,  
Charleston, West Virginia*

► **I-75 in northern Florida** “It’s not especially scenic, but the road conditions are fantastic. It’s three lanes wide

for most of it, with a large median between north- and southbound traffic. It’s well paved and straight. The rest areas are clean and spacious, and state troopers man them, so you feel secure.” *Trucker Frank Silio,  
Miami*

► **I-80 in Utah** “You come down into Salt Lake City, and you’re surrounded by mountains, you see the lights of Salt Lake City in front of you, and off to the west, you see the Great Salt Lake. The only issue is that it’s easy to get distracted by how beautiful it is.”

*Trucker Kevin Johnson,  
Rushville, Illinois*

► **I-95 between Elkton, Maryland, and Baltimore** “Before Elkton, I’m in Delaware dealing with congestion [I-495 and I-295]. So I always breathe a sigh of relief when I get to this area. It’s a really good stretch of road, well designed. Enough time to merge from the on- and off-ramps. And great signage. You know well in advance when your exit is coming up. Also, all the exits are off to the right, and the rest areas are off to the left.”

*Trucker Phil Gould, Edgewater Park, New Jersey*





This 2008 wreck closed Interstate 70 for eight hours in Pennsylvania.



# THE WORST ROADS

Dreaded, dreadful, deadly **BY MICHELLE CROUCH**

*Which states and roads do truck drivers, traffic reporters, and other experts complain about?*

► **Louisiana roads in general** “The local paper published a picture of a guy who, to make a point, set a mattress down inside a pothole and was taking a nap.”

*Ray Romero,*  
New Orleans traffic reporter

► **I-55 in Louisiana** “The second you cross the Mississippi state line into Louisiana heading south, it’s like driving on a washboard. You can close your eyes and know. I had a cup full of soda one day, and the road literally rattled it right out of the drink holder and all over the floor of my truck. God

help you if you think you’re going to play a CD going down there.”

*Trucker Kevin Johnson,* Rushville, Illinois

► **I-12 east of Baton Rouge** “It’s one of our deadliest stretches of highways because it goes from six lanes down to four lanes. They’re widening it now, but just another two exits because they don’t have the dollars to finish. So that will just carry the problem farther down the road.”

*Jennifer Marusak,* communications director for Driving Louisiana Forward, a campaign committed to improving Louisiana’s highway infrastructure

► **I-15 in California (from Barstow to the Nevada state line)** “It’s hilly, and the road has a lot of high and low spots. But the real problem is that



it's always so heavy with traffic, and you've got gamblers heading to Vegas who are thinking, The buffet in Vegas closes at ten o'clock. I gotta get there. If you hit it on a Friday night? Forget about it. You're out in the middle of the desert and you get to the top of one of the hills, and as far as you can see it's just a string of brake lights."

*Trucker Matt Boose, Eudora, Kansas*

► **The Pennsylvania Turnpike, I-78 and I-80 in Pennsylvania**

"Vehicles have gotten wider and bigger since these roads were built, and they're still very narrow. They've also got a lot of hills and curves, and people are always crossing over into the other lane when they go around a curve. Plus, their on-ramps are very short, and there's not enough time for people to get up to highway speed. So you end up with lots of people running into the back of slow-moving vehicles as they're getting off a ramp ... It seems like they've been under construction forever. We like to say they have two seasons in Pennsylvania: winter and construction."

*Trucker Frank Silio, Miami*

► **I-79/I-70 interchange in Pennsylvania** "If you're going north on 79 and you need to go west on 70, the ramp is U-shaped. You've got to slow

down to 25 to get around this crazy U. There is a wall around it that is just beat to pieces where people have banged into it."

*Trucker Clarence Jenkins, Charleston, West Virginia*

► **I-95 over the George Washington Bridge, New Jersey/New York** Truck drivers hate this two-level bridge so much that they will drive 30 or 40 miles out of their way to avoid it.

In addition to some of the worst gridlock in the country, it's got potholes galore. Then there are the drivers. "You can sit there with your signal on all day, and nobody will let you over. So you've got to 'take the lane.' Basically you start easing over until finally someone realizes he's going to get run over unless he lets you in."

*Trucker Kevin Johnson*

► **The Will Rogers Turnpike (Interstate 44), Oklahoma** "I've never driven from Tulsa to the Missouri state line when all four lanes were open the whole way. There is always—always—a mile or two where a lane is closed and you have to merge. I keep wondering, When do we get to pay and use the thing?"

*Jeff Brucculeri, traffic reporter, Tulsa*



For more best and worst roads, go to [readersdigest.com/bestandworstroads](http://readersdigest.com/bestandworstroads).



# THE BAMBBI FACTOR

How did the deer cross the road? In Montana, it has its own bridges and tunnels.

BY JEFF BAILEY

**Up and down** a 56-mile stretch of U.S. Highway 93 in western Montana, amid breathtaking views of Flathead Lake and the mountains, the state is completing a series of 42 bridges and tunnels and installing miles of fencing to help deer and other wildlife safely cross the road. The cost: \$10.5 million. The unusual project, which runs between Missoula and Kalispell, is an investment that could point the way toward saving Americans billions of dollars and hundreds of lives.

In the United States each year, there are a staggering 1.2 million car accidents involving deer—one every 26 seconds. The cost to drivers, insurance companies, and local, state, and federal governments is about \$8 billion. That includes auto-body repair, medical care, cleanup, and the lost earnings of the 200 people killed.

If you drive beyond a city, especially during the fall mating season, it's hard not to encounter deer road-kill. Deer crashes, which vastly outnumber all other accidents involving large animals, have increased in recent years with a surging deer population and rising roadway traffic.

The Montana project is part of a movement to promote safety and perhaps save money in the process. At the center of the effort is an unlikely character, 42-year-old Marcel Huijser (pronounced "how's your"), who once studied hedgehog crossings in his native Netherlands and has a PhD in road ecology. Huijser and a team of researchers affiliated with Montana State University spent years tracking wildlife near U.S. 93. His cost-benefit study, published last year, rebuts the argument that deer

## WHAT WE DO WHILE WE DRIVE

You think texting while driving is bad? Wait until you hear what America's truckers have seen.

BY MICHELLE CROUCH





crashes are inevitable or too expensive to prevent. “I take that as a challenge. Sometimes it costs more to do nothing,” Huijser says.

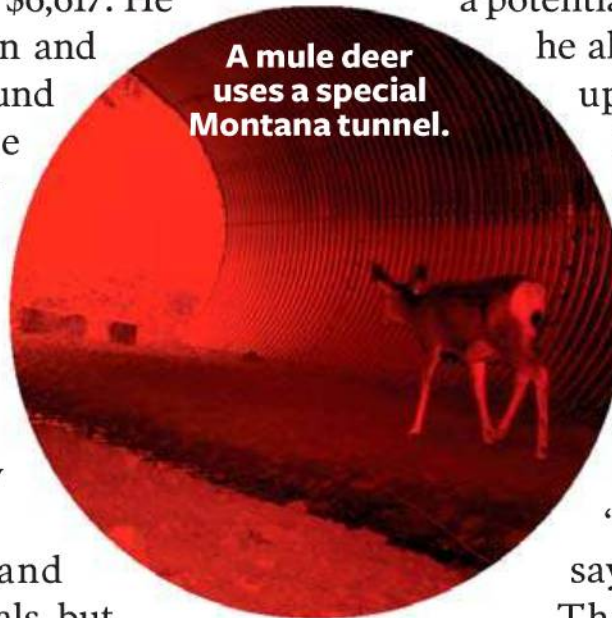
By Huijser’s calculations, the average deer crash costs \$6,617. He wants transportation and wildlife officials around the country to be able to count deer crashes and other animal collisions in a given area and compute whether crossings or other measures would pay for themselves.

Huijser, lanky and bearded, loves animals, but it was his love of environmentalist Bethanie Walder, whom he’d met at a conference, that brought him to America in 2002. They married, and Huijser, who speaks English with only a hint of his northern European roots, also became captivated by Montana’s wide-open spaces. Last April, driving

from his home in Missoula to Helena one evening to be sworn in as a U.S. citizen, he was reminded of his new life’s work. “I saw over 200 deer before it got dark,” Huijser says, each one a potential collision. Eventually

he also saw lights flashing up ahead on the two-lane road. A pickup truck had hit a deer, and it lay quivering on the roadside. Huijser called for a game warden to come out and end the animal’s misery. “It was suffering,” he says simply.

There are thousands of standard deer-warning road signs in the United States, and deer experts consider them mostly useless. Some signs were put up on the basis of a single collision or near miss, not after a systematic tally of deer sightings. And, says Bob Weinholzer of the Minnesota Department of Transpor-



A mule deer uses a special Montana tunnel.

COURTESY CSKT & MDT

► **Wardrobe changes**

“One time on the 405 in L.A., I saw a woman switch from a very nice business outfit into a leotard. At one point, she was just sitting there in her undergarments.”

► **Diaper changes** “A woman had her baby in

the front seat next to her and was changing the baby’s diaper.”

► **Piano playing** “I saw a gentleman one time—in a Suburban—and he had a full-size piano keyboard sitting between the two seats. He was using his right hand to play it while

he was going down the road.”

► **Arts and crafts** “I’ve seen a lot of people sewing or knitting while they’re driving. And, you know, that takes two hands.”

► **Dog fancying** “Last week, I had a lady pass me at 70 miles an hour, and I



## DISTRACTIONS

tation, “people were ignoring them. You’re telling people, If there isn’t a sign, don’t worry.” Minnesota stopped installing them three years ago and doesn’t replace damaged ones.

Deer-crash experts also don’t recommend whistles, which are attached to a car and supposedly emit high-pitched sounds to ward off animals. It’s debatable whether deer can hear them, but University of Georgia researchers deemed them ineffective.

Wisconsin deals with more than 40,000 roadkill deer a year, according to State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance estimates. Pennsylvania and Michigan each deal with more than 100,000. And in West Virginia, with a relatively small human population and lots of deer, the odds of hitting one are the highest in the country—about one in 39 in a given year.

The odds seem worse to Frank Akers, 68, a retired aluminum worker

Here’s a shocking new statistic to consider: 28 percent of traffic accidents occur while the driver is talking on a cell phone or text-messaging. That’s 1.4 million crashes a year because of phones, 200,000 a year because of texts. Handhelds have been banned in 19 states, 23 more are considering a ban, and Congress has four bills before it to make such a ban national. (Another new finding for lawmakers: Hands-free phones are no safer than handhelds.)



who hit two deer during the past year near his Ripley, West Virginia, home. “They’re everywhere,” Akers says. “They blend in with the woods.” This past summer, Akers ran into a doe crossing a dark road. It limped off, but his 2001 Toyota 4Runner needed \$2,000 in front-end repairs.

Sonny Fisher, who owns Sonny’s Body & Paint in Ripley, says 70 to 80

looked down, and her dog—a little Jack Russell terrier—was standing on his back legs and resting his paws on the steering wheel.”

► **Eating soup** “I was in Indiana or Ohio, and a woman was driving down the road, steering with

her elbows, eating a bowl of soup. Now how in the world do you pull that off without spilling?”

► **Putting on makeup** “What I see all the time is women steering with their knee, with the makeup mirror in one hand and a brush in the other, putting

on eye shadow and blush and going 65 or 70 miles an hour. Usually they’re going back and forth across the line, running over and hitting the rumble strips. I blow the horn at them.”

► **Reading** “One guy actually had a paperback book taped to his steering wheel.



percent of the work at his four-man shop is deer-crash repair. That's true of many rural auto-body shops in the country. "Hit 'em solid, it wipes out the front end completely," Fisher says.

Big animals and cars collide with each other all over the world. Panthers in Florida. Moose in Maine. Camels in Saudi Arabia. And kangaroos in Australia. But most collisions involve deer. Over the past ten years, road engineers and ecologists—two groups who didn't talk much before—have begun to work together. Funding is still skimpy, but Huijser and a few others push forward.

There are some intermediate fixes. Motion detectors that sense large animals near a road can set off flashing beacons that are far more effective at warning drivers than the old yellow signs. Tempting vegetation along roads can be cleared. And fences can keep deer away from roads and funnel them to specially built underpasses and overpasses.

The work along U.S. 93 represents

the largest collection of animal-crossing structures in a single area in the country. Oddly, the network of tunnels and bridges came about because the highway was so dangerous to humans. "Pray for me, I drive 93" has long been a popular bumper sticker in the area. (During the decade ending in 2005, 79 people died on this road.) Montana decided to turn the two-lane road into four lanes. But the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the local Flathead Nation resisted the initial plan and persuaded the government to build a road that also looked out for wildlife. The \$10.5 million allocated for animal crossings was a small part of a \$150 million project. Already, deer are running back and forth through the underpasses, with some curious ones walking up to monitoring cameras. And last July 13, at 4:36 a.m., a grizzly bear lumbered through one of the underpasses, not far from where grizzlies were killed on the highway in 2002 and 2003. "That," says Huijser, "was exciting."

It would move when he turned the wheel."

► **Putting both feet up**

"What I see a lot of times, more with ladies, is they'll be sitting cross-legged, driving with cruise control. All I can think is, How long is it going to take to get their legs uncrossed and

get their foot down to the brake if they need to stop suddenly?"

► **Typing and drinking**

"The other day, I saw a guy with a cup of coffee between his legs, typing on his laptop computer and trying to drive. We hit a curve, and he wasn't going

with the curve. I had to tap my horn to alert him."

► **Smoking, drinking, talking on the phone**

"I've seen a lady with a cigarette in one hand, a cup of coffee in that same hand, driving with her elbows and talking on a cell phone at the same time."



# THE MAKEOVER OF ROUTE 21

Once deadly, it's now the  
"Cadillac of highways"

BY LISA GOFF

"Go ahead home," Frank Roland told his wife, Evelyn. The mayor of Hillsboro, Missouri, Roland had volunteered to stay behind and lock up the Knights of Columbus Hall, where the couple had spent the evening setting up for a wedding that Evelyn was catering the next day. Less than 15 minutes later, Roland spotted the flashing lights of emergency vehicles on the road ahead and Evelyn's crumpled car on the side of Route 21—a treacherous two-lane relic built in the 1930s and dubbed Blood Alley for its frequent crashes.

"I could see her slumped over the steering wheel, but I couldn't get the

The treacherous relic was built in the 1930s and later dubbed Blood Alley.

car door open," says Roland, who 13 years later is still the mayor of this bucolic St. Louis suburb. "People just can't know how that feels."

Roland lost his wife in the crash but not his commitment to improving Route 21, where dozens of people have died and hundreds more have been injured since 1990. (*Reader's*

*Digest* named it one of America's most dangerous roads

in 2000.) Shortly after

Thanksgiving 2008, Roland was among the dignitaries celebrating the dedication of a four-mile stretch of what locals call new 21. The 23-mile,

four-lane parkway has

shaved at least 15 minutes

off the commute to St. Louis and reduced serious accidents, so far, to zero—not only on new 21 but also on old 21, which now serves as an access road for homeowners.

## THE MAKEOVER CHECKLIST

**ALIGNMENT** Abrupt twists and steep hills made driving old Route 21 a white-knuckle affair, but the new highway cascades south of St. Louis like a waterfall, straighter and flatter.

**SHOULDERS** The old road had none, turning momentary lapses of attention into major accidents. The new road has ten-foot-wide shoulders.

**DIVIDED LANES** Two narrow lanes separated by two four-inch-wide yellow lines became a divided four-lane highway separated by landscaped medians. Improved



“It’s a template of the safest road you can build—the Cadillac of highways,” says Judy Wagner, who taught her 16-year-old daughter how to drive on the new highway. “I wouldn’t have let her close to the old road.”

Getting the new highway built was a struggle for every inch of asphalt. City, county, and state officials joined forces with business and local citizens’ groups to pressure Congress for the money to build the initial \$17.5 million stretch, which opened in 1992. (The old highway stayed open, keeping traffic flowing.) Construction accelerated when former congressman Richard Gephardt championed the road, winning earmarks that funded three more expansion projects that finally brought the new highway all the way to Hillsboro.

Jefferson County has doubled in size, to about 225,000 residents, since construction started, and those who fought to rebuild Route 21 as far as Hillsboro lobby for its extension. “I probably won’t live to see it,” says Mayor Roland, who recently turned 76. “But it will happen eventually.”

visibility and a wider margin for error help prevent head-on collisions like the one that killed Evelyn Roland in 1997.

**LIMITED ACCESS** On- and off-ramps keep traffic flowing. On the old road, blind intersections, some marked only by stop signs, and a plethora of driveways created safety hazards. L. G.

## WHAT IF ...?

BY FRAN LOSTYS

Survive your drive with these tips from Walter Irvine, an instructor at the Skip Barber Racing School, in Lakeville, Connecticut.

**... a car is heading straight toward you in your lane?** “Try to get their attention [honk, flash your lights], but also look ahead and plan for an evasive reaction. Do not stare at the oncoming vehicle,” because your car follows your line of sight. “Look where you want to go, not where you are heading.”

**... a car is tailgating you and honking wildly?** “Pull over and let it by.”

**... a car is swerving ahead of you and the driver is clearly impaired?** “Give him room, do not tailgate, and, again, do not fixate on him.”

**... a deer darts in front of your car?** “Calmly attempt to avoid it with as little braking and steering as you can.”

**... you come to a four-way stop?** “Always try to establish eye contact with drivers waiting to proceed. If you see them looking at you, you know it is safe.”

**... you’re blinded by the sun?** “Don’t overreact by slamming on the brakes or swerving. Continue on your path so you are predictable to other vehicles.”

**... you get a yellow light as you approach an intersection?** “You should never go through a yellow light if you have the ability to stop safely.”

**... you’re about to be rear-ended?** “Take your foot off the brake. If the car behind you hits you, the impact will be lessened if your car can roll forward.”



# OTHER BRIGHT IDEAS FOR SAVING LIVES

BY FRAN LOSTYS

Hari Kalla, a professional engineer at the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration, in Washington, D.C., reveals what the best roads have that the worst roads don't.

## SAFETY EDGE

Paving a gradual 30- to 35-degree slope to a road's edge helps prevent the notoriously dangerous rollovers and crashes that occur when a tire inadvertently strays over a steep edge.

## RUMBLE STRIPS AND STRIPES

Grooved sections loudly announce when tires veer off course. Shoulder strips lower crashes by some 20 percent on freeways.

## ROUNDBABOUTS

These circular intersections cut crashes by 60 to 87 percent.

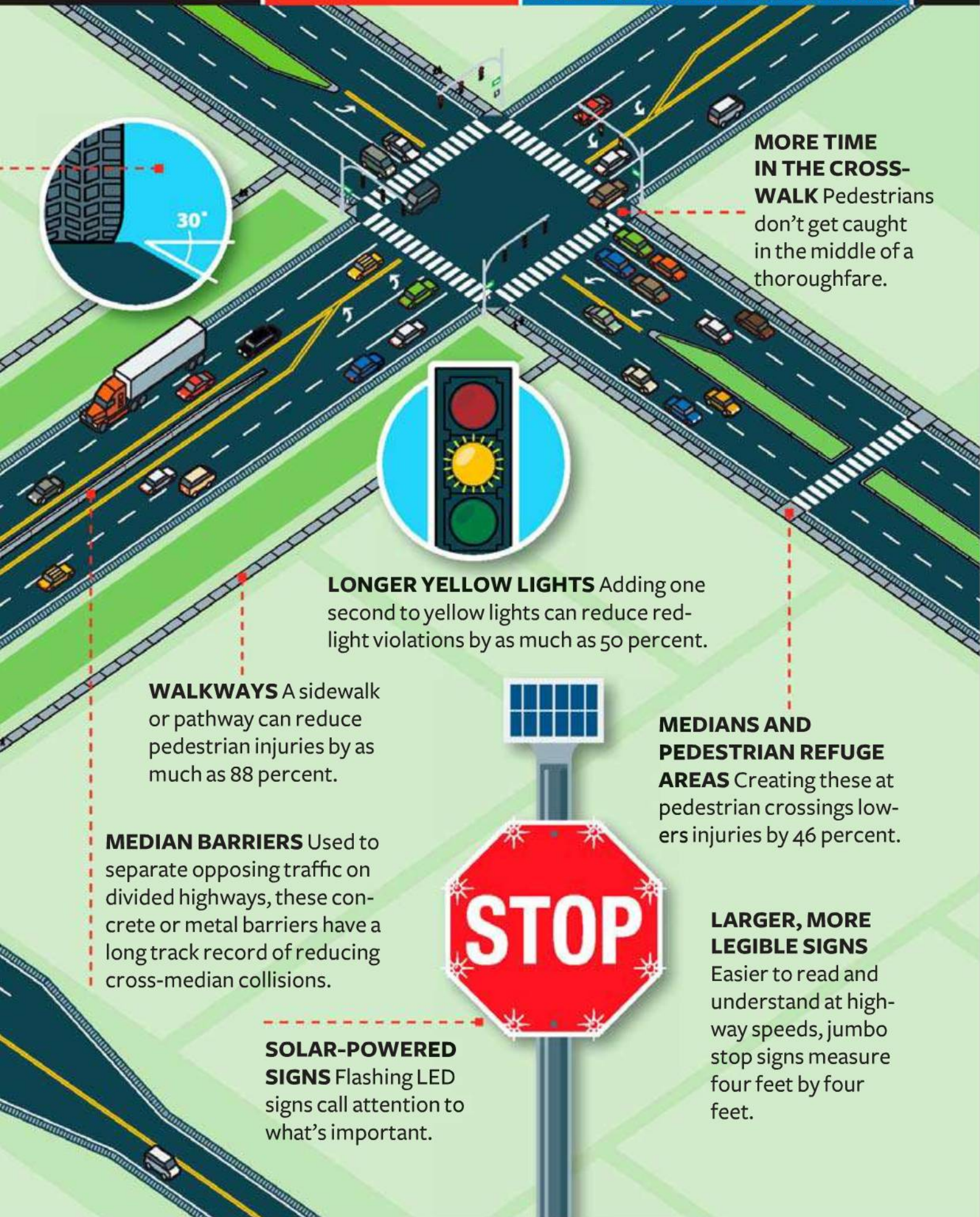
## TURNING LANES AT STOP-CONTROLLED INTERSECTIONS

At major intersections, lanes reserved for right or left turns can dramatically reduce crashes—in some cases, by as much as 48 percent.

## DIFFERENT LANE MARKINGS

These give drivers more warning if they need to turn, merge, or change lanes.





**MORE TIME IN THE CROSS-WALK** Pedestrians don't get caught in the middle of a thoroughfare.

**LONGER YELLOW LIGHTS** Adding one second to yellow lights can reduce red-light violations by as much as 50 percent.

**WALKWAYS** A sidewalk or pathway can reduce pedestrian injuries by as much as 88 percent.

**MEDIANS AND PEDESTRIAN REFUGE AREAS** Creating these at pedestrian crossings lowers injuries by 46 percent.

**MEDIAN BARRIERS** Used to separate opposing traffic on divided highways, these concrete or metal barriers have a long track record of reducing cross-median collisions.

**SOLAR-POWERED SIGNS** Flashing LED signs call attention to what's important.

**LARGER, MORE LEGIBLE SIGNS** Easier to read and understand at highway speeds, jumbo stop signs measure four feet by four feet.





**“I used to lie in bed and think about moving. I could feel my body trying to make connections.”**



A summer's day, a small tumble—

# EVERY

and Trudy Tuffy was paralyzed. The

# STEP A

real surprise is what happened next.

# MIRACLE

BY JESSICA SNYDER SACHS

**At 4:30 on a hot August afternoon in 2008,** Trudy Tuffy was standing in a backyard full of friends and coworkers, chatting happily as she dried off from a swim in the pool. At 6 p.m. she was on a stretcher, heading into an operating room at Danbury Hospital in Connecticut—paralyzed from the neck down.

It had started as a day of celebration. For months, Trudy and her staff at the Danbury offices of the children's book publisher Scholastic Corporation had been working long hours on a new website. That Tuesday, they'd met an important deadline, and Trudy, then 45 and the project's supervisor as well as the mother of two young boys, had invited her staff to knock off



early for a barbecue at her home in nearby Sandy Hook.

The backyard was ringing with laughter when Trudy and a friend threw themselves into a hammock strung over the lawn. Without warning, it flipped, dumping them on the ground. Trudy's friend managed a somersault and ended up on her

**Phone cradled to his ear**, spinal surgeon David Bomback stared at Trudy's CT scan images on his computer screen. On call that day, he was in his office, a mile from the hospital. "Get an operating room ready," he told the ER physician. Spinal surgeons don't use the term "broken neck," but that didn't apply here anyway; Trudy had suffered something worse. Her fall had jammed a vertebra down and partially in front of the one below it, and her spinal cord was being crushed between them. "One bone jumped completely over the other," Dr. Bomback says. "It was the worst injury she could have."

## A MINUTE PASSED, AND THEN ANOTHER, AND STILL SHE COULDN'T MOVE. SHE COULDN'T FEEL ANYTHING BELOW HER SHOULDERS.

knees, but Trudy landed on the back of her neck. Her last sensation was of her feet flying through the air.

How stupid, she thought as her colleagues rushed over. She asked for a moment to get her bearings. But a minute passed, then another, and still she couldn't move. Nor could she feel anything below her shoulders.

Someone ran into the house to call 911. Someone else sprinted upstairs to get her husband, Keith, an Internet product developer, who was working at home. Keith told 12-year-old Josh and 9-year-old Ben to stay inside, then raced into the backyard and knelt on the grass beside his wife.

"I think I've pinched a nerve," she told him.

A CT scan would show otherwise.

Dr. Bomback and his fellow surgeon, Dr. David Kramer, got to the hospital fast and joined the Tuffys outside the OR. Doctors and nurses in the emergency room had already done a physical exam, pricking Trudy on her forehead, then proceeding down her body, poking her over and over. The only jab she felt was the first one. "I was hoping that her nerves were going to kick back in—that they'd been stunned, and they'd come back on line," Keith says. "But it became more and more apparent that wasn't going to happen."

Now Dr. Bomback paused. There was no good way to deliver the news: Nerve impulses weren't making it past Trudy's neck injury. The only reason she could still breathe



on her own and wriggle her shoulders was that these movements were controlled by nerves that entered the brain from above her injury.

Standard protocol called for Trudy to get an MRI, to guide the surgery she needed. But Dr. Bomback knew that would take time, and he didn't want to wait. As the minutes ticked by, immune cells were flooding the injury, producing inflammation that increased the pressure on Trudy's spinal cord. Worse, those cells are programmed to clean away damaged tissue—meaning that they were destroying irreplaceable nerves. Dr. Bomback wanted to give Trudy steroids to reduce the inflammation, although, he said, some doctors aren't

convinced the drugs help. The Tuffys nodded and gave him the

go-ahead. And one more thing: "I want to get you into surgery *now*," he told Trudy.

It was nearly 11 p.m. when Dr. Bomback came out of the surgical suite and looked around for Keith. His expression was somber. He and Dr. Kramer had freed Trudy's spinal cord from the pressure of the dislocated vertebrae; then he had stabilized the spinal column with steel rods. But Trudy had regained consciousness more than an hour earlier, and although he'd tested her a half dozen times or more, she had no movement or sensation below the injury.

"He said, 'If we're not seeing anything now, her prognosis isn't very good,'" Keith remembers. "I knew he was saying that my wife was never going to walk or move her arms again."

When Keith was finally allowed

**For surgeons David Kramer (left) and David Bomback, time was of the essence.**





into Trudy's room, he didn't volunteer any information about what the surgeon had said, and, mercifully, Trudy asked no questions. In her mind, though, she was replaying the look of disappointment she had seen on Dr. Bombback's face as he bent over her in the recovery room. She'd never been one to sit around—she

## THE DOCTOR HADN'T EXPECTED HER TO EVER WALK AGAIN, KEITH SAID. “I’M SO GLAD YOU NEVER TOLD ME,” SHE REPLIED.

was always busy at work or with the boys, and in the evenings she'd go running. Weekends were for puttering in her beloved garden. I don't want to be nothing but a head, she thought. How can I be a mother to my boys if I can't move?

Nurses came into the room every half hour or so, checking her vital signs and asking her to try to move. Then, around 3 a.m., she thought she felt something. The big toe on her left foot: Was it wiggling? Yes, Keith told her. The nurse was ecstatic; Trudy was less impressed. “I thought, So what? I'm moving a big toe. When am I going to move the rest of me?”

But the next morning, she could see Dr. Bombback was thrilled. “I would have been happy to see that she was

moving anything, but a toe was very, very good because it's far from the zone of injury,” he says. “It meant that signals were making it all the way down her spinal column.”

Dr. Bombback knew the odds were still against Trudy ever regaining the ability to walk. But now it seemed possible that she'd be able to sit up in bed, or even lift herself into and out of a wheelchair instead of having to wait for help. To Trudy, still unaware of her prognosis, her doctor's excitement meant much more. “That's when the determination kicked in for me,” she says. “I told Keith, ‘Don't worry. I'm going to work hard and get better.’”

“**Tell us your goals** for your stay here,” a therapist said. It was a week and two surgeries after the accident, and Trudy had just arrived at Gaylord Hospital, a spinal rehabilitation center in Wallingford, Connecticut.

She knew that Gaylord pushed hard: Patients were expected to be full participants in their treatment, four to eight hours a day, five days a week. This was no place for slackers, she sensed, and that suited her just fine. Now, invited to share her hopes, she took a leap.

“I want it all back,” she blurted out. “Everything.”

There was an awkward silence, and Trudy saw raised eyebrows. She quickly made an adjustment. “I'll be happy to get as much function back as



possible,” she assured them. “I want to be there for my children.”

She knew the clock was ticking: Her insurer had agreed to pay for a six-week stay, and she planned to make the most of it. Still, she was caught off guard the next morning when her physical therapist, Erin Prastine, proposed to get her onto her feet. Trudy knew she was still essentially deadweight—and Prastine was just five feet one inch and petite. “I was shocked,” Trudy remembers.

Trudy had landed at a premier spinal rehab center, one of 14 in the country designated a model system. It was stocked with state-of-the-art technology, like an electrical stimulation unit that sent a small charge through Trudy’s muscles to work them (she’d stare at a jerking muscle, then struggle to find the internal connections that would enable her to move it herself). A body weight support system helped her begin to walk when she could barely sit up on her own. It was

## THE WAY FORWARD

Overcoming paralysis is one of the most daunting challenges in medicine—and one of the most exciting. “There are formerly paralyzed rats running around labs all over the world, but it’s been very difficult to translate that to humans,” says Susan Howley, director of research for the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation. “Most of us don’t expect a magic bullet that will make someone rise Lazarus-like out of his wheelchair. But there’s a sense of momentum now that hasn’t existed before.”

Some of the most promising areas of research:

### > **Locomotor training**

Patients are supported in a harness over a treadmill while a therapist moves

their legs to mimic a stepping motion. The idea is that the nervous system learns by doing: The spinal cord is sent information from the feet and legs that “teach” it how to regain more control over the process. The approach is used at a handful of rehabilitation centers around the country for patients who still have some ability to move their legs.

### > **Electrical stimulation**

Electrodes deliver low levels of electric current that can trigger movement even in completely paralyzed muscles so that patients can exercise their limbs. Implanted electrodes can create a kind of bionic prosthesis, although these aren’t widely used yet.

> **Regeneration** The regrowing of spinal cord nerve fibers is “the Holy Grail of spinal cord research,” says Howley. Scientists know that nerves in the central nervous system are theoretically capable of regenerating themselves; the problem is that the spinal cord is bathed in chemicals that inhibit nerve growth. So researchers are looking for ways to turn off these “no grow” signals and turn on “go grow” ones instead. Increasing the level of regulatory proteins called neurotrophic factors may help. So may implanting stem cells or other kinds of cells, which might act as bridges across the damaged area. *Neena Samuel*





**Trudy with her family—back at home and back to normal.**

high-tech, but it was also hard work, Keith says. “Her day was filled with therapy sessions. She loaded up with as many as they allowed.”

Trudy had always been stubbornly independent—“You can call it being a control freak,” she says with a laugh—and the mere fact that she could barely move didn’t seem to her like a reason to change. “Some people had the aides feed them, but I said, ‘Oh, no, I’m not doing that,’” she says. The hospital fitted her with a wrist strap that could hold a fork or pen, and by making careful menu selections, she was able to feed herself, stabbing pieces of toast and chunks of scrambled eggs. Pinching thumb to palm, she could even raise a half-filled cup of coffee, which she turned into another challenge: “I love coffee with cream and Equal, but I couldn’t

even rip the Equal packet open. So my deal was, Okay, if you want the coffee, you have to do it yourself. If I couldn’t, I either had to drink it black or pass on the coffee.”

“I’d try to assist her, but she didn’t want it,” Keith says. “She’d be trying to stab a grape with a fork, and I’d be going crazy. But she wanted to do it on her own.”

Every day, Trudy saw some tiny improvement. Before a week had gone by, she took her first steps using the parallel bars in the hospital gym. Prastine talked her through it: Position arm forward. Shift weight. Lift foot. Move foot forward. Center weight. “I’d think, Oh, my gosh, will this ever feel normal again? But your mind and body have to reconnect.”

Soon Trudy was using the pool—



loving the feeling of freedom it gave her but hating the fact that she'd have to rely on other people to keep her alive if she slipped beneath the surface. Prastine or Keith beside her, she even attempted Gaylord's stairs. "Every day they were pushing me to try something new, and I have to say that I was scared every time," she says. "But I just always said okay."

Keith hooked up her laptop to the television, and Ben and Josh came for movie nights in her hospital room. They wheeled Trudy down to the snack machine—the rule was that she had to muster the dexterity to push the buttons. "We made games out of everything," she says.

One day, she and Keith were taking tentative steps together on the hospital grounds, when he finally confessed to her that Dr. Bomback hadn't expected her to walk again. "I am so glad you never told me," she said.

**In late September**, almost two months after the minor tumble that had changed her life, Trudy went home to Sandy Hook with a walker and cane she would never use. She soon returned to work, part-time at first

but quickly added hours. She does yoga and Pilates now, where before it was Zumba and cardio dance. But she's jogging on the wooded lanes of Sandy Hook again—two miles, twice a week. Best of all, she's back to being an active mom.

A case like Trudy's is as inspiring as it gets, Dr. Bomback says. "I've seen patients with exactly her injury remain totally paralyzed." Everyone who treated her was at the top of his or her game: the paramedics who were first to touch her, the doctors who repaired her injury, the therapists who got her moving. Trudy credits them all—along with the support of her family, great good luck, and her own obstinately positive attitude.

"Who would think that you could fall off a hammock and become paralyzed?" she asks. "When Keith finally told me how bad my odds had been, I said, 'You must have thought I was a lunatic—saying I'd work hard and get better.' But all my stubbornness, all those quirky things that sometimes drive him crazy, worked for me.

"Whenever he has his hands full with me insisting on doing something for myself, I remind him of that."

## IF LOOKS COULD KILL

**I have long been teased** about my large nose, and I sought some reassurance from a friend.

"Is it really that big?" I asked.

"No, your nose isn't big," he replied. "It's just that your face is too far back."

*Tony Murray*







# inw

DAVID NARDINI/GETTY IMAGES

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Beautiful but  
dangerous. Wispy  
fins hide spines  
armed with venom.

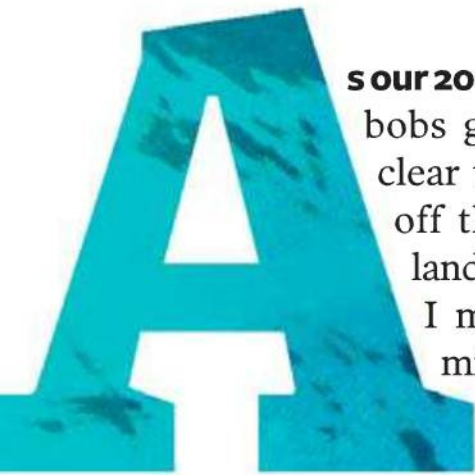
What happens  
when a handsome  
aquarium fish from the  
other side of the world  
runs rampant off the  
Atlantic coast?

(Hint: It's not pretty.)

BY ROBERT KIENER

# adler





**A** **sour 20-foot** diver's boat bobs gently in crystal clear turquoise waters off the Bahamian island of Great Exuma, I make a few last-minute adjustments to my dive mask and snorkel. In

a moment, I will join marine biologist Mark Hixon on an underwater expedition to locate and capture a lionfish, so named because its fanlike fins resemble a lion's mane. Or, as it's known to avid tropical fish hobbyists, *Pterois volitans*.

Before we jump overboard, Hixon reminds me, "If we see one, keep your distance. These babies pack a wallop. A jab from their venomous spines could send you to the hospital. And the nearest one is a plane ride away."

Hixon smiles and asks me, "You're not having second thoughts, are you?"

**I've come to the Bahamas** to spend time with Hixon as he investigates what he says may become "the most devastating ocean invasion ever." He and other researchers are looking for ways to stop the explosive population growth of red lionfish, a nonnative species eating its way through the Caribbean and up the Atlantic coast.

While scientific data are not in yet, some Caribbean fishermen are already reporting that lionfish are affecting their catch of commercial fish like grouper and snapper. Hixon and his team watched one lionfish eat more than 20 small fish in 30 minutes.

"Worst of all, they are eating their

way through the reefs like a plague of locusts," says Hixon, a coral reef expert. Because lionfish are devouring the grazing fish that prevent seaweed from choking the fragile reefs, many scientists fear for these endangered ecosystems.

"*Explosive* is a good word to describe the lionfish's advance," says Hixon as we sip Bahamian beers at the Perry Institute for Marine Science on Lee Stocking Island near Great Exuma. Ten years ago, sightings of lionfish in Atlantic waters were rare. These maroon-striped, foot-long beauties that hide an arsenal of venomous, needle-sharp spines among their feathery, translucent fins are native to the Pacific and Indian oceans, some 10,000 miles away. "Suddenly," says Hixon, "they were being spotted in the Atlantic. It was like seeing a polar bear in Hawaii."

They didn't swim there, he said, and there's no evidence they arrived in ships' ballast waters.

"So how did they get here?" I ask. Hixon smiles, sips his beer, and tells me an amazing story—nobody can prove it really happened—that begins in southern Florida in 1992 with the onslaught of Hurricane Andrew. That Category 5 storm, the century's third most powerful, roared ashore in late August with winds over 155 miles an hour and wiped out thousands of homes—and some aquariums.

"There were unconfirmed reports that it smashed one private aquarium that was home to perhaps six or seven lionfish," explains Hixon. "These



were released into Biscayne Bay and began doing what invasive species often do best: eat and reproduce.”

But some scientists say that lionfish probably were released by owners after they discovered these hungry pets will quickly eat every smaller fish in their aquarium. DNA evidence suggests that the lionfish in the Atlantic were originally from western Indonesia, where lionfish are collected for the aquarium trade. However they got to the Atlantic, they have multiplied over and over.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) marine biologist James Morris and colleagues recently published a study that found that red lionfish females can produce over two million eggs a year. The race to find a way to stop this invasion has just heated up.

Because the fish don't seem to have any local predators, they are reproducing on an unheard-of scale. In the Bahamas, some scientists report finding more than 400 lionfish per two and a half acres of ocean.

Lionfish have been spotted as far north as Massachusetts and as far south as Mexico and Panama. “No fish has ever colonized so quickly and over such a vast ocean range before,” says Paula Whitfield, a NOAA research ecologist. Marine biologists have discovered that the lionfish's fertilized eggs hitch a ride on the Gulf Stream.

**Back on Hixon's boat,** I am anxious, and just a bit edgy, to see what some have dubbed the Frankenfish in action. I jump into the 10- to 20-foot-deep waters off Great Exuma and snorkel above Hixon as he scuba dives, carrying two nets with which he hopes to trap a lionfish. Within minutes, I'm hovering over an artificial reef that Hixon and other researchers have built from cement blocks. It's like a miniature apartment building perched on the sandy ocean

**“These babies pack a wallop. A jab from their venomous spines can send you to the hospital.”**

floor, with scores of colorful residents, from multihued parrot fish to neon-blue damselfish to thick-lipped wrasses, darting in and out. But no lionfish.

Then, as Hixon shines his light into a crevice, he gives me a thumbs-up sign and I snorkel closer. An 18-inch-long lionfish, its majestic fins displayed like a peacock's feathers, stares back at us. I have been told the fish is not thought to be aggressive, but as I dive down, I can't get out of my mind the stories of hapless fishermen and divers who have been severely stung.

Florida-based dive tour organizer Bruce Purdy has told me that when he was stung by a lionfish, his palm turned crimson and ballooned. “The



pain was so severe, I wanted to cut my hand off,” he said. A fisherman on Great Exuma confessed to crying like a baby after being hit. Lionfish stings reportedly can cause nausea, breathing difficulties, convulsions, and paralysis.

When I am finally face-to-face with *Pterois volitans*, the fish is spectacularly beautiful, its body glistening with red, white, and gold stripes. Its delicate, wispy fins sway and flutter hypnotically in the gentle current. An arm’s length away—as close as I dare—it shows no fear, eerily staring me right in the eye. I’m almost tempted to reach out and touch it. Almost, but for the 18 camouflaged dorsal, pelvic, and anal spines, each of which is armed with a pair of powerful venom glands.

**An arm’s length away—as close as I dare—the lionfish shows no fear, staring me right in the eye.**

Suddenly, the fish darts away and reveals its true nature. I marvel as it spreads its fins to mesmerize a small wrasse. Slowly, the lionfish backs the unsuspecting fish against the reef. With one lightning-fast strike, the lionfish lunges at the wrasse and sucks it into its mouth, swallowing it whole. The wrasse never had a chance. Now I understand what researchers mean when they call the lionfish the perfect eating machine.

After Hixon captures the fish, we return to the boat, and he tells me that lionfish have been seen eating fish that are up to two thirds of their own length. An experiment led by Hixon’s colleague Mark Albins found that lionfish ate about 80 percent of young native fish on several research reefs.

As we speed over the tranquil waters of Exuma Sound on our way back to the Perry Institute’s marine laboratory, I ask Hixon if he’s optimistic about controlling this invasion. “You saw the way those things are vacuuming the reefs of native fish,” he answers. “I’m afraid I’m a pessimist. But we haven’t lost yet.”

**Scores of scientists**, government officials, and others are racing to come up with a solution for the lionfish invasion. Right now, the lionfish are winning.

At the Perry Institute, I meet Paul Sikkell, an Arkansas State University marine parasitologist who is spending

much of his summer dissecting specimens, looking for “any chink in their armor.” The more parasites, the more vulnerable the fish may be. However, as he peers into a microscope at the gill tissue of a recently caught lionfish, he exclaims, “I cannot believe this. These are the cleanest fish I’ve ever seen. I’m seeing *no* parasites!”  
Lionfish 1, scientists 0.

Many researchers have been hoping to discover a local predator of the





**Marine biologist Mark Albins charts the growing population of lionfish off the Bahamian island of Great Exuma.**

lionfish. Mark Hixon recently traveled to the Pacific to see what keeps the lionfish there in check. “At this time, we just don’t know,” he says.

He and others have tried to entice a wide range of fish, from sharks to sea bass, to eat the venomous invaders, but they’ve shown little interest.

Bruce Purdy, the tour organizer, even dangled a lionfish in front of a green moray eel, a voracious eater, without luck. “The eel struck out at the lionfish, got stung, and gave up,” recalls Purdy. Lionfish 2, scientists 0.

A consortium of marine conservation agencies and organizations has



been established to serve as an “early warning system” for the lionfish invasion. One member is the Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF) in Key Largo, Florida. In January 2009, a diver told then executive director Lisa Mitchell that she’d seen a lionfish in the 2,900-square-nautical-mile Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

“We freaked out—it was the first confirmed sighting of a lionfish in our waters,” recalls Mitchell. Early the next morning, a team from REEF jumped into a dive boat and sped to the scene of the sighting, near the remains of a sunken ship. The team found the lionfish right where the diver said it would be and netted it.

“We know we can’t remove every lionfish out there, but we’re doing our best to prevent them from gaining a foothold in our backyard,” says Mitchell.

While it’s far too late to stop the lionfish solely by capturing and killing them, some governments have culling programs to help control the local populations. Educational programs are aimed at teaching local fishermen how to safely catch and dispatch the fish.

Many marine biologists believe the best way to contain the lionfish would also be one of the simplest—by eating them. Indeed, some restaurants in Nassau have begun featuring lionfish on their menus as a novelty item. But as I soon discover, Bahamians are leery of eating what many of them consider to be “that poison fish.”

**When I ask noted** Great Exuma chef Susan Gordon if she will share a lionfish dinner with me, she howls with laughter and says, “No way! I’m not touching that fish.”

Finally, after I explain that the lionfish is harmless once its spines have been removed and cooking neutralizes any venom, she reluctantly agrees to prepare one. At the kitchen of the Perry Institute, Paul Sikkel brings in a pudgy 18-incher that Hixon’s team has dubbed Big Poppa. Sikkel confirms he has removed the needlelike spines. Gordon promises to eat it with me, but only if I take the first bite.

With a crowd of locals and marine biologists urging us on, Gordon fillets, batters, and fries up the fish, adding lime juice and minced garlic. As I raise a forkful of the whitefish to my mouth, I could hear a pin drop. I remember Hixon telling me earlier, “The nearest hospital is a plane ride away.”

The fish is flaky, almost sweet, like grouper. “Delicious,” I say as I take another bite.

Gordon hesitates but takes a forkful. Her verdict: “Mmmmm.”

Our audience nods in approval. I think we’ve convinced them that when properly cooked, lionfish are perfectly safe—and tasty—to eat. But to seal the deal, I remind them, “In Asia, the lionfish is said to be prized as a powerful aphrodisiac.”

I can still hear their laughter and see their broad smiles. Writer 1, Lionfish 0. ■



A man donates sperm to a friend, who gives birth to twins. Is he a dad—or just a donor?

# You Be the Judge

**When Daryl Hendrix** got the call that the twins were being born, he sped to his local hospital in Topeka, Kansas. The security guard at the entrance called the labor-and-delivery floor: “The father’s here,” he announced. But as the guard heard the response from the floor nurse, his face fell.

“You’re not allowed up there,” the guard told Hendrix.

“You’ve got to be kidding,” Hendrix said.

The twins’ mother, Samantha Harrington, said the father was not welcome. Hendrix was surprised. Nine months earlier, he’d handed Harrington, a longtime friend, a container of his sperm to take with her to a fertility doctor. According to Hendrix, the two prospective parents—she, an unmarried attorney; he, an unmarried businessman—had an oral agreement to share custody should Harrington conceive. She denied this.



ILLUSTRATED BY DANIEL BEJAR

BY VICKI GLEMBOCKI





## He caught a glimpse of the twins, the first and last time he saw them.

On May 19, 2005, the day after being turned away, Hendrix arrived at the hospital with a video camera and was able to catch a glimpse of the twins in the nursery—the first and last time he saw them. Hendrix soon learned that Harrington’s attorney had filed a Child in Need of Care petition in

Shawnee County District Court that morning. The petition aimed to sever Hendrix’s paternal rights on the grounds that he was “unfit” because he didn’t provide emotional or financial support to Harrington during her pregnancy. He later countered that she never made any specific demands and that he would now pay his share of support for the children, as well as reimburse Harrington for some of her prenatal medical expenses.

But the issue of custody remained the biggest source of conflict. “She never would have agreed to let him be the donor if she had known he was going to expect to be active in parenting,” the petition explained. On the contrary, Hendrix says now, had he known she didn’t want him involved, “I never would have done it.” According to the petition, Harrington chose a known donor—instead of using a sperm bank, where donors must remain anonymous and sign away their rights—only because she wanted access to him in case of any future medical issues with the kids.

Hendrix then filed his own petition to establish his paternity status. He requested joint custody and a visitation schedule with the children.

Several days later, Harrington filed again, this time invoking a 1994 Kansas statute stating that a man who donates sperm is not viewed as the legal father unless it’s agreed to in writing. The fact that Kansas sperm donors even have an opportunity to “opt in” to parenthood through a written agreement is unusual, says



Joan Heifetz Hollinger, a family law expert at the University of California, Berkeley School of Law, who supported Harrington's position. In most states, there are no such options. "If you provide sperm to a woman other than your wife," Hollinger says, "you are not the father."

**Harrington, now 35,** and Hendrix, 47, agreed on one thing: They had nothing in writing.

She next motioned to dismiss his petition because, under Kansas law, he had no standing to file it—he was a sperm donor and nothing more. In December 2005, the Shawnee County District Court agreed: "Hendrix is found not to be the legal father."

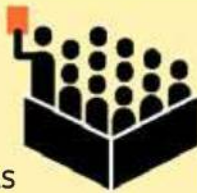
Hendrix took it to the next step. A year later, he sat in a wood-paneled courtroom in the Kansas Supreme Court, hoping to overturn the lower

court's decision. Flanked by a large group of friends, Hendrix listened as his legal team argued that the donor statute was unconstitutional because it denied Hendrix his "right to care, custody, and control of his children." Hendrix's attorney also cited the mother's petition, which referred to Hendrix as the "father" 87 times.

Hollinger and 20 other family law professors filed a friend of the court brief on behalf of Harrington, arguing that Hendrix's rights hadn't been violated, because the legislature had made it clear that he didn't have any: "He is not a legal father unless he and the mother agree otherwise in writing." At the hearing, Harrington's attorney said as much to the judges: Hendrix, she said, was "out of luck."

Is the statute unconstitutional? Should Harrington share custody? Or is Hendrix, indeed, out of luck?

## The Verdict



**T**en months later, the Kansas Supreme Court ruled four to two: The statute is constitutional, a landmark opinion, since it was the first time any court had ruled on that statute. Still, Hendrix kept pushing, filing a petition with the U.S. Supreme Court in March 2008. The Court decided not to hear the appeal. In the end, the Kansas Supreme Court ruling stands.

Harrington, as she maintains was her intention all along, is a single parent of twins who turn five this May. Hendrix has only one consolation. Someday, he says, when the twins search the Internet for information about their birth father, "they'll find the documents and know that I fought and fought for them."

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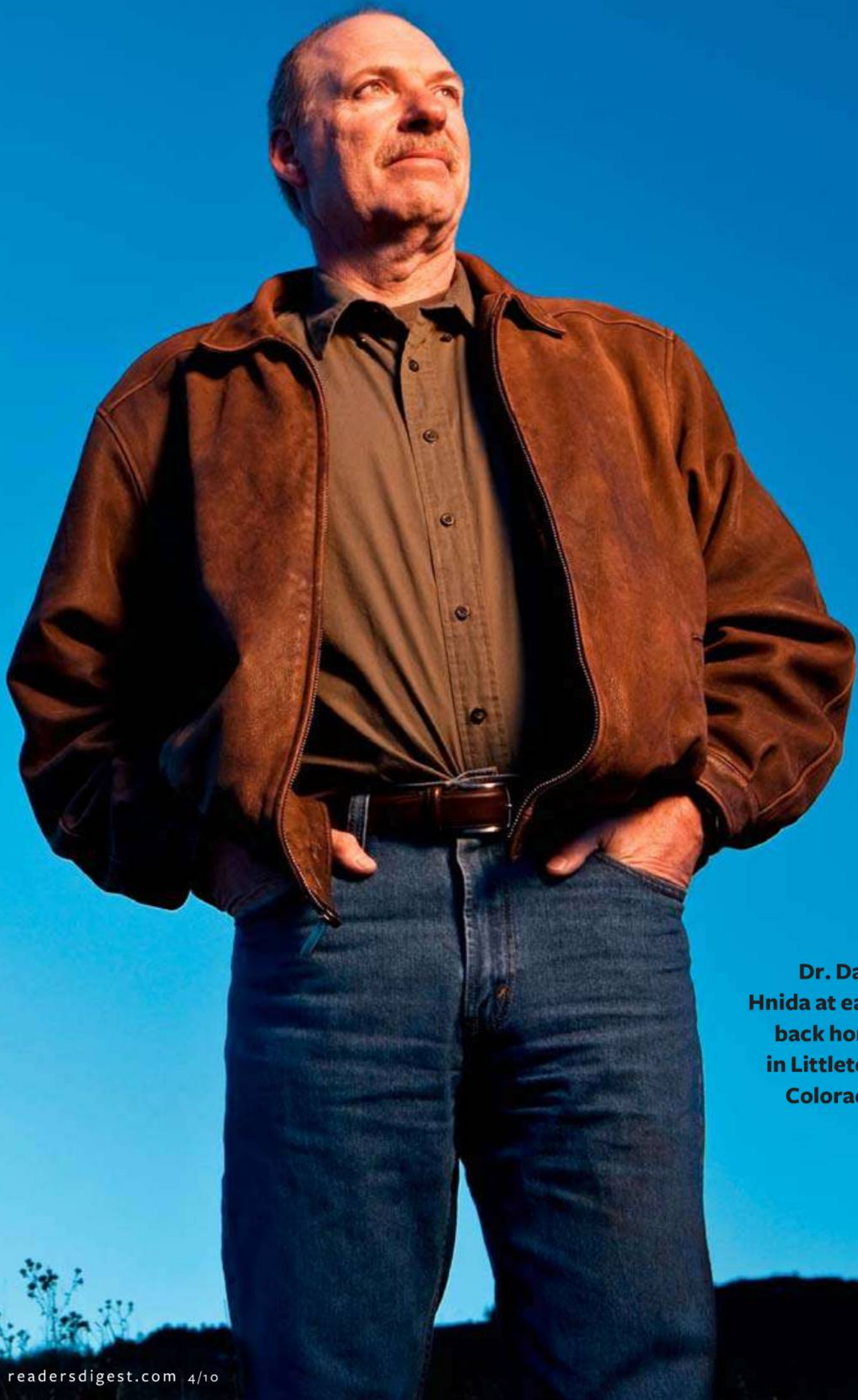


# Doctor's Orders

Dave Hnida  
traded his family  
practice for  
the front lines of  
Iraq and found  
his own personal  
peace

FROM *PARADISE GENERAL* BY DAVE HNIDA, MD





**Dr. Dave  
Hnida at ease  
back home  
in Littleton,  
Colorado.**



**The last time I talked with my dad** was on a sweltering April evening in 2004. It was a lopsided conversation. He had died of a heart attack almost 30 years earlier. But he was one of the main reasons I was hiding in a sandy ditch in the middle of Iraq, and I had some things to tell him before I died. My dad was a good man, although until a few days before his death, I didn't always think so. A hard-toiling factory worker, he drank a fifth of cheap whiskey every day and always left me searching for the answer to why any man felt the need to retreat to the safety of the bottle. I had my hints and theories but never walked in his shoes or, in this case, his Army boots. It took three hours in a ditch to get a firsthand revelation about why the liquor cabinet was permanently open while I was growing up.

As a 23-year-old infantry lieutenant at Anzio in World War II, my dad sent a number of other young men into battle and could never forgive himself for the ones who didn't return. This member of the Greatest Generation was silent about his war until he abruptly and permanently corked the bottle in late 1975, when I was a senior in college.

We were driving from Newark to Philadelphia down the New Jersey Turnpike when he threw a couple of quarters into a tollbooth, saying,

“That’s not much of a toll in this life, Dave.”

I wasn't sure what he meant until a painful flood of war memories suddenly spilled from a place deep in his soul. He had never told anyone, including my mom, about any of his wartime experiences. I was the typical college kid who thought he could handle anything the world dared throw at him, but I was humbled into silence as each mile marker brought a new and horrible description of the savagery of war.

The drive ended in exhausted silence an hour later when he dropped me in front of my apartment near the University of Pennsylvania. We shook hands, said our goodbyes, and that was it. Almost. As he rolled up his window, my dad quietly said, “I’m sorry, Dave. I hope I wasn’t a bad father.” I saved myself from a lifetime of regret when I answered with a smile and a quick thumbs-up as he pulled away from the curb.

He died of a heart attack four days later.

I think my dad died a more peaceful man, but for me, his stories of war delivered anything but peace. I tried to make sense of the things he had told me, wondering how his experiences shaped him and—as a result—me. And I simply couldn't shake the last words I would ever hear from



him, almost a plea for forgiveness. As the decades following that car ride melted away, the stories did not—they seemed to be on a constant simmer below the surface of my life. I went on to medical school, got married, and started a family.

Yet as I watched my own four children grow, there was always a sober thought that the only way to learn what made my father tick was to leave them—and go to war myself.

Then came two events that shattered my world. The first happened in 1999—the Columbine High School shootings. My family practice was literally a stone’s throw from the

My life became a bottomless well of guilt, and it seemed the only way to lift myself out was to serve penance: do something to protect, help, save the young people of the world. Memories of my dad’s experiences resurfaced, and suddenly I knew where I was needed, where I could help, where I might find peace. That place was war.

**Now, in a classic case of “be careful what you wish for,”** I was lying in some nameless ditch along the side of a nameless road outside a village whose name I couldn’t pronounce. It was a beautiful desert night, with a moon so brilliant, it made me the perfect silhouette.

**“You’re going to get us all killed unless you eat some sand, sir.”**

school; I knew most of the students, parents, and teachers; and most important, of the thirteen who died in the shootings, nine had been patients of mine. And as they fell, so did I. Soon after, my daughter Katie made history at the University of New Mexico as the first woman ever to play and score points in a major college football game. But her groundbreaking journey had been a long and painful one. Katie had originally been recruited as a placekicker by the University of Colorado, but the atmosphere for a female playing a traditionally all-male sport chilled, and soon after the season ended, the nightmare of every father took place: Katie was raped—by a teammate.

“Doc!” The voice came from behind in a stern whisper. “Get

down and make yourself small!”

A wiry young sergeant had silently wiggled up beside me.

“You’re going to get us all killed unless you eat some sand, sir.”

He was right. Here I was, a 48-year-old doctor, well schooled in medicine but clueless in the ways of war. And fortunate to be getting lessons from a 23-year-old tutor carrying an over-size M4 automatic rifle. This kid was the same age as my father when he crawled around Italy.

My night in the ditch had actually started hours before the sun went down. We were on our way back from convoying a wounded Iraqi insurgent



to a British combat hospital when one of our Humvees unexpectedly chugged to a halt. The breakdown left us no choice but to sit and wait for help. And wait we did, watching the sun disappear and darkness creep up.

It didn't take long for word to make its way to the wrong ears that an American convoy was stranded on an isolated road. At first we could vaguely see, then only hear, scrunch-

with gunshots and fireworks, it was John Wayne enough for me. Our cavalry came rumbling to the rescue: a half dozen heavily armed gun trucks with a massive tow truck bringing up the rear. We cautiously got up and moved toward our rescuers, grins of relief splitting our faces.

As I walked with shaking legs to my Humvee with my wiry young sergeant, I apologized repeatedly for screwing up as we'd hid for our lives in the ditch.

## Inhaling a breath of bravery, I pushed open the door to the ER.

ing footsteps in the darkening fields and groves

that ran along both sides of the road. The contractors from the fuel trucks huddled as the soldiers set up a protective perimeter. I settled into my spot in a ditch, cradling an M16 rifle, and waited. And listened as the scrunching slowly and steadily got louder. I'm a doctor. What the hell am I doing here? And what will my kids do when they get the news I was killed?

The exotic voices from the fields were getting louder. I took a quick look at the fuel trucks, knowing they'd be hit first, and wondered if I'd get a shot off before being burned to a crisp. Whispered orders made their way among us. *Lock and load. Safeties off. Here we go.* Then, without warning, a growling thunder erupted from down the road, overtaking the noises from the hedge. The ground began to shake, and I thought my world was coming to an end. I was wrong. While it wasn't a true John Wayne moment

It wasn't until our Humvee was headed toward our base that it hit me. The young sergeant had answered with a smile and a quick thumbs-up.

**I wasn't sure what to expect when I** saw "Paradise General" for the first time. The hospital was located within the cavernous COB Speicher, with the COB standing for "contingency operating base"—the military's new term for huge, monstrous, and probably-going-to-be-here-forever base. The COB was home for the 82nd Airborne's and 25th Infantry Division's main operations, with the 399th combat support hospital a flyspeck on its periphery. I knew it wasn't going to look like Johns Hopkins, but I wasn't ready for a group of shabby tents hidden behind ten-foot-high, three-foot-thick blast walls to protect us from the rockets and mortars that the in-





**Hnida (middle)**  
examines a  
wounded Iraqi  
soldier during the  
second of two  
tours of duty.

surgents would lob onto our laps. Out of the five combat support hospitals in Iraq at the time, all had regular buildings and hard roofs except one. Ours. The support staff of more than 200 had already been in country for a year and gone through three rotations of doctors.

Through all my years of schooling and training, I'd had a lot of first days—this one was by far the worst. For every step I took toward the hospital, I wanted to take two steps back. Inhaling a breath of bravery, I pushed open the door to the ER.

I wandered the room, shaking hands with each of the medics lounging in

folding chairs—they were all young enough to be my children. Next were staff nurses—most worked in emergency rooms back home and probably had more knowledge of trauma medicine in their pinkies than I knew altogether. Last were the head nurses in charge of the department. Both held the rank of major. Roger Boutin was a firefighter and nurse from small-town Massachusetts. He was the assistant to Jack Twomey, a stoic figure whose imposing demeanor told me his ER ship was a tight one. Twomey was an ER nurse in one of Boston's busiest trauma centers and could probably staff this department by himself. I



worried he would eat me for lunch, then spit out the bones after picking his teeth.

Before long, word came over the radio of my first American trauma case. A soldier shot through the neck by a sniper. The estimated arrival time was 20 minutes. I scrambled to Alpha bay and took my place at the head, where the stretcher would roll to a stop. As I slipped on gloves and work goggles, I saw our little ER quickly fill up. News travels quickly when an

stage, with every eye in the audience focused on me, awaiting my impersonation of a qualified trauma leader. It should have been about the guy on the stretcher, but no, in my mind, it was all about whether I was up to the task of being allowed to perform on the Broadway of the emergency room.

I simply didn't know where to start—or maybe I did know but couldn't. I just stood there, staring. In the meantime, Major Twomey was at the foot of the stretcher, waiting for me to begin my assessment of the

**Every eye in the audience** patient—describing,  
**was focused on me, awaiting my**  
**impersonation of a qualified**  
**trauma leader.**

American is coming in, and every doctor, clerk, administrator, and staff member hustled in. Even the doctors we relieved came over from their quarters—their plane wasn't due to leave until that night.

There was a flurry of movement throughout the room as the stretcher burst through the door. He was a skinny young kid with a sickly gray cast to his skin. A leg jaggedly pointed at an unnatural angle. And a thick bandage around his neck was saturated with blood. It had to be a carotid or jugular wound. As the stretcher moved into the bay, medics scrambled to place IV lines while I stared at the tiny bubbles forming on the surface of the bandage.

In my mind, the room went pitch-black, with a single, bright spotlight focused on me in the middle of a vast

in order, status of the airway, the soldier's breathing, his circulation, and his level of consciousness. It was all cookbook medicine, but I couldn't remember a word of the recipe.

Then came a sudden parting of the sea as a mass of doctors swarmed around the patient—all with their own idea of what needed to be done. Alone in a crowded war, I was literally being pushed away from the head of the stretcher as the bodies crowded into the bay. There were no familiar faces for support or guidance as the soon-to-depart doctors ordered the medics to wheel the patient to surgery.

I stepped away from the flapping blanket of the OR entrance and found a quiet spot between a couple of tents. I was so new, I didn't know where I



was, but my stomach didn't care. First I threw up my coffee from breakfast, then some green bile, followed by a series of violent retches. I weakly wiped the putrid residue off my uniform. I can't do this. I'm going to hurt somebody.

I had two choices—walk away claiming some bogus illness, or return and face the music of my medical peers. The answer came in the form of a question: What would I tell my kids to do?

I spun around back into the ER and went straight to Major Twomey.

Can we speak outside?

He nodded and led the way to the helipad.

"Man, I messed up. Big-time."

"Well, it wasn't the most organized effort, but no, you didn't."

"I know a screwup. And that was one. I got stampeded."

"Listen, you wouldn't be here if you couldn't do the job."

"Then level with me. What can I do better?"

"Easy. Be in charge. Don't let anyone cross that red line until you're ready for them. Stop for a minute and look at one thing. We've got a guy who should be dead, but he's not. So you didn't make any fatal errors. Just be the boss. It's your ER when you are at the head of the stretcher."

"Thanks. And sorry."

"There's nothing to be sorry about. That's why it's called the practice of medicine."

With that, Twomey abruptly spun on his heels and headed back to the ER.

**A couple of weeks later, I was finally** at a point where I wasn't too worried about my skills, whether it was caring for a guy whose limbs had been shredded or whose eardrums were ruptured and bleeding thanks to an IED. But when done, you were forced to watch a mental rerun of your every move and decision.

The night before, a gunshot wound made me think about all the ways we talked about a "breath." You take one, you lose one, steal one, hold one, waste one, save one, run out of ... the combinations went on and on. And those combinations dominated a corner of my mind as I watched a young soldier heave for air. As I did my exam, I couldn't shake the thought of what his lungs were trying to do. A simple act that we don't think very much about. Yet for this kid, I prayed he'd take another. And another. And he did.

The wounds of this war were certainly vicious but no worse than the ones my father witnessed, or the ones suffered by the soldier who lay in a field for two days during World War I, or for that matter, any war since someone decided to invent war.

I knew people back home saw and heard about the deaths and the wounds, but on a screen or in writing, it was all sanitized and sterile.

Just numbers. They didn't have to make the decisions we did. Save the arm? Save the leg? Save the soldier?

We had only seconds to decide what would define the rest of someone's life and, in turn, the lives of the loved ones who would care for



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- ✓ Joint Pain
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- ✓ High Blood Pressure
- ✓ Restless Legs Syndrome
- ✓ Poor Circulation
- ✓ Obesity
- ✓ Edema
- ✓ Insomnia
- ✓ Neuropathy
- ✓ Diabetes
- ✓ Arthritis
- ✓ Multiple Sclerosis
- ✓ Knee Pain
- ✓ Spinal Stenosis
- ✓ Lymphodema
- ✓ Lack of Energy



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People of all ages, with a wide variety of health issues, are using the **Exerciser 2000 Elite®** on a daily basis and receiving wonderful results.





## Customer Letters

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 2000. —C. Cordes

Little did I know when I ordered the Exercise 2000 Elite® that it would prove valuable to my wife of 62 years. I got it for the stiffness in my legs and it works perfectly to get me loosened up after playing tennis in the morning. When I come home I immediately get on the Exerciser 2000 Elite® for ten minutes and I feel great! My wife suffers from restless leg syndrome at night. Instead of walking the floor for a long period of time, she just gets on the Exerciser for ten minutes and the symptoms subside. After wrestling with restless legs for a long time she is all smiles in the morning. Happy days are here again! Just thought you would like to know. —Dick P.

I am 76 years old, heavy, stiff with arthritis and a leukemic for the past nine years. Using your machine twice a day has made me feel ten years younger. I also have a great deal more energy. When you say that your company is in the business of "helping people feel better", it is no fib!  
—Kate B.

I am 97 years old and have edema in my left foot and leg. My daughter saw the Exerciser 2000 in an ad and encouraged me to try it. It is helping a lot and I feel alive again. Thank you!—Grace R.

I have loved your product for many years now and couldn't live without one. It truly is the best product on the market...and I would never pay a person to do what this does better. You have the control of it all...and I love that. It definitely pays for itself many times over!! —Kathy C.

I am an 88 year old woman with multiple health problems. After seeing the ad for the Exerciser 2000 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.

As a Chiropractor, I would say the Exerciser 2000 enables people to benefit themselves at home. It is a valuable asset in moving lymph fluid, oxygenating the blood, increasing immune system function, maintaining mobility in the spine, and freeing up a spine that had become stiff and arthritic. —Garry G., D.C.



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them. With all the advances in military medicine that have been made, we played by a new set of rules, and with them came a new set of dilemmas. We saw soldiers who would have quickly died on the battlefield in wars past; in Iraq they came to us maimed, blinded, or with traumatic brain injuries. Save them with their horrific injuries or let them die peacefully? For us, the unspoken rule was save them every time.

And when our workdays were done, we sat together like a family at dinner and talked about beautiful and peaceful things. There'd never been a single hot word between us. We would often speak of family, baseball, a frosty cold beer spilling over the lip of a tall glass. We were wounded by what we did and what we saw.

But no more than those we cared for. A few days before, I was talking to a grimy sergeant who'd accompanied a wounded soldier from a firefight in Baquba. I looked at his arms and legs and realized he had tourniquets loosely in place around all four limbs. So did the rest of his squad.

"Doc, we know we're going to get hit one of these days. Better to have the tourniquets on ahead of time. All we've got to do is tighten them up if something bad happens." He chuckled grimly. "Might save you some work, sir."

All I could do was shake my head at him, and at the others. Many others.

**Someone watching from a distance** would have thought it was a group

of overgrown kids going to the circus or an amusement park. Eight doctors shouting, laughing, and stealing hats, getting ready to board our truck for a ride to the airstrip and the first leg of our journey home. After three months in country, some of the guys were done for good, a few of us knew we'd be back, but it didn't matter. We were all in one piece and heading home to our loved ones. It wasn't until we looked at the hospital in the distance that the laughter softly died. Two medevacs with wounded were landing on the helipad. They were specks in the sky, but we all knew the precious cargo on board.

As the distance between us and the base continued to grow, we realized we'd revisit this place often in the years to come, traveling back in sweat-soaked dreams on our darkest nights. I now knew what my father, and every other man and woman who has seen the horrors of war, knew: You may leave the war, but it never leaves you.

About a week later, we were at the Atlanta airport, where we would finally split up and fly to our respective homes. Our goodbyes, at least to the casual observer, probably seemed awkward, choppy, and brief. But the thin ribbon of a smile, the squint of the eyes, and the almost imperceptible nod of a head spoke deep and thoughtful volumes. We had spent a lifetime together in just a few months and didn't need words to communicate our feelings. We knew we would never be as close to another group of people in our lives.



**The sunrise reflecting off the foothills** of the Rockies was beautiful that early May morning. I put my feet up on the same lawn chair as I had what seemed like a lifetime ago. I took in the sweet smell of dew-covered grass that had been cut the night before. It was quiet, the perfect time to talk with my dad.

I'd been back from Iraq for close to eight months and was slowly adjusting to life in the civilian world. I told him how good it felt to be home but still struggled as I tried to figure out how Iraq had changed me, or whether anything I'd done had changed Iraq. That it might be years before I came to any conclusions, if I ever did.

I've never believed that you have to go to war to serve your country;

that choice was mine and mine alone. But I had been raised to believe some form of service is important and that there are a lot of ways to do it, whether it's working at a soup kitchen or just being a good neighbor. My dad showed me that when he gave up his Saturdays to put on magic shows for little kids living in the poorer sections of Newark or left early on Sundays to give an elderly widower a ride to church.

I thanked him for the lesson.

I also thanked him for teaching me the importance of honor, integrity, and humility, along with giving me advice about never being afraid to ask for help or extend a hand to offer help. I realized his words had, decades later, saved me in Iraq.

## TIME FOR EHARMONY

**Love is not always** a many-splendored thing. It's often a head-scratching thing, as these real-life tales collected by collegehumor.com prove:

My ex-girlfriend asked me if "countries are the big ones and states are the small ones." She was serious, and she's 19.

When I told my girlfriend that my mom wanted to take us to see musician Stevie Wonder, she responded, "Oh, I love magic!"

After I popped the question, my fiancée said two things: "Yes!" and "Now I have to change my Facebook status!"

I spent an hour getting my girlfriend to stop being mad at me over something I had done ... in her dreams.

My friend's boyfriend broke up with her by kicking her out of the guild on World of Warcraft.



*Jason Michaels, collegehumor.com*



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# Eater's Digest

**COMFORT  
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MADE  
LIGHT**

**Who says you can't** have your cake ... and a reasonable waistline too? Not celebrated chef **Rocco DiSpirito** (pictured here), whose new *Now Eat This!* remakes classic comfort foods at less than 350 calories per serving. And not Lauren Deen, whose *Cook Yourself Thin* TV show has spun off a new cookbook, *Cook Yourself Thin Faster*. With dishes like Chicken Cordon Bleu, Fettuccine Alfredo, Fish and Chips, and Quick Jambalaya, these cookbooks offer easy meals that are loaded with flavor—not fat.

KRITSADA PANICHGUL







**Traditional:**  
**1,360 calories;**  
**this version:**  
**just 333.**

## Chicken Cordon Bleu

*Makes 4 servings*

DiSpirito's cheese sauce is so creamy, it's hard to believe it's made without butter.

- ½ cup evaporated skim milk**
- 2 tsp. cornstarch**
- ½ cup shredded Swiss cheese**
- 3 tbs. chopped fresh chives**
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- Nonstick cooking spray**
- 4 chicken cutlets (4 oz. each), pounded very thin**
- 3 oz. thinly sliced lean ham (from the deli counter)**
- ⅓ cup whole wheat flour**
- 1½ cups whole wheat panko bread crumbs**
- 4 large egg whites**

**1.** In small saucepan, whisk evaporated milk into cornstarch. Bring milk mixture to boil over high heat, whisking constantly. Reduce heat to low and continue to cook until mixture has thickened, about 1 minute. Then whisk cheese into sauce until melted and smooth. Whisk in chives and season sauce with salt and pepper to taste.

**2.** Spray ice cube tray with cooking spray and divide cheese sauce equally among 8 cube holes. Freeze sauce until hard, about 2 hours.

**3.** Preheat oven to 450°F. Place wire rack on foil-lined baking sheet. Set aside.

**4.** Lay chicken cutlets on work surface and season with salt and pepper to taste. Arrange ham slices over chicken. Remove frozen

cheese sauce cubes from trays, using a fork if necessary to pry them out. Place 2 cubes in center of each piece of chicken. Roll up chicken to encase filling, and secure each package with 2 toothpicks.

**5.** Put flour in shallow dish. Place panko bread crumbs in another shallow dish. In medium bowl, whip egg whites with whisk until they are extremely foamy but not holding peaks. Working in batches, dredge chicken bundles in flour, shaking off any excess. Dip into egg whites to coat completely. Then dredge in bread crumbs to coat completely.

**6.** Place chicken bundles on wire rack. Spray chicken lightly with cooking spray and season with salt and pepper to taste. Bake until breading is golden brown and crispy outside and cheese sauce is fully melted, 25 to 30 minutes. Serve hot.



# Oscar Mayer

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## Fettuccine Alfredo

Makes 4 servings

Forget the cream: DiSpirito makes a rich but nutritious Alfredo sauce with Greek yogurt.

- 8 oz. whole wheat fettuccine**
- 1 tbs. butter**
- 3 garlic cloves, minced**
- 2 tsp. cornstarch**
- Pinch ground nutmeg**
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup low-fat, low-sodium chicken broth**
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese**
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup 5% Greek yogurt**
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper**

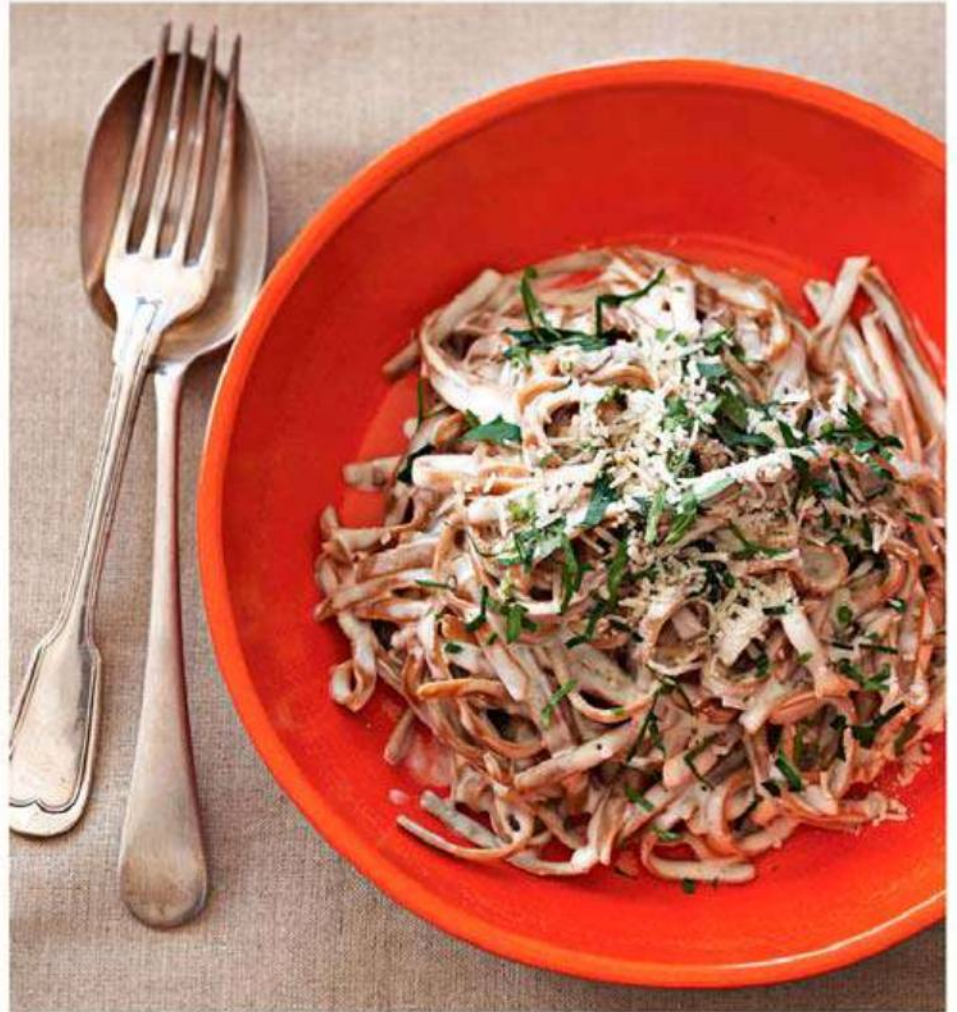
**1.** Bring large pot of salted water to a boil. Add fettuccine and cook according to package directions, 9 to 11 minutes; drain.

**2.** While pasta is cooking, melt butter in large sauté pan over medium heat. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, about 2 minutes.

**3.** Meanwhile, combine cornstarch and nutmeg in small bowl. Whisk in chicken broth until smooth. Pour mixture into sauté pan, raise heat, and bring sauce to simmer, whisking occasionally. Whisk in  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cheese until melted.

Remove sauté pan from heat and whisk in yogurt until sauce is smooth.

**4.** In large bowl, toss fettuccine with Alfredo sauce. Season with salt and pepper to taste if desired. Top pasta with remaining  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cheese and serve.



## Fish and Chips

Makes 4 servings

Deen bakes these fillets and fries in the oven for a crispy, golden crust.

- 4 Yukon gold potatoes, scrubbed**
- 3 tbs. olive oil**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt, preferably coarse sea salt**
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. pepper**

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cups cornflakes, crushed**
- 2 large egg whites**
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup all-purpose flour**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. whitefish fillets, cut into 5-by-1-in. strips**
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. cayenne**

**1.** Center one oven rack in oven and arrange second rack in position closest



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## Quick Jambalaya

Makes 4 servings

Deen lightens up this Creole classic by using turkey instead of sausage.

- 1 smoked turkey drumstick (about ½ lb.)
- 2 tsp. vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 small green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 celery stalk, chopped
- 1 can (15 oz.) diced tomatoes, drained

to broiler. Preheat oven to 450°F. Line 2 large rimmed baking sheets with nonstick aluminum foil.

**2.** Cut potatoes lengthwise into ¼-in. slices, then cut each slice lengthwise into ¼-in. pieces to form fries. Toss with 2 tbs. oil, ¼ tsp. salt, and pepper. Spread in single layer on one baking sheet. Bake on middle rack until golden brown and crisp, turning occasionally, about 25 minutes.

**3.** Meanwhile, combine crushed cornflakes and remaining 1 tbs. oil in shallow dish. In another shallow dish, beat egg whites until foamy. Spread flour in thin layer in third shallow dish. Season fish with remaining ¼ tsp. salt and cayenne. Coat fish with flour, shaking off any excess. Dip into egg whites, then dredge in crumb mixture, patting on crumbs to cover. Arrange fish in single layer on remaining prepared pan. Bake on rack closest to broiler until cooked through, about 6 to 8 minutes, turning midway through.

**4.** Remove potatoes from oven and reset oven control to broil. For extra crunch, broil fish until crumbs are golden brown, about 2 minutes. Serve with potatoes.

½ cups water

¼ tsp. salt

½ tsp. Cajun spice

1 cup long-grain white rice

Store-bought extra-hot sauce

**1.** Cut turkey meat off bone, then pull off and discard tendons and skin from meat. Cut turkey into ½-in. pieces.

**2.** Heat oil in 4-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat, then cook onion, bell pepper, and celery, stirring frequently, until onion begins to brown, about 5 minutes.

**3.** Add turkey, tomatoes, water, salt, and Cajun spice and bring to a boil, covered, over high heat. Stir in rice and bring to full rolling boil. Cover, reduce heat to low, and cook until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand, covered, for 5 minutes. Fluff with fork and serve with extra-hot sauce.

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Your Guide to What's Happening Now.

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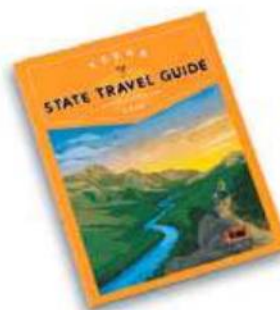
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# Quotes

ON MONEY



What's money? A man is a success if he gets up in the morning and goes to bed at night and in between does what he wants to do.

Bob Dylan

Of the billionaires I have known, money just brings out the basic traits in them. If they were jerks before they had money, they are simply jerks with a billion dollars.

Warren Buffett, *The Tao of Warren Buffett*

**Wisdom outweighs any wealth.**

Sophocles

Money frees you from doing things you dislike. Since I dislike doing nearly everything, money is handy.

Groucho Marx

Too many people spend money they haven't earned, to buy things they don't want, to impress people they don't like.

Will Rogers

**Got That?**

People say that money is not the key to happiness, but I always figured if you have enough money, you can have a key made.

Joan Rivers, *Enter Talking*



He who has money can eat sherbet in hell.

Proverb

It's better to do nothing with your money than something you don't understand.

Suze Orman

Empty pockets never held anyone back. Only empty heads and empty hearts can do that.

Norman Vincent Peale

**Money isn't everything, but it sure keeps you in touch with your children.**

J.P. Getty

Unexpected money is a delight. The same sum is a bitterness when you expected more.

Mark Twain

The safest way to double your money is to fold it over once and put it in your pocket.

Kin Hubbard, cartoonist



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# Word Power

EMILY COX & HENRY RATHVON

**Talk Big** We are a social species. Not only do we have thousands of words to use in conversation, we also have many to describe the very act of conversing. So the next time you're confabulating,<sup>1</sup> try out some of these words on your interlocutor.<sup>2</sup> For quiz answers, **turn the page**.

**1. gainsay** v.—A: repeat.

B: add, as an afterthought. C: deny.

**2. badinage** (bad-

uh-'nazh) *n.*—

A: swearwords.  
B: playful back-and-forth.  
C: stern warning.

**3. taciturn** ('tass-uh-

turn) *adj.*—A: chatty.  
B: quiet. C: afflicted with a lisp.

**4. wheedle** ('wee-

dull) *v.*—A: tease.  
B: speak breathily.  
C: persuade with flattery.

**5. loquacious** (low-'kway-

shus) *adj.*—A: quick to agree. B: talkative.  
C: to the point.

**6. wag** *n.*—A: unfair debater. B: joker. C: short digression.

**7. polemic** (puh-'lem-ick)

*n.*—A: opinionated attack.  
B: off-the-cuff remark.  
C: awkward pause.

**8. schmooze** ('shmooz)

*v.*—A: contradict oneself.  
B: chat. C: mispronounce.

**9. maunder** ('mawn-dur

or 'mahn-) *v.*—A: ramble.  
B: squabble. C: gurgle.

**10. rodomontade** (rod-

uh-mun-'tayd or -'tahd) *n.*—A: circular argument.  
B: talking while walking.  
C: bragging.

**11. repartee** (rep-ur-'tee

or -ar-'tay) *n.*—A: verbal habit, as “like” and “you know.” B: witty reply.  
C: rhetorical question.

**12. bombastic** (bahm-

'bass-tick) *adj.*—A: shocking. B: pompous. C: given to interrupting.

**13. prevaricate** (prih-'var-

uh-kate) *v.*—A: scream.  
B: emphasize. C: tell a half-truth.

**14. colloquy** ('coll-

uh-kwee) *n.*—  
A: dialogue.  
B: slang usage.  
C: translation.

**15. fustian** ('fuss-

chun) *adj.*—  
A: obscure.  
B: high-flown.  
C: mumbled.

**16. tête-à-tête** (tet-

uh-'tet) *n.*—A: comeback.  
B: roundtable. C: private conversation.

**17. insinuate** (in-'sin-yoo-

ate or -ya-wayt) *v.*—  
A: make hand gestures.  
B: embellish. C: artfully suggest.

<sup>1</sup>chatting

<sup>2</sup>participant in a dialogue



## Sound Smarter

**Reticent** is not a synonym for *reluctant*. A reticent person is quiet, while a reluctant person is unwilling (though both may be infuriating). Someone could be reluctant—not reticent—to change his bad habits.





## Answers

1. **gainsay**—[C] deny. It cannot be *gainsaid* that the sign maker who spelled “Exit” wrong is an idiot.
2. **badinage**—[B] playful back-and-forth. The team’s locker-room *badinage* is not for the squeamish.
3. **taciturn**—[B] quiet. The only *taciturn* member of a large and boisterous family, Mavis grew up to become a psychotherapist.
4. **wheedle**—[C] persuade with flattery. The saleswoman *wheedled* me into buying this dress.
5. **loquacious**—[B] talkative. My *loquacious* seatmate bent my ear all the way from LaGuardia to LAX.
6. **wag**—[B] joker. Ever the *wag*, Mike stood in the receiving line clutching a joy buzzer.
7. **polemic**—[A] opinionated attack. The meeting was interrupted by Jay’s *polemic* against the copying machine.
8. **schmooze**—[B] chat. He doesn’t know the difference between a driver and a putter—he just likes *schmoozing* at the country club.

9. **maunder**—[A] ramble. We listened to Uncle Horace’s *maundering* stories, one right after another.

10. **rodomontade**—[C] bragging. The actress’s Oscar acceptance speech came off as 45 seconds of unabashed *rodomontade*.

11. **repartee**—[B] witty reply. When Curly asked, “What’s that monkey got that I ain’t got?” Moe’s *repartee* was “A longer tail.”

12. **bombastic**—[B] pompous. The club president’s speech would have seemed less *bombastic* without Tchaikovsky’s “1812 Overture” playing in the background.

13. **prevaricate**—[C] tell a half-truth. When asked if he’d broken the window, the Little Leaguer *prevaricated*, claiming that as a southpaw, his aim couldn’t have been that good.

14. **colloquy**—[A] dialogue. The professors’ highbrow *colloquy* quickly turned into a slugfest.

15. **fustian**—[B] high-flown. The candidate’s *fustian* oratory barely disguised his poor grasp of the issue.

16. **tête-à-tête**—[C] private conversation. After a quick *tête-à-tête* with his attorney, the defendant decided to change his plea.

17. **insinuate**—[C] artfully suggest. When my friends chipped in for my birthday present—a gift certificate for a housecleaning service—I had to wonder what they were *insinuating*.

## VOCABULARY RATINGS

- 11 and below: speechless
- 12–14: articulate • 15–17: eloquent



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**A**s my sister relaxed on the couch, her head comfortably leaning against the crook of her husband's arm, her cell phone beeped. It was a text message from her husband: "Move."

*Amber Cariker, Norman, Oklahoma*

**My son Timothy** was his brother's best man. To commemorate the event, Daniel bought him a silver mug, but the engraver made a slight mistake. The mug read "Best man once, a bother forever."

*Daniel Kepple, New Alexandria, Pennsylvania*

**To get his mind off** his losing streak at the racetrack, I took my friend horseback riding. Being a novice, he freaked when his mount took off.

"How do I stop?" he yelled.  
"Bet on it!" I hollered back.

*Rich Roberts, Kings Park, New York*

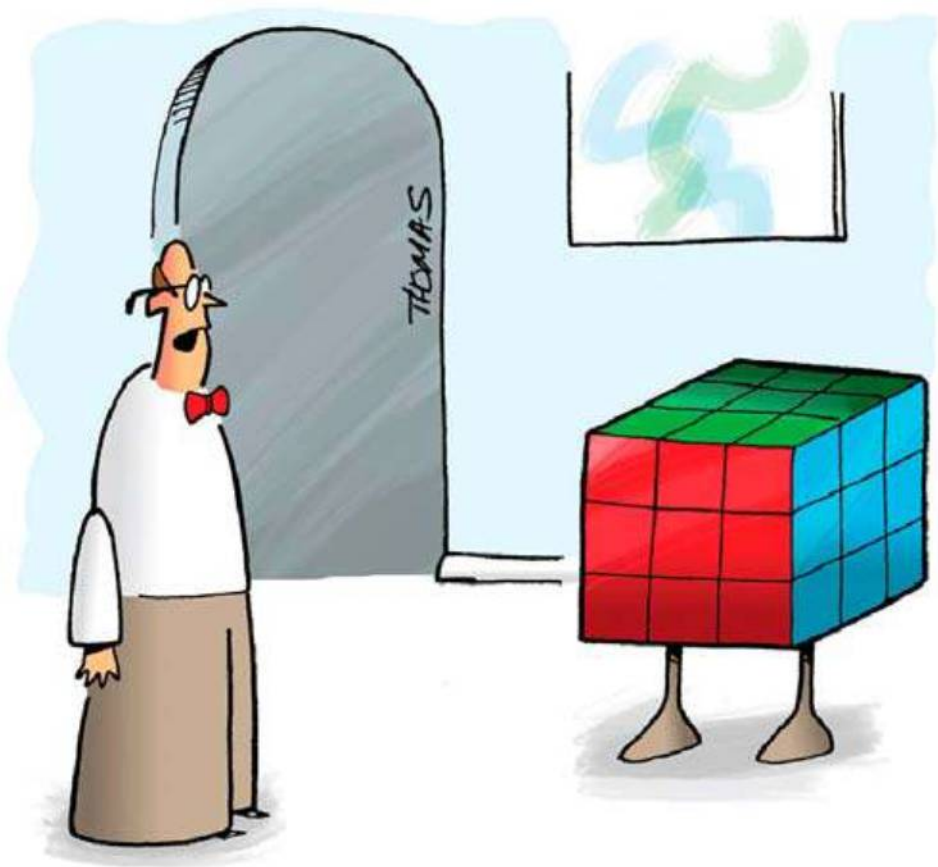
**Every year** on my birthday, I looked forward to my aunt's gift—a scarf, hat, or sweater knitted

**Seen outside a professor's door at Georgetown College: "Psychology 376: Dying, Grieving, and Coping. Take for your major or minor, or as a fun elective."**

*Rebecca Abbott, Georgetown, Kentucky*

by hand. One year, she must have had better things to do because I received a ball of yarn, knitting needles, and a how-to-knit book. Her card read "Scarf, some assembly required." *Dionne Obeso, Hollister, California*

**My wife took** our three-year-old to church for the first time. Getting impatient while waiting for the Mass to start, he turned to her and asked, "What time does Jesus get here?" *itmademyday.com*



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**My wife and I** were at my high school reunion. As I looked around, I noticed the other men in their expensive suits with their bulging stomachs.

Proud of the fact that I weighed just five pounds more than I did when I was in high school—the result of trying to beat a living out of a rocky hillside farm—I said to my wife, “I’m the only guy here who can wear the suit he graduated in.”

She glanced at the prosperous crowd. “You’re the only one here who has to.” *George Crenshaw*

**When our son, Joe,** turned six, my husband and I decided it was high time for him to ditch the Winnie the Pooh underwear for something a bit more studly. So I bought him some Incredible Hulk briefs. When Joe got home, he found the package lying on his bed.

“Finally!” he exulted. “Adult underwear!” *Nora Dorso*

**With fire alarms** blaring at my mom’s apartment complex, she grabbed her favorite bathing suit and ran out.

“A bathing suit?” I said later. “Of all the priceless things in that apartment, that’s what you chose to save?”

“Material things come and go,” she said. “But a one-piece suit that doesn’t make you look fat is impossible to replace.” *Cathy Peacock*

**At first it was funny.** Whenever our mother played the piano, our poodle would sing along—enthusiastically, in an earsplitting howl. We would all laugh, but after a while, my dad couldn’t take it any longer.

“For Pete’s sake,” he begged, “play something the dog doesn’t know.”

*Temple Lymberis*

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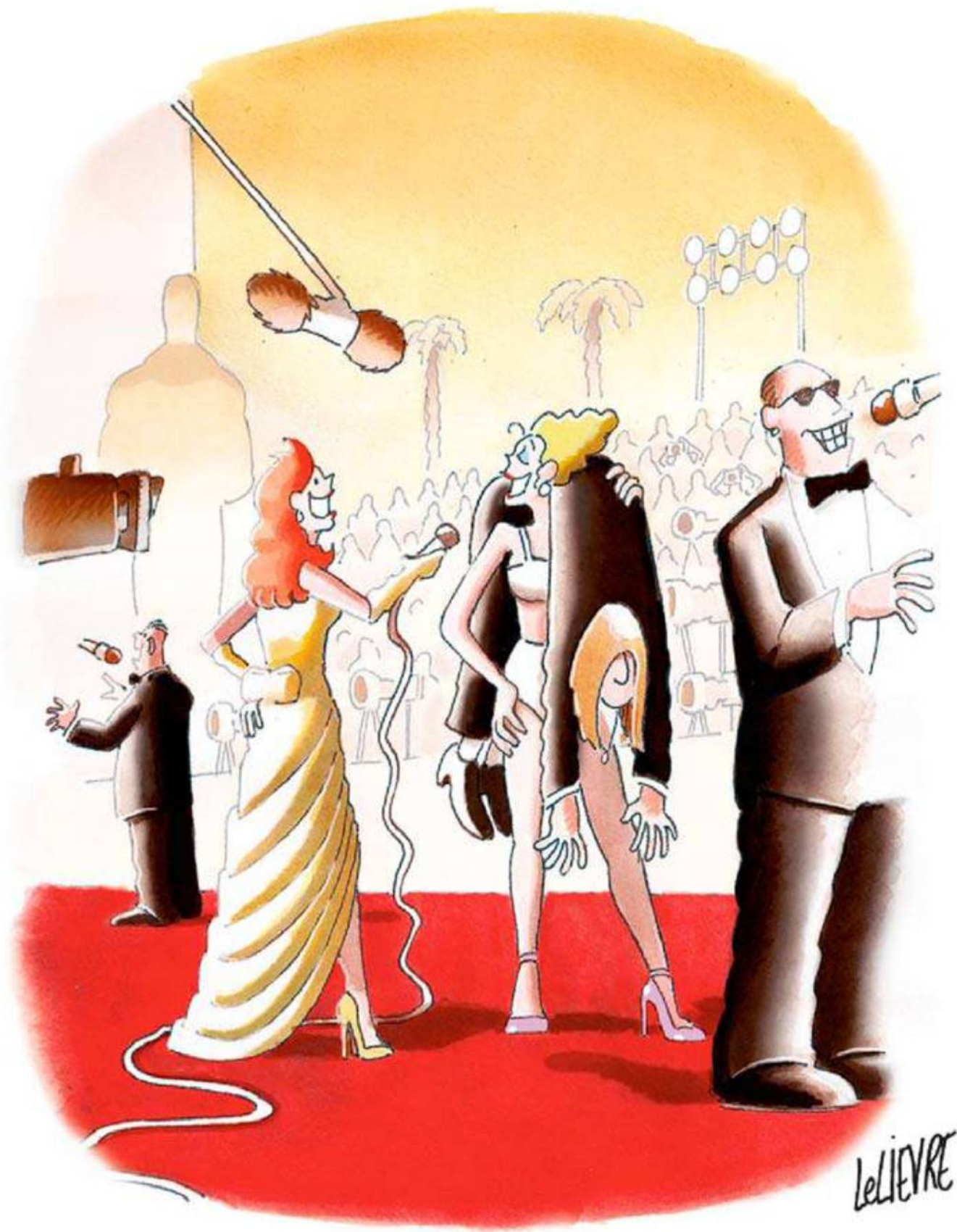
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