

# Reader's digest

JANUARY 2014

## BORN TO BE BRAVE

An RD ORIGINAL

### SLEEP SOUNDLY TONIGHT

From **THE DOCTORS**

### PLANE CRASH IN THE WILDERNESS

From **ANCHORAGE  
DAILY NEWS**

### THE ULTIMATE DEVILED EGG

From **GARDEN & GUN**

### CHEER UP! 20 WAYS 2014 WILL ROCK

An RD ORIGINAL

### IMAGINE THE SCHOOL OF YOUR FAMILY'S DREAMS

From **SALON.COM**

QUOTABLE QUOTES.....	152
LAUGHTER, THE BEST MEDICINE.....	76
YOU BE THE JUDGE.....	18
LIFE IN THESE UNITED STATES .....	26



What's  
the Gecko's  
favorite book?

**The Wonderful Lizard of Oz.**

For another joke, text GEICO to 51684.  
For more savings, contact GEICO today.

**GEICO**<sup>®</sup>

geico.com | 1-800-947-AUTO (2886) | Local Office



You will receive 1 text message. Message and data rates may apply. Text HELP for help. Your information will not be sold or used for any other purpose. Some discounts, coverages, payment plans and features are not available in all states or all GEICO companies. GEICO is a registered service mark of Government Employees Insurance Company, Washington, D.C. 20076; a Berkshire Hathaway Inc. subsidiary. GEICO Gecko image © 1999-2013. © 2013 GEICO

# Contents

JANUARY 2014

- Cover Story**
- 66 THE BRAVE AMONG US**  Does courage live in the heart or the mind? What compels some people to run toward danger and others to run from it? **JEFF WISE** investigates.
- Inspiration**
- 78 20 REASONS WHY THIS YEAR WILL BE BETTER THAN LAST** Experts, authors, and thought leaders agree: 2014 will be very good indeed.
- The Stranger Who Changed My Life**
- 86 THE HORSE WHISPERER** The road was wet, and we crashed, flipping our horse trailer. Then a mysterious man appeared out of nowhere. **KRISTEN IVERSEN**
- Drama in Real Life**
- 92 PLANE CRASH IN THE WILDERNESS** Dense clouds obscuring his way, a pilot flies into a mountain. How could this family survive? **KYLE HOPKINS**, FROM *ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS*
- Human Interest**
- 100 LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE BOYS!** A reporter meets two young athletes for a TV story—and then can't walk away. **LISA FENN**, FROM *ESPN.COM*
- Confession**
- 106 I'M SO NOT EATING THAT** A lifelong fussy eater is unapologetic about saying, "No, thank you!" **CHUCK THOMPSON**, FROM *OUTSIDE*
- Perspective**
- 112 SCHOOL IS A PRISON AND DAMAGES OUR KIDS** Education has become an American institution—of the worst kind. Plus: Readers sound off. **PETER GRAY**, FROM *SALON.COM*

happy  
new  
year.

p. | 78



FIREFIGHTER  
JORDAN CARROLL  
OF NEW YORK  
CITY'S LADDER  
135 WAS  
PHOTOGRAPHED  
BY MIKE MCGREGOR;  
GROOMING BY  
BIRGITTE  
PHILIPPIDES FOR  
SALLY HARLOR.

4 Editor's Note    8 Letters



P. | **126**


---

## READER FAVORITES

---

- 26 Life in These United States
- 31 Faces of America
- 32 Points to Ponder
- 46 All in a Day's Work
- 64 News from the World of Medicine
- 76 Laughter, the Best Medicine
- 91 That's Outrageous!
- 105 Laugh Lines
- 120 Photo of Lasting Interest
- 133 Word Power
- 136 See the World ... Differently
- 149 RD.com
- 151 Humor in Uniform
- 152 Quotable Quotes

### Everyday Heroes

- 10 The Gracious Givers**   
Three acts of generosity inspire others around them.

---

## VOICES & VIEWS

---

### Department of Wit

- 15 Our Empty Nest**  
Rick Bragg never thought he'd miss the noise, the mess, and the casual insults.  
*FROM SOUTHERN LIVING*

### You Be the Judge

- 18 The Case of the Benchside Baptism**  
CAITLIN O'CONNELL

### Finish This Sentence

- 22 Twenty Years Ago Today, I Was ...**

### Words of Lasting Interest

- 24 Why It's Great to Be a Nerd**  
A *Star Trek* actor delivers some wisdom to an expectant mom's unborn child.  
WIL WHEATON

### The RD Interview

- 28 Sonia Sotomayor**  
A Q&A with the salsa-dancing, baseball-loving Supreme Court justice. DARYL CHEN



## ART OF LIVING

- 35 One Key Move** Ten tricks to improve your life. JOE KITA
- Food**
- 40 The Devil's in the Eggs** 🍳  
THE EDITORS OF *GARDEN & GUN*,  
FROM *THE SOUTHERNER'S HANDBOOK*
- 42 Tricky Words on Food Labels** ARIKA OKRENT,  
FROM *MENTAL FLOSS*
- Home**
- 44 How Happy Homeowners Think**  
LAURA GASKILL, FROM HOZZ.COM
- 45 8 Old Wives' Tales That Are All Too True** SHANA ECKER, FROM HUFFINGTONPOST.COM
- Technology**
- 48 E-mail Etiquette Rant**  
NICK BILTON, FROM *NEW YORK TIMES*
- Money**
- 51 Why It Costs What It Costs: A Vacuum Cleaner**  
CAITLIN O'CONNELL
- 52 Sneaky Credit Score Saboteurs** BETHY HARDEMAN,  
FROM CREDITKARMA.COM
- Health**
- 54 A Day in the Life of Your Knee** JILL PROVOST
- 58 GMO Foods: Dangerous or Innocuous?** CHRIS WOOLSTON
- 60 6 Reasons You Got a Bad Night's Sleep**  
THE PHYSICIANS OF *THE DOCTORS*


## WHO KNEW?

- 122 13 Things Lottery Winners Won't Tell You**  
Is all that money a blessing—or a curse? MICHELLE CROUCH
- 124 Outside the Box**  
Seriously crazy FedEx shipments.  
DAVID ZAX, FROM *FAST COMPANY*
- 125 To Have and to Hold**  
One couple wouldn't let religion, custom, or even burial come between them. ALISON CAPORIMO
- 126 Return from Space**  
An astronaut's firsthand account of an epic landing.  
FROM *READER'S DIGEST CANADA*
- 128 As Seen on TV** 📺  
We tested the ten most tempting household helpers.  
PERRI O. BLUMBERG
- From Our Shelves**
- 140 Get a 21-Day Tummy**  
Our excerpt reveals foods that slim and soothe your belly.  
FROM RD BOOKS



# Editor's Note

## Read Up!

 **I JUST ASKED MY FRIEND** Steve to tell me his favorite things to read. Here is his answer: “I like to read my bank statement on payday. I love to read personal e-mails. I read Hemingway’s short stories when I need a touchstone for writing, and I read newspapers because I always have. I love to read *Reader’s Digest* because it’s endlessly inventive. [Thanks, but I wasn’t fishing.] And I have a book of David Letterman’s Top 10 Lists that I’ve read over and over again and turn to when I need a laugh.”

Does your list reflect the same desire for tradition and discovery, amusement and enrichment? I know mine does. As we redesigned *Reader’s Digest*, we aimed that high. The makeover debuts with this month’s issue (as does our new mobile app; see page 111 for details).

Here’s what we changed and why.

Let’s start with the logo, which now enhances the first word in our title: *Reader’s*. It broadcasts our commitment to reading and emphasizes whom we put first. Every change we made aims to improve your experience while reading our magazine.

How about our new cover look? We decided to stop trying to grab your attention in the supermarket checkout line. Instead, we were inspired by the table of contents that graced *RD*’s covers for decades and better highlights the uniqueness of what we are—a tidy collection of uplifting true stories, family-friendly humor, and surprising and useful information. We are creators, and we are finders, filtering the



PHOTO/ILLUSTRATION CREDIT

endless amount of material available to all of us, all the time. We hope our cover reflects this and welcomes you by appearing smart, timeless, and collectible. And don't miss this—the subscriber cover designed as a removable bookmark so you can save your place in our pages.

You cheer when we share stories that reflect the power of humanity and the extraordinary accomplishments of ordinary people, so there's more of that. You applaud coverage of social affairs and crave a variety of voices and views—thus a new section was born. We organized everything into easy-to-follow categories with some familiar names (Art of Living, page 35) and fresh ones (Who Knew? page 122), with a robust section of features at the center.

We decided to improve our mix of story lengths and styles: You'll get longer reads when a tale needs to be told, briefer pieces when the point can be made quickly. We'll run essays when a writer has a thought-provoking point to make, and lists when they are the fastest way to impart information. And, of course, this wouldn't be *Reader's Digest* if we didn't break up all the seriousness with some fun—shareable jokes, witty one-liners at the end of

some articles, and beautiful photographs that tell stories themselves.

We invested in paper that's whiter and thicker because that makes the type easier to read and the pages easier to turn. We refined the design, introducing simpler graphics, iconic photography, and more modern illustration. In our pages, the stories shine.

Over the years, you've told us that we ran too many ads and that they overshadowed the editorial content. Our business

team took a bold step to address this by setting a limit on the number of advertising pages we will accept. We're also asking advertisers more for the privilege of being in *RD*, and we are delighted to discover that our best partners want to be among more exclusive company in the pages you read so closely.

The holidays always remind me that experiences make better gifts than things. I hope we've offered you the ultimate reading experience. We want to earn every cent of your dollar. If you think we're worth it, spread the word. Better yet, treat those you love to subscriptions of their own ([rd.com/subscribe](http://rd.com/subscribe)). Happy New Year.



I invite you to e-mail me at: [liz@rd.com](mailto:liz@rd.com).

---

“

***We've taken  
the bold step  
of limiting the  
number of ads  
we accept.***

---



TRAVELTEX.COM > THINGS TO DO > COWBOY



FUN FOR THE WHOLE POSSE



**A CHANCE TO SAY “YIPPEE-KI-YAY!”**



RANCH EXPERIENCES



CHUCK WAGON DINING



COWBOY CULTURE



SADDLE UP, PARTNER



WIDE OPEN SPACES



RODEO-OOOO!



WILDLIFE



RIDE OFF INTO THE SUNSET



FILMED ON LOCATION



WESTERN MUSEUMS





IT GIVES YOU A WHOLE

**NEW RESPECT**

FOR THE

**GREAT BIG STEAK**

**YOU'LL HAVE**

*When you're done*

**THE TEXAS COWBOY EXPERIENCE**

**EXPLORE IT AND OTHER ADVENTURES**

AT **TRAVELTEX.COM/COWBOY**

**TEXAS**

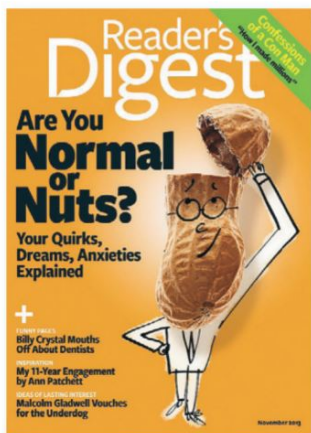
*It's like a*

**WHOLE OTHER COUNTRY**

**AMARILLO**  
VISITAMARILLOTX.COM

# Letters

COMMENTS ON THE NOVEMBER ISSUE



## WORD TO THE WISE

My husband was one of the people scammed by “Jim” (“Confessions of a Con Artist”). Your article was encouraging to us; now we can take comfort in knowing we were scammed by a true professional! We learned a painful financial lesson that will stay with us forever. Thank you for publishing this article. I hope it will help others avoid becoming the victims of con artists.

MARIE EDWARDS, *Tehachapi, California*

## TEARS OF JOY

Thank you for your Editor’s Note (“My Heart’s in Yosemite”). I was born and raised in California but had never been to Yosemite until a few years ago, when my fiancé took me. That first time, standing in the Valley, I looked toward the heavens with tears running down my face and said, “You cannot stand on the Valley floor of Yosemite and deny there is a God.” Your remembrance of your father took me back to that moment. Thank you!

LINDEE FAIRBROTHER, *Encinitas, California*

## TEARS OF LAUGHTER

Billy Crystal’s piece about his experience with dentists (“Drilling for Laughs”) was probably one of the funniest things I’ve read! I literally laughed until I had tears rolling down my cheeks. Mr. Crystal is as funny as ever and still has us in stitches.

RASHIDA TAYLOR, *Riverview, Florida*

## RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS

“Big Bucks for a Burger” (Everyday Heroes) really moved me. I have always said that if I ever won the



New York Lottery, I would love to give my winnings to average, hardworking people at random. What a joy it would be to see happiness in the face of someone who would not be expecting the money!

**MICHELLE RUGGIERI**, *Webster, New York*

## A LIFESAVING QUESTION

A friend who is also a survivor of domestic violence (“A Fateful Knock,” *Family Digest*) woke me up when she asked, “Why do you feel that you deserve this?” It is the most important question I’ve ever been asked. It made me contemplate the situation I was in, and it inspired me to leave the relationship. Her question saved my life.

**ERIKA LINDBERG**, *Rochester, Michigan*

## DEATH AND FACEBOOK

Four days after I read “How to Die on Facebook,” my brother died. Within hours, his Facebook page exploded with posts from friends and family sharing their thoughts, prayers, and memories of him. I found this very comforting and check in every day to see what is new. My sister-in-law will keep his profile active because she also finds the posts consoling.

**Y. J.**, *via e-mail*

## KNOW YOUR WEAKNESSES

I liked your interview with Malcolm Gladwell (“The Truth About Underdogs”). I have a different explanation for the outcome of the David and Goliath story: Goliath was defeated because it never occurred to him that he would be vulnerable to David’s rock—and then he lost his head over it.

**J. A.**, *via e-mail*

## THOUGHTS IN ACTION?

“Agreeable America” (*Pop! Digest*) tells us that 90 percent of Americans surveyed believe it’s their duty to vote. Really? Where in the world are these “believers” when the voting participation figures are released for any election we hold?

**JOHN HARDING**, *Sterling, Ohio*

## NOT SO FUNNY

I was upset that under “Yin & Yang: Teacher Edition” (*Life in These United States*) there was a negative connection between poor grades and a job at Burger King. There is a tremendous value in education, but none of us have the right to insult an entire group of people who are earning a living, perhaps doing the best they can. I hope it was just a joke, albeit a thoughtless one. **R**

**ANTHONY BARCIA**, *Lynbrook, New York*

**Send letters** to [letters@rd.com](mailto:letters@rd.com) or Letters, Reader’s Digest, PO Box 6100, Harlan, Iowa 51593-1600. Include your full name, address, e-mail, and daytime phone number. We may edit letters and use them in all print and electronic media. **Contribute** Send us your funny jokes, true stories, and quotes, and if we publish one in a print edition of *Reader’s Digest*, we’ll pay you \$100. To submit, visit [readersdigest.com/submit](http://readersdigest.com/submit), or write to us at Jokes, Box 6226, Harlan, Iowa 51593-1726. Please include your full name and address in your entry. **Do Business** Subscriptions, renewals, gifts, address changes, payments, account information, and inquiries: [readersdigest.com/help](http://readersdigest.com/help), 877-732-4438, or write to us at Reader’s Digest, PO Box 6095, Harlan, Iowa 51593-1595.



# EVERYDAY HEROES



Three acts of generosity  
inspire others around them

## The Gracious Givers

### **PAYING IT BACKWARD**

Eileen Taylor had something sweet on her mind in the drive-through line at Heav'nly Donuts. But it wasn't a doughnut. Just the day before, a stranger ahead of her in line had generously paid for her coffee. "[The gesture] made such a big difference in my day," says Eileen, 55. She had recently lost her job as a physician's assistant, and money was tight. But Eileen was inspired to pick up the \$12 tab of the family in the car behind hers.

What she didn't know was that her kindness would go viral, and in a

chain reaction, dozens of other drive-through patrons would be prompted to pay backward too. In two and a half hours, 55 drivers paid for the order of the person behind them in line.

The doughnut shop's employees had seen this before. In fact, this Heav'nly Donuts, in Amesbury, Massachusetts, was known as a special place—manager Wendy Clement says her customers are the “best in the world.” But, even so, the workers were amazed when a 15th car pulled up to the window and the driver paid for the next patron— they knew then that they were on ➤➤

*"It's the best  
\$12 I've ever  
spent," says  
Eileen Taylor.*



a streak. By the time the lines for the drive-through and at the counter were empty, the shop had more than doubled its previous record.

Later that day, Eileen swung back to pick up a coffee. Wendy told her what had happened. “Everyone was all aflutter,” says Eileen.

Now working again as a physician’s assistant, Eileen visits Heav’nly Donuts every Saturday morning, grabbing a coffee—and paying for the order of the customer behind her.

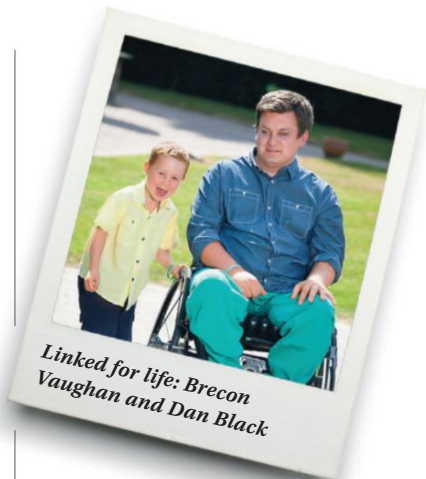
CAITLIN O’CONNELL

## A SELFLESS SPONSOR

In 2009, Dan Black was hit by a car in his hometown of Chepstow, Wales, as he was biking to his job at a grocery store. The accident left him paralyzed from the chest down. During his recovery, he suffered a stroke that rendered his right arm all but useless. Once a promising guitarist, Dan, now 25, lives with his parents and requires around-the-clock care that costs nearly \$300,000 a year.

After the accident, a friend of Dan’s started the Help Dan Black fund to defray some of Dan’s medical expenses. Dan learned about an experimental stem cell treatment in China that could enable him to walk again. After four years, donations to Help Dan Black and money from several fundraisers totaled nearly \$30,000.

One day, in the summer of 2013, a news story caught the eye of Dan’s mother, Michaela, who then shared



*Linked for life: Brecon Vaughan and Dan Black*

the article with her son. The story featured a local five-year-old boy named Brecon Vaughan, who had a rare form of cerebral palsy and had never walked without assistance. The boy’s family had created a website with which to raise the nearly \$100,000 needed for a trip to the St. Louis Children’s Hospital, where treatment was offered that could help Brecon walk. Only half the amount had been raised, said the report.

Dan deliberated. Then, after considering that his own dream of walking could be years away, he donated his \$30,000 to Brecon’s cause.

“I wouldn’t wish getting paralyzed on anyone,” Dan told another newspaper. “I know how it feels to walk. Brecon doesn’t. He needs it much more than I do now.”

Dan’s generosity received a great deal of attention, and contributions started pouring in to the Vaughan

website. The family soon exceeded their fund-raising goal. They've pledged excess funds, about \$17,000, to the Tree of Hope charity, which helps sick children in the United Kingdom find specialized medical help. In October, Brecon and his family traveled to St. Louis to begin treatment.

"What Dan did is brilliant," Brecon's mother, Ann Drewery, said. "It is a phenomenal gift."

DAMON BERES

## A RECEPTION TO REMEMBER

September 15, 2013, was a perfect day for a wedding in Atlanta—sunny and 78 degrees. Tamara Fowler had planned to get married that day. But a month before the nuptials, she had phoned her parents in Roswell, Georgia, to tell them she was calling off the wedding.

Her parents, Willie and Carol Fowler, were "devastated," Carol says. Why, then, on the same September day, were Willie, Carol, and Tamara eating, drinking, and dancing among hundreds of other revelers at the Villa Christina in Atlanta?

Because when Carol and Willie faced

the prospect of losing 75 percent of their deposit at the upscale Italian restaurant they'd booked for their daughter's reception, Willie had an idea. As Carol started to call the venue to cancel, her husband stopped her. "We're going to have my birthday party there and invite the homeless as our guests," Willie said. (His 70th birthday was on September 16.)

So Carol phoned a nonprofit agency and asked it to extend an invitation to local disadvantaged families; all told, 237 men, women, and children showed up.

During a cocktail hour, children played tag on the restaurant's huge lawn and sipped pink lemonade. On the outdoor patio, adults munched on hors d'oeuvres like coconut shrimp, mini croissants stuffed with chicken salad, and macaroni and cheese shooters. After dinner, they ended the evening dancing in the ballroom. "Our guests told us it was the best meal they'd ever eaten," says Carol.

At one point, Tamara pulled her mother into a hug, whispering, "I'm glad we were able to help so many people rather than let this go to waste." Says Carol, "We got more out of this experience than we ever thought we would." **R**

ALYSSA JUNG



# HAS NO LOVE FOR LOVE HANDLES.

Drink V8® 100%  
Vegetable Juice as  
part of a reduced  
calorie diet along  
with regular exercise.

70 calories

0g fat

3g dietary fiber



**Could've had a V8.®**

V8juice.com



# VOICES & VIEWS

Department of Wit

## Our Empty Nest

BY RICK BRAGG

FROM SOUTHERN LIVING



RICK BRAGG is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author. His seven books include the bestselling memoir *All Over but the Shoutin'*.

THE BOY HAS gone off to college now. And here I am, left with all the peace and quiet I have learned not to miss.

I was not a man who wished for children. It seemed contrary to the notion of human happiness, like wishing for chiggers, or tinnitus, or the more awful forms of gout. I was single most of my life, and parenthood was something that afflicted other people. I watched it from a distance, and shuddered.

When they were small, children seemed to scream for no apparent reason. As teenagers, they seemed to lose all sanity, ping-ponging through mood swings like Ricochet Rabbit and marking their bodies with more tattoos than a harpooner from *Moby-Dick*, while listening to music with more foul language than my uncles used drunk at a rooster fight. In between infancy and high school graduation (if their parents were lucky), they were mostly just unclean.

Then one entered my life. I did not plan on him. He just came in the package, like a ninth piece of chicken in an

eight-piece box, and, in time, made me pay for all the happiness I had enjoyed. He was 11 when he appeared, past the screaming years and before the age where everything that fell from my mouth was deemed idiotic. I got him in the unclean years, when I tried to avoid close contact with him because I was never quite certain where he had been. This is the child who once licked spaghetti sauce off the underside of his arm. No more needs to be said.

When he discovered girls he got much cleaner, but suddenly I was unfit to be around. I always said the wrong thing, or a dumb thing, or too loud a thing. When he had a girl over, I was banished to whatever room he was farthest from, like a cave troll.

“I used to be cool,” I said. “Some people think I still am.”

He gave me a pitying look. So did his mom.

And now he is gone to college and I miss him, which is how I know there is indeed a God and He is a great Prankster, and knows how to make a man pay for his transgressions. He remembers that long-ago day I sulked in my airplane seat, thinking over and over that the screaming baby one row over should’ve been

left at home, even if it meant her grandparents wouldn’t see her until the cotillion.

I am not alone in this sadness in our house, in this empty nest. I barely even had a nest, before it was empty,

though I guess I have no one to blame but me. His mom misses him, too, of course. Even the dog misses him.

The dog loved the boy. Woody Bo met him every day at the door after school, knowing he was home because every time the boy locked his car, it gave a short, quick

honk. Woody, who is too fat to jump (usually), bounded into the air at the sound, defying gravity, flinging rugs about, and destroying furniture on a wild-eyed dash to the door. A dog should love his boy, I suppose.

His world is in pieces now. The boy has been gone for months. The dog will not even go in his room—not one time since he left. Recently, my wife had to use the boy’s car and, unsure if she had locked it, aimed the fancy remote thingamajig at the window and pressed “lock.” The horn gave its quick honk, and the dog bounded into the air and raced to the door, his tail wagging.

He sat there a long time.

I guess I know how he feels.



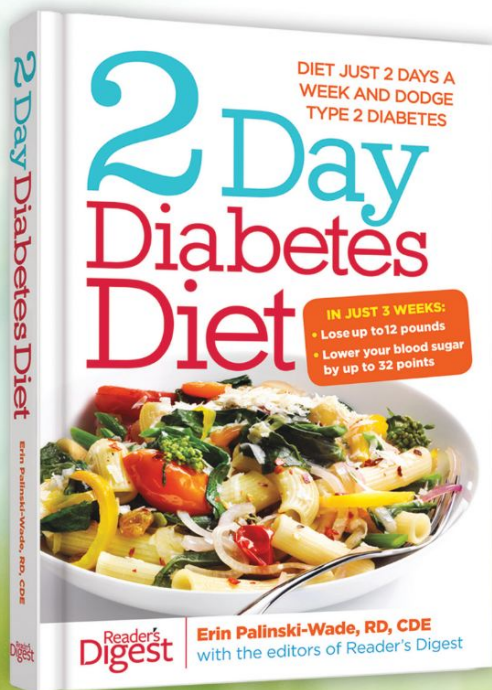
***The dog’s world  
is in pieces now.  
He will not even  
go in the boy’s  
bedroom—not  
one time since  
he left.***



ADVERTISEMENT

# Diet just **2** days a week to **FIGHT DIABETES** & **LOSE WEIGHT!**

**MELT STUBBORN FAT** in one-third the time with  
this new meal plan from *Reader's Digest*.



- ✓ **Manage Blood Sugar**
- ✓ **Drop Extra Pounds**
- ✓ **Enjoy Delicious Meals**

Whether you're *prediabetic, at-risk,* or *living with type 2,* find out why **dieting just two days a week** can work **BETTER** than a full-time diet.

Try it **FREE** for 14 Days  
Go to **2DayDiabetes.com**

Available wherever books are sold

Is it legal for a court to change a child's first name?

# The Case of the Benchside Baptism

BY CAITLIN O'CONNELL

WHEN JALEESA MARTIN and Jawaan McCullough appeared in Tennessee family court in August 2013, they were hoping that the judge would settle a dispute about their baby's last name. Jaleesa wanted eight-month-old Messiah DeShawn to have her last name; Jawaan wanted another McCullough in the family.

Cocke County Magistrate Lu Ann Ballew quickly ruled that the boy should be given the last name of McCullough, after his father.

Case closed? Nope.

Judge Ballew also handed down a second, unexpected ruling: In the opinion of the court, "the name Messiah is reserved solely for the son of God." She ordered the couple to change their son's first name.

"The word *Messiah* is a title that has been earned by only one person, Jesus Christ," Judge Ballew said.

After giving the bewildered parents just an hour to pick a new name for little Messiah, Judge Ballew called a recess. When the couple failed to produce a name, the judge did it herself, incorporating both his mother's and father's surnames into one: Martin DeShawn McCullough. Then Judge Ballew instructed them to amend the boy's birth certificate.

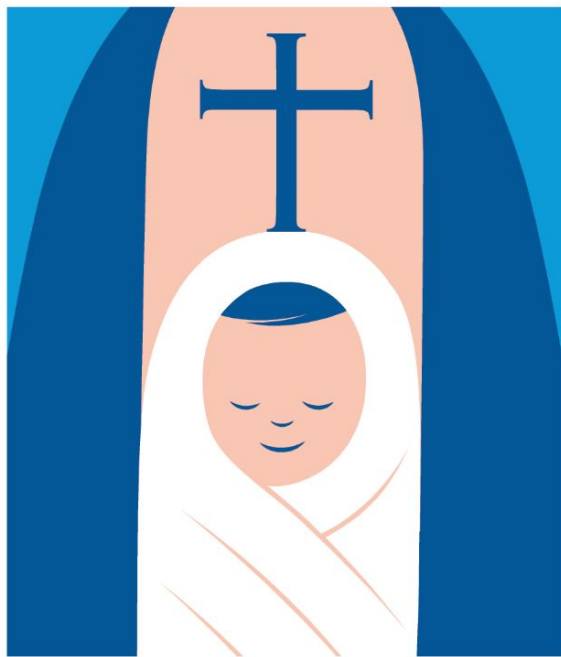
In her ruling, Judge Ballew wrote that her decision was in the child's best interest: "The name Messiah places an undue burden on him that as a human being he cannot fulfill." Additionally, she said the name would offend the area's large

Christian population, putting the boy “at odds with a lot of people, and at this point, he has had no choice in what his name is.” (The judge probably didn’t realize that Messiah was one of the 400 most popular baby names in 2012.)

After court was adjourned, a stunned Martin told reporters that she would not abide by the ruling, saying it was “ridiculous.”

“I was shocked,” said Martin. “I didn’t name my son Messiah because it means God, and I didn’t think a judge could make me change my baby’s name because of her religious beliefs.”

In the weeks that followed the ruling, the case attracted nationwide attention, including from First Amendment defenders such as the American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee. ACLU Executive Director Hedy Weinberg issued a statement condemning Judge Ballew’s decision. “The bench is not a pulpit, and using it as one, as this judge did, violates the parents’ rights and our sense that people of all faiths will be treated fairly in the courtroom,” she said.



While Tennessee law does have provisions for establishing a child’s last name, there are no state laws governing first-name designations. Martin agreed to have the ACLU represent her in an appeal of the court’s ruling; the organization planned to argue that Judge Ballew’s order was a violation of the couple’s First Amendment rights.

***Was Judge Ballew correct in ruling that McCullough’s and Martin’s son could not be named Messiah? You be the judge. Turn the page to read what happened. ➔➔***

# The Verdict

IN AN APPEAL hearing in Cocke County Chancery Court in September, Chancellor Telford Forgety overturned Judge Ballew's controversial order, ruling that the magistrate had acted unconstitutionally by imposing her personal religious beliefs on Martin and McCullough.

Chancellor Forgety found that Judge Ballew's decision violated the Establishment Clause of the Constitution, which forbids any legal action that favors a particular religion.

Additionally, he declared, there is no law that allows a court official to change a child's first name if the parents are in agreement with each other about it.

The chancellor ordered that the baby's name be changed back to Messiah. (And in accordance with Tennessee law, Messiah will retain his father's last name, McCullough.) **R**

**Agree? Disagree? Tell us what you think.**  
Sound off at [rd.com/judge](http://rd.com/judge).



## CRAZY NAMING LAWS

The federal government does not regulate monikers. However, some states take matters into their own hands.

■ **NORTH DAKOTA** Parents can't name a child a numeral, and adults aren't legally allowed to change their names to a number. In 1976, Michael Herbert Dengler tried, and failed, to change his name to 1069.

■ **CALIFORNIA** Children's names can't include pictographs, ideograms, or diacritical marks. In 2002, Louis Freedberg wanted to name his infant daughter Lucia, with an accent mark over the *i*, but the state would acknowledge her only as *Lucia* on official documents.

■ **MASSACHUSETTS** A baby's full name can contain no more than 40 characters due to the state's "technological limitations."

■ **OHIO** It is illegal for a baby or an adult to have the name of a cultural icon. In 2000, a judge rejected Robert William Handley's attempt to change his name to Santa Robert Claus.

■ **PENNSYLVANIA** A baby or an adult can't have a one-letter last name. When Mary Ravitch petitioned to shorten her last name to *R* in 1998, the court ruled that a single-letter surname would be received with "repeated suspicion and distrust."





enjoy the  
**freedom**  
of **touring**

True adventures go beyond incredible destinations or inclusive packages. Collette delivers an essential sense of possibility across all seven continents. Wake each morning on tour with a new

experience in front of you and let us seamlessly handle the details. With Collette, the world is within your reach.

 **collette**  
guided by travel

**Save** up to **\$400** per couple\* with offer code DEW0-AA9-975.  
Contact your travel professional or **call 877.951.8687** for details.

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

\*Offer is valid on new retail bookings only made between 12/11/13 - 2/15/14 for travel between 12/11/13 - 4/30/15 on any Collette tour. Space is on a first come, first served basis. Offer is not valid on group or existing bookings or combinable with any other offer. Offer savings of up to \$400 per couple is arrived at as follows (all savings listed are per couple): Europe savings of \$400; Africa savings of \$200; USA & Canada savings of \$200 (call for offer details on Alaska Discovery); Australia & New Zealand savings of \$400; Asia savings of \$200; South & Central America savings of \$200 on all tours except: Experience South America, Journey Through the Andes, Treasures of South America where savings is \$400. Royal Horticultural Society tours savings are as follows: Europe, South Africa, USA and Japan savings of \$200; New Zealand savings of \$400. Explorations tours savings are \$300. Other restrictions may apply; call for details.

CST# 2006766-20 UBN# 601220855 Nevada Seller of Travel Registration No. 2003-0279

FINISH THIS SENTENCE

# Twenty years ago today, I was...

...very sad

because my love  
moved east.

**KURT BRADER**

Tracy, CA

...running  
a little bar

that I bought in Duke,  
Oklahoma, and making more  
money throwing darts in  
tournaments than a lot of  
people did working all week.

**PAUL CHAMPAGNE**

Altus, OK

...excited

about where I'd be in  
20 years. I'm sorely  
disappointed!

**BRIAN C. DOUGLAS**

Alamogordo, NM

...watching  
a video of  
my mother

(or so my journal says),  
among a million other things  
I was doing that day.

**CAROLE CLAYTON PULLEY**

Laie, HI

...probably  
a mess.

The 40s are so much  
better than the 20s.

**COLLEEN ELIZABETH  
COOPER**

...27 years old and told that my daughter was autistic. She will be

## graduating college

soon. We serve a mighty God.

**VICKIE SCOTTI**

...11 years old and

## reading my mom's

*Reader's Digests.*

**HOLLY PUTNAT**

## ...about to embark

on one of the most magical hockey seasons I have ever had as a Rangers fan.

**TONY HENRIK WEISSMAN**

Northlake, IL

Knoxville, IL

Ravenna, OH

Wytheville, VA

Atlanta, GA

Savannah, GA

Katy, TX

Shelton, CT

## ...20 years old.

I did not know my four children. I did not know myself. I did not know God. I can't wait to see what I'll know at 60!

**PAMELA GODSIL**

...six years old and

## in foster care.

**ASHLEY DRAPER-GRAVLEY**

## ...a DJ

at a country radio station. Now most of our stations are automated or outsourced.

**MARGUERITE DISMUKES FISCHER**

## ...starting to run

on a regular basis, and I'm still doing it! It was the best decision I ever made about my health.

**ANGELA BRADFORD ELKOWITZ**

An expectant mother at a comics convention asked a *Star Trek* actor to tell her unborn daughter ...

# Why It's Great to Be a Nerd



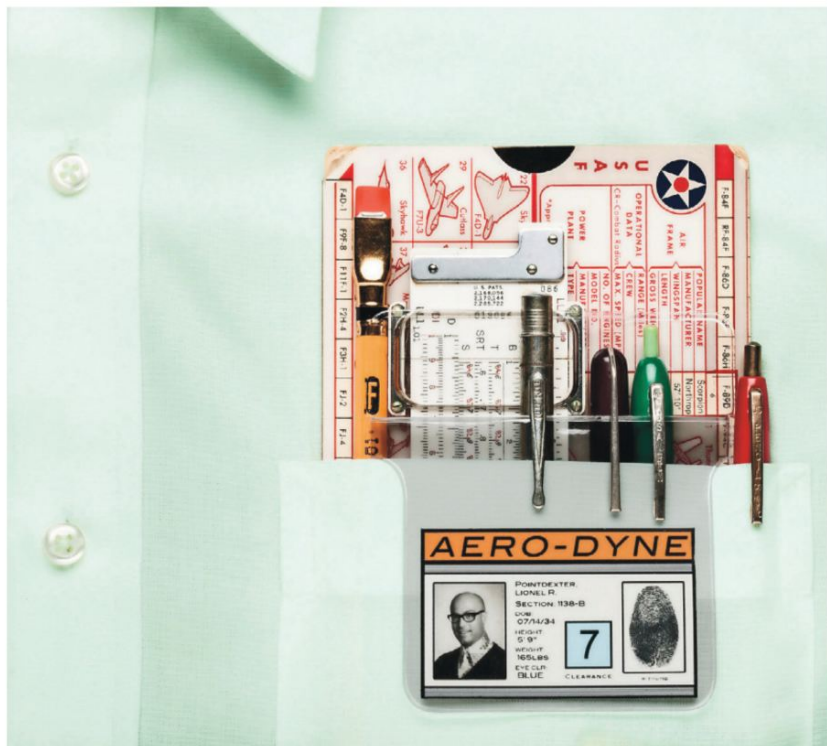
**WIL WHEATON** is an actor, a writer, and a dad. He's known for playing Wesley Crusher on the TV series *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and for his appearances on *The Big Bang Theory*.

☞ **THIS IS WHAT HE SAID:** My name is Wil Wheaton—and I am a nerd. It's awesome to be a nerd.

I don't know what the world is going to be like by the time you understand this. I don't know what it's going to mean to be a nerd when you are a young woman. For me, when I was growing up, being a nerd meant that I liked things that were a little weird, that took a lot of effort to appreciate and understand. It meant that I loved science, playing board games, reading books, and really understanding what went on in the world instead of just riding the planet through space.

When I was a little boy, people really teased me about that and made me feel like there was something wrong with me for loving those things. Now that I'm an adult, I'm a professional nerd, and the world has changed. I think we have realized that being a nerd is not about what you love but about how you love.

So there's going to be a thing in your life that you love. I don't know what it's going to be. It might be sports or science or reading or telling stories—it doesn't matter what it is. The way you love that thing and how you find other people who love it the way you do is what makes being a nerd awesome. Some of us love *Game of Thrones*, while



others love *Star Trek* or *Star Wars*. But we all love those things so much that we travel thousands of miles—which is probably easy for you, but we’re still using fossil fuels, so it’s difficult—to be around people who love the things that we love the way that we love them. That’s why being a nerd is awesome.

Don’t let anyone tell you that the thing that you love is a thing that you can’t love. Don’t let anyone ever tell

you, “You can’t love that. That’s for boys.” You find the things that you love, and you love them the most that you can.

And listen, this is really important: I want you to be honest, honorable, and kind. I want you to work hard because everything worth doing is hard. I want you to be awesome, and I will do my very best to leave you a planet that you can still live on.

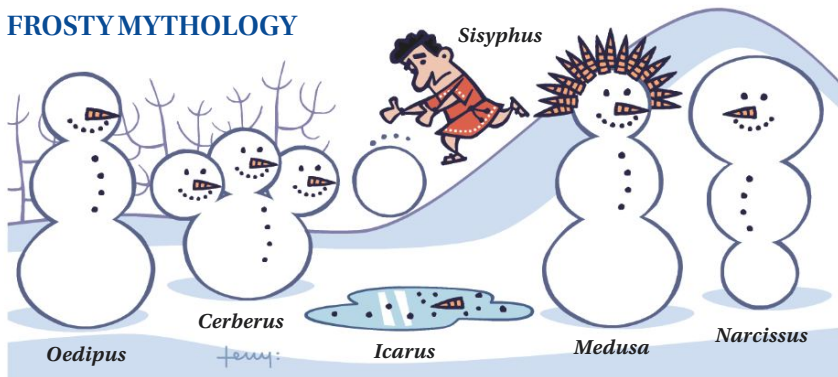
Have a great life.

**R**

# Life

IN THESE UNITED STATES

## FROSTY MYTHOLOGY



**WHEN MY HUSBAND'S** friend gave his order at a fast-food restaurant, the cashier asked for his name.

"It's Stephen, with a *ph*," he said.

Soon after, he was handed his order and a receipt, which had his name on it: *Phteven*.

**WENDY DEWBERRY**, Pell City, Alabama

**A NEIGHBOR'S** 44-year-old sister was pregnant with twins. When her niece asked if she knew the genders, she said, "No. I want it to be a surprise."

"You're 44 and having twins," said her niece. "How much more surprise do you need in your life?"

**JIM GRANT**, Twinsburg, Ohio

## HEADLINES AROUND AMERICA

■ County to Pay \$250,000 to Advertise Lack of Funds

*Register-Guard* (Eugene, Oregon)

■ 4-H Training Scheduled for Shooting Instructors

*Pine City Pioneer* (Minnesota)

■ Study Shows Frequent Sex Enhances Pregnancy Chances

*Winchester Star* (Virginia)

■ Police: DUI Charge for Woman Celebrating End of Earlier DUI Suspension

*Chicago Tribune*

■ Federal Agents Raid Gun Shop, Find Weapons

*Tulsa World* (Oklahoma)

**SHORTLY AFTER** my grandmother passed away, I took my daughter to her grave site, which was



located beside a row of pine trees.

“How nice,” I said. “Grandma has a great spot here in the shade.”

My daughter replied, “Mom, they’re all in the shade.”

**SANDRA SHEA-CRABBE**, *Tolland, Connecticut*

**MY NINE-YEAR-OLD** and I passed a store with a sign that read “Watch Batteries Installed—\$5.”

He seemed confused: “Who would pay to watch batteries installed?”

**DEB MORRIS**, *North Creek, New York*

**DISHARMONY IN** Washington, D.C., proved a hassle for Philadelphia’s Independence Hall in October.

A sign outside read “The Great Debates Program, ‘Is American Politics Broken?’ has been relocated due to Government Shutdown.”

**“THOSE FRAMES** are so flattering,” I assured my sister. She’d just gotten new glasses after 25 years and wasn’t happy with them.

“They’re OK,” she said, staring gloomily at herself in the mirror.

“Can you see better?”

“Yeah, I can see better.”

“So what’s wrong?”

“Well, for one thing,” she said, “I thought I was still cute.”

**JUDEE NORTON**, *Show Low, Arizona*

**THE WAITRESS** at the diner greeted me with a cup of coffee. I was about to take a sip when I noticed pink lipstick on its edge, so I reached

across the table for another cup. That, too, had lipstick on it.

“Excuse me,” I said to the waitress, pointing to the stains.

“Oh!” she said. “Those stupid white cups!” **NANCY SETTER**, *Tulsa, Oklahoma*

**A MOTHER’S LAMENT:** Whoever said not to cry over spilled milk has obviously never had to pump before.

**VANESSA MARCHAL**, *Marion, Illinois*



## YIN & YANG

I was showing my kids an old rotary phone when my nine-year-old asked, “How did you text on it?” My 15-year-old daughter roared with laughter, until a thought occurred to her: “Wait, where did you store your contacts?”

**TARA PRICE**, *Leesburg, Georgia*

My grandmother called to tell me she’d gotten an e-mail account. “Great,” I said. “Send me a message so I’ll have your e-mail address.” I waited and waited, but she never sent it. Several days later, an envelope arrived—Grandma had written her info on a piece of paper and mailed it to me.

**MEAGAN LUNDGREN**, *Calgary, Ontario*

Share your funniest joke, anecdote, or news headline—it might be worth \$100! See page 9 for details.

Americans know her as a justice on our nation's highest court, but this salsa-dancing, baseball-loving New Yorker thinks of herself as “Sonia from the Bronx”

# Sonia Sotomayor

BY DARYL CHEN

WHEN SONIA SOTOMAYOR was only seven months old, according to family lore, she abruptly stood up one day—and ran. There was no crawling or walking for her; she simply took off. It was a fitting start for a woman whose will and intellect have propelled her from growing up in a Bronx housing project to being the first Hispanic justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.

Sotomayor has faced some big challenges. At seven, she learned she had type 1 diabetes and started giving herself three to six insulin shots a day. Her father was an alcoholic and died of heart disease at 42, when Sotomayor was nine.



Her mother then fell into a deep grief and often locked herself in her bedroom, until one day her daughter confronted her, demanding to know if her mother intended to leave her and her younger brother, Juan, too.

Sotomayor escaped into books, but it was a TV show that set her on the path to her future career. While watching an episode of the legal drama *Perry Mason*, she noticed that the judge wielded all the power in the courtroom and decided that someday she would be one.

As a freshman at Princeton University, Sotomayor felt like an outsider among her largely white, affluent, better-educated classmates. (She shared her feelings of not belonging with a friend, who then compared her to Alice in Wonderland; Sotomayor replied, "Alice who?") Yet she graduated summa cum laude and became a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

Sotomayor went on to attend Yale Law School and became a district court judge at 38, making her the first Hispanic federal judge in New York State. In May 2009, President Barack Obama nominated her to the U.S. Supreme Court (she was confirmed that August). Her memoir, *My Beloved World*, comes out



As an appeals court judge at 44 (with brother, mom, and stepfather), 1998

Throwing out the first pitch for her beloved New York Yankees, September 2009



in paperback this month. On a recent afternoon, *RD* sat down with the associate justice in her bright, airy chambers at the Supreme Court.

***Give me the Reader's Digest version of the theme of your book.***

I want people who feel [they have] challenges in their lives to come away believing that despite their difficulties, they can still accomplish a lot. I'm completely honest about the many adversities in my life. One of my main lessons is to always ask for help.

***You're from an atypical background for a Supreme Court justice. Did people back home treat you differently after you were nominated?***

There were moments, especially at the beginning of the process! Once, I went to a family Christmas party,



and all of a sudden, everybody's hanging on my every word. At one point, I realized the room was completely silent, and I looked around at them and said, "Cut it out! I'm still Sonia!" [Laughs] Then the talking and screaming and arguing started again.

***What's the best part about being on the Supreme Court?***

Having a voice in the decision-making process. And meeting with people and talking to them about our judicial system. There's something exceedingly gratifying about [that]. I've met with groups as young as Head Starters.

***How do you explain your job to kids?***

I've been on *Sesame Street*. I give a very simplified version of what a judge does. But a lot of younger kids are more interested in presidents than in judicial history, so I've had to bone up on my early-history lessons. I do talk to them about how the law helps people solve their problems. It's all about relationships—family relationships, business relationships—and how you structure those relationships so that conflicting interests can be resolved or harmonized. We're not solemn.

***You have to do an awful lot of reading and writing as part of your job. Are you an early riser?***

No, I'm a New Yorker. [Laughs] Justice [Ruth Bader] Ginsburg is our night owl.

***RD has a monthly article called "13 Things Your \_\_ Won't Tell You." What would be included on your list of "13 Things Your Supreme Court Justice Won't Tell You"?***

That the law doesn't give you clear answers. There's no easy Supreme Court case. We're all trained lawyers. By the time we write an opinion, we've convinced ourselves it's the right decision. We try to write in a persuasive, forceful, and convincing manner. But it's misleading to assume that the verdict was as clear-cut as we make it out to be.

***What's your idea of happiness?***

I think it would be the satisfaction of enjoying things with others—meaning, when you're giving to others, whether it's time, attention, a gift, anything. Just those moments of sharing.

***With or to anyone in particular?***


No, and that's why I do public service; for me, the act of giving is the height of joy. And I define joy as happiness.

***One of the most popular columns in our magazine is Word Power.***

***What's your favorite word?***

I've never considered that question! I'd have to think long and hard about it. Will you take a favorite phrase?

***Sure. What is it?***

"Yes, I can." Just like the Little Engine That Could. 





# FACES OF AMERICA

## Phil Berg

MONTAUK, NEW YORK

"I kept getting a coffee cup [at Starbucks] that read 'A writer is someone who wrote today.' I must have gotten 30 or 40. One day, I just looked up in the sky and thought, I get it—I'm going to write a book about all the funny things that happen when I ride my motorcycle. People said, 'How are you going to write a book? You don't know how to write a book!' And I said, 'Get out of the way and watch!'"

PHOTOGRAPH BY GLENN GLASSER

# Points to Ponder

At the end of my shift, every removable piece of the restaurant would be carted off and washed. Vinyl booths were searched and scrubbed. This routine seemed Sisyphean at first, but I soon learned the satisfaction of working at a place that truly closed. I took great joy in watching people stroll in after hours, thinking they could grab a late-night sundae. I would point to the dimmed lights and stacked chairs as proof that we were shut. It was deliciously obvious and final.

**AMY POEHLER,**  
in the *New Yorker*



Let's be honest, we eavesdrop too. Everyone is listening to everyone else. We don't have the same means as the United States—which makes us jealous.

**BERNARD KOUCHER,**  
former French foreign minister, in *The Week*

If you want to feel better about yourself and your life, stop focusing on yourself. It is so simple but so hard for us to understand.

**MATT EMERZIAN,**  
nonprofit founder, in *Fast Company*

I shall always be grateful for this curious love of history, allowing me to spend a lifetime looking back into the past. Allowing me to learn from these large figures about the struggle for the meaning of life. Allowing me to believe that the private people we have loved and lost in our families and the public figures we have respected in our history, just as Abraham Lincoln wanted to believe, really can live on as long as we pledge to tell and to retell the stories of their lives.

**DORIS KEARNS  
GOODWIN,**  
historian, in a TED Talk



When we first started out, I was terrified of doing anything wrong onstage. I got to learn, though, that people don't mind. In fact, they kind of like it. People go, "I was at the show where he made a mistake!"

**PAUL MCCARTNEY,** in the *New York Post*

My grandpa Max the junkman would say in Yiddish, “The wheel is always turning.” What he meant was how to behave toward people. The person on the bottom of the wheel, you’d better be nice to because at some point you’re going to be on the bottom.

**MANDY PATINKIN**, in the *New York Times Magazine*



I encourage you to reject the cynics who say technology is flattening your experience in the world. Please don’t let anyone make you believe you are somehow shallow because you like to update your status on a regular basis.

**MELINDA GATES**,  
in a Duke University  
commencement speech



Birds are like people. The bird is here because it’s a good place. There’s food, and there’s safety. When a bird doesn’t like a situation, it protects itself and stays away. No matter where you are in the world, if you see a bird in a place, it’s a good place, a safe place, a place that sustains life.

**ENRU LIN**,  
*bird-watcher*, in the *China Post*

You can’t really blame people for preferring more of what they already know and like. The trade-off, of course, is that predictability is boring. Repetition is the death of magic.

**BILL WATTERSON**,  
*cartoonist*, in *Mental Floss*

In American fisheries alone, there are hundreds of available commercial species, and yet we eat only ten. We have the most robust fishery management in the world, but we do not take best advantage of what the oceans can provide. So when we ask ourselves how do we get more salmon, we’re asking the wrong question.

**BARTON SEAVER**,  
*chef*, in *Nutrition Action Healthletter*

I was pretty young when I figured out that tying shoes could waste up to three years of my life, so I don’t wear shoes that have laces. You have to study things carefully and be efficient.

**TED TURNER**,  
*businessman*, in *Origin*



Our priorities are askew. Our leaders talk a lot about international terrorism. I often talk about domestic terrorists, by which I mean the day-to-day crime that is even more devastating to our cities than the episodic threats from overseas. **R**

**MICHAEL NUTTER**,  
*Philadelphia mayor*, in *Time*



Knock, knock.  
Who's there?  
Woo.  
Woo who?

That's the sound of millions of people  
saving money with GEICO.

**GEICO**<sup>®</sup>

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

1-800-947-AUTO (2886)

Local Office



Some discounts, coverages, payment plans and features are not available in all states or all GEICO companies. GEICO is a registered service mark of Government Employees Insurance Company, Washington, D.C. 20076; a Berkshire Hathaway Inc. subsidiary. GEICO Gecko image © 1999-2013. © 2013 GEICO

# ART *of* LIVING

Ten ways to unlock your best life in just ...

## One Key Move

BY JOE KITA

### Smile ... To Spread Happiness

"The simplest and most reliable way to make someone smile is to smile at him," says Marianne LaFrance, a Yale University psychology professor and the author of the book *Lip Service*.

"Smiles are the most contagious kind of facial expression, even among people who don't know each other," LaFrance says. That's because seeing a smile and showing a smile originate from the same area of the brain.

Skeptical you can change your world by just smiling more often? LaFrance suggests trying this experiment: For one day, vow to not smile at anyone. The next day, smile at everyone.

Then compare both days. Chances are the second day will be one of the best you've had in a long time. ➔



## Cooperate ... To Foil A Mugging

Forget about every Clint Eastwood movie you've ever seen. According to former FBI agent Mark Safarik, studies conducted over the past 20 years have all concluded the same thing: To avoid injury or death, cooperate fully with the thief. Since the crook will likely cop your mobile phone or tablet, use technology to nab him later. (Just be sure to first download and activate the Find My iPhone app or the Avast! security and anti-theft app for Android.)

If you're fortunate enough to locate your stolen device, report the information to police, and let them play Eastwood.

## Sleep Well for Seven Hours a Night ... To Look Younger

Researchers at University Hospitals Case Medical Center have shown for the first time that poor sleep can contribute significantly to looking older. Women ages 30 to 49 who said they usually slept fitfully had more fine lines and wrinkles, uneven pigmentation, and reduced skin elasticity and recovery than those who said they regularly slept well for at

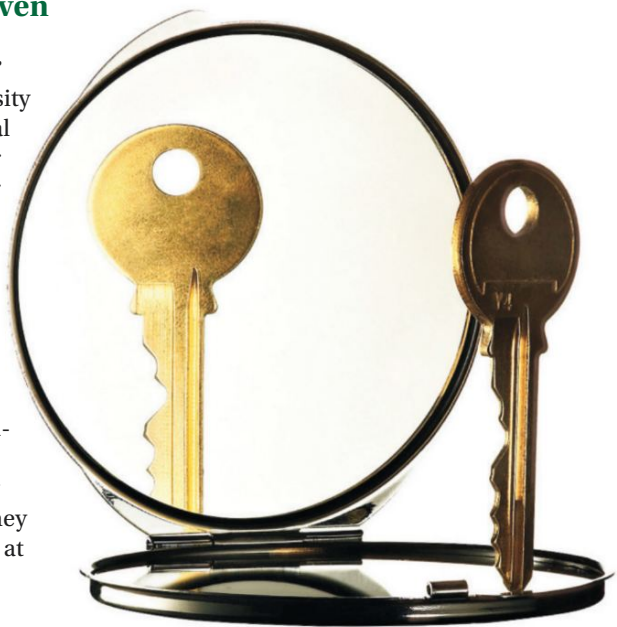
least seven hours per night.

Sleep acts as a repair shop for the skin, according to Jeffrey Benabio, MD, physician director of healthcare transformation at Kaiser Permanente in San Diego. While you're snoozing, inflammation subsides, soothing conditions such as eczema and acne.

"Beyond using sunscreen and not smoking, the best thing anyone can do to preserve his or her looks is to get a healthy seven to nine hours of sleep every night," explains Dr. Benabio.

## Water from the Bottom ... To Perk Up Plants

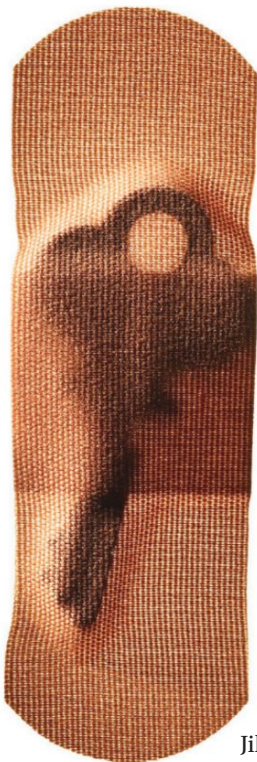
According to Mike McGrath, host of *You Bet Your Garden* on National



Public Radio, the best way to water a plant is not from above but rather from below, by setting the pot in a sink with a couple of inches of water for an hour, so that the plant can drink through its roots. Afterward, note how much heavier the pot feels. When it feels light again, add water.

### Call 911 and Chew Aspirin ... To Stop A Heart Attack

After you summon an ambulance, chew one 325 mg adult aspirin or four 81 mg low-dose tablets, advises emergency physician Ryan Stanton, MD. "Aspirin stops blood platelets from clumping together and enlarging the clot that's causing the heart attack," he explains. "Chewing helps the aspirin enter the bloodstream faster." In fact, Dr. Stanton says, anyone with a family history of heart disease should always carry a bottle of aspirin with him. As the drug works its magic, which includes helping to dissolve the clot, lie down and try to remain calm. "When the heart is not getting enough oxygen, any additional stress will increase the demand for oxygen," explains Dr. Stanton.



### Start with a Strong Story ... To Command Attention

That's the advice from statistician Sebastian Wernicke, who analyzed 1,500 TED Talks in an effort to gauge their oratory lessons. For *Reader's Digest*, he compared the opening lines of the ten most popular TED Talks of all time with the ten most average ones. He found that the former began with a very focused anecdote that related to the overall topic. Here is one example from a popular presentation called "Stroke of Insight" by neuroanatomist

Jill Bolte Taylor:

"I grew up to study the brain because I have a brother who was diagnosed with a brain disorder: schizophrenia. And as a sister and, later, as a scientist, I felt that I needed to understand, Why is it that I can take my dreams, I can connect them to my reality, and I can make my dreams come true? And what is it about my brother's brain and his schizophrenia that he is unable to connect his dreams to a common, shared reality, so they instead become delusions?"

## Shower ... To Calm Down

Few places offer the opportunity to lower anxiety in as many ways as a shower stall, says Debbie Mandel, stress-reduction expert and the author of *Addicted to Stress*.

For instance, the act of showering soothes tense muscles, and if you sing in the shower, all the better—singing boosts levels of hydrocortisone (a stress-reducing hormone). Also, talk therapy has been proved to ease anxiety and can be done while showering: Imagine your boss, ex-spouse, or anyone else causing you angst is in there with you. Then tell him or her what's bothering you. Speak your mind. Use the back scrubber to make a point. Just don't get angry, shout, or throw the loofah.

## Spread Positive Energy ... To Have a Happy Marriage

To achieve wedded bliss, aim for a 5:1 ratio of positive-to-negative exchanges. That was the magic number that emerged from a 14-year study that examined how couples handle conflicts, by psychotherapist John Gottman.

According to Gottman, couples who divorce have a positive-to-negative ratio that's nearly equal (0.8:1). Although that sounds like a good balance, it's not. Negativity is

corrosive to relationships. However, couples who are happily married uplift each other five times more often than they undercut.


## Try Chin-ups Followed by Squats ... To Get in Shape

Two or three times per week, do one or two sets (five to 15 apiece) of chin-ups (or perform dips with a chair if chin-ups are too hard), followed by one or two sets of squats. When done in tandem, these two exercises work nearly all the body's muscles. "To maximize strength, fatigue the muscles with 30 to 90 seconds of activity," says Wayne Wescott, an exercise scientist for 42 years.

Research also shows that exercising in this way increases resting metabolism by about 5 percent for three full days after the workout, so you'll burn fat as well as get fit.

## Volunteer ... To Live Longer

"About 30 studies link volunteer work to health and longevity," says Greg O'Neill, director of the National Academy on an Aging Society.

Volunteermatch.org lists give-back opportunities that might interest you and need your unique talents. 





**CERTIFIED HEART-HEALTHY BY THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION**



**CERTIFIED HEART-HAPPY BY YOU**



Over 40 choices of Campbell's® Healthy Request® soups are certified heart-healthy by the AHA.



**M'm! M'm! Good!®**

While many factors affect heart disease, diets low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease.



FOOD



A fresh look at how to make this iconic appetizer

# The Devil's in The Eggs

BY THE EDITORS OF *GARDEN & GUN*  
FROM *THE SOUTHERNER'S HANDBOOK*

🌀 IF THERE'S ONE DISH you'll find doubled or tripled up on in a Southern party spread, it's deviled eggs. And even then, the folks who brought them aren't likely to go home with leftovers. The "devil" part? It's not because they're a source of temptation (though they are); it refers to the spices that add their nice, piquant kick.

Southern cooks have lately taken to dressing up their eggs with various accoutrements—country ham, chilled Gulf shrimp, poached tomatoes. But connoisseurs will rightly tell you that what matters most is the springiness of the white and the tang of the yolk. To please the fussiest of them, start with eggs a few days removed from the nest, since fresher eggs are frustratingly dodgy come peeling time. Put the eggs into a pot, cover with an inch or so of cool water, and bring to a boil. Once the water is sputtering, reduce the heat to a low simmer, and cook for eight minutes. To avoid

overcooking the yolk, shock the eggs in an ice water bath for 30 seconds before peeling. Slice the eggs lengthwise, and remove the yolks.

If the boiling process is a science, doctoring up the yolks is an art. But if you're short a treasured yellowed recipe card with handwritten instructions for the absolute best proportion of mustard to mayonnaise, not to worry. Just combine a dozen yolks with a cup of your favorite mayo and a quarter cup of your favorite mustard, then add salt, pepper, and paprika to taste, and you'll have a preparation worth handing down.

For creamier eggs, you might stir in a bit of butter. For spicier eggs, a few dashes of Tabasco or grated horseradish will do the trick. And there are plenty of folks who won't declare a deviled-egg filling ready until they've added a teaspoon of lemon juice and a tablespoon of pickle relish. But by then, you're just tinkering with perfection. **R**

# Tricky Words on Food Labels

BY ARIKA OKRENT FROM MENTAL FLOSS

*Supermarket packaging often contains common English words that are oddly confusing. Here's what you need to know to safeguard your health.*

## ■ IMITATION

A food that simulates another food but isn't made of the same stuff is an imitation, right? Not quite. It should be labeled *imitation* only if it has a lower amount of protein or some other essential nutrient than the food it's copying.

## ■ FREE

Packages bearing the words *fat-*, *sugar-*, or *sodium-free* may still contain trace amounts of those substances. The FDA evaluates these terms according to a typical portion size known as an RACC (reference amounts customarily consumed per eating occasion). An RACC of eggnog, for example, is a half cup, and for croutons, it's 7 g. To be labeled *free* of calories, a food should have fewer than 5 calories per RACC; to qualify as *fat-* or *sugar-free*, less than 0.5 g per RACC; and

to be labeled *sodium-free*, fewer than 5 mg per RACC.

## ■ LOW

This is also evaluated based on set portion sizes. For total fat, it's fewer than 3 g per RACC. For calories, it's fewer than 40, unless it's a main meal; then it's 120 or fewer per 100 g.

## ■ REDUCED/LESS

Don't be fooled: Just because a product claims to have *reduced fat* or to contain *less sugar* doesn't mean it's *low* in the stuff you should avoid in excess. Such terms just mean the amount is lower than usual; the food might not meet the standard for *low* at all. These phrases indicate a relational claim compared with a reference food. The *reduced* substance (for example, total fat, sugar, etc.) should be at least 25 percent less per RACC than the amount in an appropriate reference food.

## ■ LIGHT/LITE

Reference foods apply to these terms too. If more than half of a *light* product's calories are from fat, the

fat should be reduced by at least half per RACC. If fewer than half its calories come from fat, the food can be called *light* if the calories per RACC are reduced by one third. A *lightly salted* food should have 50 percent less sodium than a reference food. Sometimes foods that meet *low* requirements can also be labeled as *light*.

#### ■ HIGH

Labels not only brag about a food's low levels of bad stuff but also boast about a food's high levels of good stuff. *High* (or "rich in") means that the food has 20 percent or more of the RDV (recommended daily value) for that nutrient per reference serving.

#### ■ GOOD SOURCE

A food with this label should have 10 to 19 percent of the RDV of a particular nutrient (which makes *good source* a little lower than *high*).

#### ■ MORE

One step down in nutritional value from *good source* is *more*, *fortified*,

*enriched*, *added*, *extra*, or *plus*. A food with 10 percent of the RDV of a nutrient can use one of these terms, but it applies only to vitamins, minerals, protein, fiber, and potassium.



#### ■ LEAN

This term refers to seafood or game-meat products with less than 10 g total fat, 4.5 grams saturated fat, and 95 mg cholesterol per RACC.

#### ■ HEALTHY

Foods bearing this label meet the *low* standard for fat and saturated fat, have 480 mg or less

of sodium, and are low in cholesterol. They should also have at least 10 percent of the RDV for such beneficial nutrients as vitamins A and C, iron, calcium, protein, and fiber.

#### ■ NATURAL

This is the most controversial word on food labels. The FDA solicited suggestions and considered comments about how to define *natural* for years but could not reach a consensus. The term still has no official definition.

**R**

# How Happy Homeowners Think

BY LAURA GASKILL FROM HOUZZ.COM

■ **THEY REVEL IN THEIR FIRST LOVE.** What attracted you to your house the moment you saw it? Was it the sunny yard, charming porch, original wood floors? Once you live there, it's natural to focus on what needs improving, but remember to revel in the highlights that drew you in too.

■ **THEY USE THEIR SENSES.** If you're getting down on your house, take a quick tour that zeros in on pure sensory pleasure: the cozy comfort of your couch, the smell of coffee brewing, the feel of a rug between your toes.

■ **THEY CONTRAST IT WITH NOT-HOME.** Imagine you've just been on a long trip, and you're arriving home for the first time in weeks. You close the door behind you and take a deep breath. What are you most looking

forward to about being home in that moment? Think about the ways your home comforts and supports you.

■ **THEY RECALL COMPLIMENTS.** When friends come over, do they comment on how welcoming and relaxing your house is? Is it great for parties, intimate chats, or barbecues on the lawn? Pay attention to what others have to say about your space.



■ **THEY COUNT INVISIBLE BENEFITS.** Is your rent or mortgage affordable, allowing you to live within your means? Is your home near your best friend's house, a lovely park, or your favorite café? Is it

quiet? Are your neighbors nice? There are many factors that you may not see when you look around but that are just as (or more) important as the space itself.



# 8 Old Wives' Tales That Are All Too True

BY SHANA ECKER  
FROM HUFFINGTONPOST.COM

## 1 ICE REMOVES CARPET DENTS

Place a cube in the stubborn hole, and let it melt. To make the fibers come back to life and look as good as new, fluff the damp spot with a fork.

## 2 WALNUTS FIX FURNITURE SCRATCHES

Rub a shelled nut over marks in wooden tables, chairs, or flooring. The oils will penetrate, condition, and smooth the unsightly nick.

## 3 NEWSPAPERS CLEAN WINDOWS

Newspaper fibers are denser than those in paper towels and absorb more liquid without falling apart.

## 4 ALKA-SELTZER UNCLOGS DRAINS

If you've got a mild clog, drop four tablets and a touch of vinegar into the sink or shower drain, and flush with boiling water to clear any obstructed pipes or possible blockages.

## 5 SOAP FILLS HOLES IN THE WALL

To plug a small nail hole before painting, rub a bar of white soap in a



circular motion over the hole until it's filled in. Then cover the entire surface with a coat of primer.

## 6 ALUMINUM FOIL REDUCES LAUNDRY WRINKLES

Place a sheet of foil under the ironing board cover. It will help you iron both sides of a garment at once by reflecting heat onto the creases on the back of the fabric.

## 7 SPONGES GET SQUEAKY-CLEAN IN THE MICROWAVE

Put your dirty scrubbers in a shallow dish with a mixture of water and lemon juice, and zap them at a high power to kill bacteria.

## 8 PLANTS ARE AIR PURIFIERS

The best air-cleaners are bamboo palm, ficus, and philodendron.





ALL IN

# A Day's Work



*“And if you haven’t any further questions, I’m going to turn you over to my intern Heather.”*

**IF YOU’RE A FREELANCE** graphic designer, the only thing worse than no clients might be *these* clients:

■ “You think it’s right to charge us for things just because we don’t have the ability to do them ourselves?”

■ “Make everything bold so it all stands out.”

■ “OK, the project has been approved, unless our client wants changes. In that case, it’s not approved.”

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

**SCENE:** A call-center operator on the phone with a doctor.

**DOCTOR:** If you don’t turn my cell phone back on today, I’ll tell the families of my patients and their lawyers that you are responsible for my patients’ deaths because I couldn’t be reached.

**OPERATOR:** Sir, if you are expecting your patients to die, perhaps they should switch to a different physician.

From [overheardintheoffice.com](http://overheardintheoffice.com)

**FROM AN AD** for an acting job: “When we finish the commercial, it will be shown on screens in over 200 supermarkets. It’s a great opportunity for you to expose yourself in front of everyone!” **YVONNE MIKALOPAS**,  
*North Brunswick, New Jersey*

**DOING YOUR BEST** not to join the workforce? Just act like these job seekers did while meeting hiring managers.

- Candidate said he had to quit a banking job because he was always tempted to steal.
- Candidate said he didn’t want the job if he had to work a lot.
- Candidate called his wife to see what they were having for dinner.
- Candidate emptied the employer’s candy dish into her pocket.
- Candidate wouldn’t answer a question because he thought the company would steal his idea and not hire him.

From careerbuilder.com

**ONE OF MY** fourth-grade students told me he had trouble with math. His explanation summed it up well: “The guy next to me always gets ten out of ten on his quizzes, and I get only ten out of four.”  
**NOELLE BIDWELL**, *North Battleford, Canada*

**A TIP FROM AN OFFICE DRONE:** “I just set my e-mail’s auto-response to ‘I’m looking into this now. I’ll let you know.’ I literally never have to respond to e-mails again.” @9TO5LIFE

**OUR BUSINESS** relies heavily on abbreviations. For example, I called a customer the other day. Reading from my printout, I asked, “Are you still a fun director?”

After a pause, he replied, “I’m a funeral director.”

**SUSAN LADD**, *Coatesville, Pennsylvania*



## THAT REMINDS ME OF A JOKE!

### HERE’S THE NEWS

Every year since 1992, zookeepers at a zoo in Islamabad, Pakistan, have demanded alcohol for the elephants during mating season. Without it, they insisted, the pachyderms would become violent. Only recently did it dawn on anyone that elephants are teetotalers. The zookeepers were fired.

Source: Express Tribune

### HERE’S THE LAUGH

A zookeeper walks into a pub with an elephant and orders two beers. After a few hours and a few more drinks, the elephant collapses drunk on the floor. As the zookeeper stumbles toward the door, the bartender calls after him, “Hey! You can’t just leave that lyin’ here!”

The zookeeper slurs, “That’s not a lion; it’s an elephant.”

**Tell us your favorite new work joke, silly anecdote, or wacky news story—it might be worth \$100! See page 9 for details.**

# E-mail Etiquette Rant

BY NICK BILTON FROM THE *NEW YORK TIMES*

**SOME PEOPLE ARE SO RUDE.** Who sends an e-mail or a text message that just says “Thank you”? Who leaves a voice mail message rather than texts you? Who asks for a fact easily found on Google?

Don’t these people realize that they’re wasting your time?

Maybe I’m the rude one for not appreciating life’s little courtesies. But many social norms just don’t make sense to people drowning in digital communication.

Take the thank-you note. Daniel Post Senning, a great-great-grandson of Emily Post and a coauthor of the 18th edition of *Emily Post’s Etiquette*, asked, “At what point does showing appreciation outweigh the cost?”

Then there is voice mail, a now impolite way of trying to connect. Think of how long it takes to listen to one of those long-winded messages. In texts, you don’t have to

declare who you are or even say hello. E-mail, too, is slower than a text. Which leads to the worst offenders of all: those who leave a voice mail and then send an e-mail message to tell you they left a voice mail.

My father learned this lesson after leaving me a dozen voice mail messages, none of which I listened to. Exasperated, he called my sister to complain that I never returned



his phone calls. “Why are you leaving him voice mails?” my sister asked. “Just text him.”

My mother realized this long ago. Now we communicate mostly through Twitter.

This isn’t the first time technology has changed our manners. In the late 1870s, when the telephone was invented, people didn’t know how to greet a caller. Often there was just silence. Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor, suggested that people say, “Ahoy!” Eventually *hello* won out, and the victory hastened the greeting’s use in face-to-face communications.

In the age of the smartphone, there is no reason to ask once-acceptable questions about: the weather forecast, a business’s phone number, a store’s hours, or directions to a house, a

restaurant, or an office, which can be easily found on Google Maps. But people still ask these things. And when you answer, they respond with a thank-you e-mail.

How to handle these differing standards? Easy: Consider your audience. Some people, especially older ones, appreciate a thank-you message. Others, like me, want no reply.

The anthropologist Margaret Mead once said that in traditional societies, the young learn from the old. But in modern societies, the old can also learn from the young. Here’s hoping that politeness never goes out of fashion but that time-wasting forms of communication do. **R**

---

Nick Bilton is a technology writer for the *New York Times*.



## READERS RANT BACK

The *Times* audience didn’t completely agree with Bilton. Some responses:

Hello, Nick Bilton is a sociopath. Thank you!

**ERIKA, New York, New York**

I think you are wrong. The “thank you” text back really says “I got the message. I understand the message. I appreciate your taking the time to do it.” Only it says it in two words.

**ELBRO27, Norwalk, Connecticut**

The digital age hasn’t redefined etiquette. It has eliminated it.

**IN COLORADO, Longmont, Colorado**

I’m 60, and as much as it pains me, kinda, I agree with the writer. Drop the unnecessary e-mails, questions, and tweets. If you want a more personalized interaction, go visit. But text first.

**WARREN CLARK, Amarillo, Texas**

# Small but Mighty!

Introducing *Reader's Digest* for iPhone®



Designed exclusively for iPhone's screen size, it's perfect on the go, on the train, at the store... anytime you need a burst of laughter and inspiration. Read up!



**Download the January Issue Today.**

Scan the code to get the app. Available Dec. 11.



Apple, the Apple logo and iPad are trademarks of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. App Store is a service mark of Apple Inc.

Why It Costs What It Costs:

# A Vacuum Cleaner

BY CAITLIN O'CONNELL

■ **BODY** Dyson vacuums (starting at \$200) are built from the same high-impact-resistant materials used in crash helmets and riot shields, and they are rigorously tested to verify their durability: During development, cleaners are dropped onto floors 5,318 times to certify they can withstand ten years of use.

■ **MOTOR** Don't get confused by cleaners that advertise high amps (which indicate the vacuum's electricity consumption). Instead of a cleaner carpet, you might just wind up with a larger electric bill.

■ **FILTERS** Sealed HEPA filters are the most effective at trapping allergens. They cost about \$25 and provide the same filtration as many pricey anti-allergenic machines.

■ **NOZZLE/SUCTION** Intelligence is expensive. A special sensor on the Sebo Automatic X4 vacuum (\$679) automatically adjusts the machine to

the appropriate cleaning height for each surface (like hardwood or carpeting). For \$100, you can get the Hoover WindTunnel with a manual dial that does exactly the same thing.

■ **CANISTER** Cheaper bagged cleaners like the Dirt Devil Breeze Lightweight (\$70) are actually more dependable than fancier bagless models. The bag protects the motor from large particles that would otherwise circulate freely inside the machine, damage the motor, and diminish its life span.

■ **POWER CABLE** Dyson engineers unwind and rewind a cleaner's cable 6,400 times to make sure it won't kink or break.

■ **BUMPER** The S 8990 UniQ canister vacuum cleaner from Miele takes its design (and price) cues from luxury cars: Features like a velvet bumper, mahogany-colored metallic finish, and underbody lights for cleaning in dark areas will cost you \$1,500. **R**



PROP STYLIST: ROBIN FINLAY





*Hit this number and you'll have better credit than 82% of Americans.*

# Sneaky Credit Score Saboteurs

BY BETHY HARDEMAN FROM CREDITKARMA.COM

## 1 CLOSING AN OLD CREDIT CARD ACCOUNT

While canceling a long-held but seldom-used account may seem responsible, it will shorten the length of your credit history, which can lower your score. If you feel like decluttering your wallet, nix a few of your more recently acquired cards, and hang on to the oldest one you've got—that long credit history will serve you well in the long run.

## 2 FINANCING THAT NEW BEDROOM SET

If a local business offers to let you finance a purchase, think twice before accepting. The bank may consider it a “last resort” loan, which is a huge red flag for higher credit risk.

## 3 BATTLING A BILL


If you're in the midst of a credit quarrel, the disputed credit line may be ignored during your score calculation. This will make it appear as though you are using a higher percentage of the

total credit available to you, which can result in a lower-than-average number.

## 4 GETTING A NEW CELL PHONE

Applying for that fancy phone can trigger what's called a hard inquiry, each one of which lowers your score by a few points. Anytime a company runs a credit check on you—if you apply for a loan or car insurance, for instance—a hard inquiry may follow. Also, check whether moving money from a big bank to a smaller credit union will trigger a hard inquiry.

## 5 NOT PAYING TRAFFIC TICKETS

Parking fines can really take their toll—especially in cities like Chicago, Washington, D.C., and New York, where unpaid parking tickets are sometimes turned over to various collection agencies. The result: a damaged score. To find out if your city (or one you're visiting as an out-of-state driver) uses an agency, search on its .gov home page, or contact the department of revenue to verify. 

# Save thousands on high-tech, customized digital hearing aids.



## Hear what you've been missing.

"To say I'm pleased with my hearing aids is putting it mildly. They are attractive and extremely helpful."

Myrtle F., Missouri

"... and at about one-fourth of the going cost."

Howard B., California

## Each state-of-the-art hearing aid:

- Is custom-programmed to your specific hearing needs, providing enhanced sound quality
- Is easy-to-use, automatically adjusts to your environment
- Is available in small, discreet and comfortable styles
- Includes robust nationwide customer support and free daily hearing aid seminars
- Has a no-risk, 70-day money-back guarantee

## Only \$799 – \$999 each.\*

Go online to check out our low pricing on hearing aid batteries.



\*People with UnitedHealthcare® insurance may have even lower pricing.

**hi** HealthInnovations™  
a UnitedHealth Group company

Go online or call to learn more.



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



1-888-547-1506



HEALTH

*I'd love you  
to lose just  
10 percent of  
your weight.  
It would  
improve my  
arthritis.*

Got an achy twinge? A limp? Out-and-out arthritis? Well, why don't you try to live ...

# A Day in the Life Of Your Knee

BY JILL PROVOST

☞ IT'S COZY BENEATH these blankets, but I want out. I am achy and inflamed, brittle from a motionless night. I wait for The Body to register my familiar morning stiffness. He moans and rolls over, not quite ready to face the day. C'mon, get up already so we can work out these kinks.

He flings his feet over the side of the bed and plants them on the floor. I'm not gonna lie: Straightening myself out under all 210 pounds of him takes some serious grit. I brace myself for the load. My upstairs neighbor, the thigh muscle, contracts and yanks the quadriceps tendon, which pulls on my kneecap to make the leg extend. I'm a hinge, with pulleys that bend and straighten me.

The other knee snickers. He's not in as bad a shape as I am and thinks I've got the martyr routine down pat. The quads and hamstrings like to joke that I'm their little marionette. Yeah, real knee-slapper, guys.

As he gets dressed, The Body flips on ESPN to catch replays from last

night's NFL game. Oh, dear. What's this? His team's running back suffered an ACL tear? Side-tackled while all his weight was on one foot. Body, cover your eyes, for the love of God! Why does he make me watch this? He's wincing, too, because I suffered that same injury about 20 years ago. It still haunts us.

## THE STORY OF MY DEMISE

The Body had been out of college for ten years and had let all of us (muscles, ligaments, and tendons) go to pot. Not that I blame him. You know the drill: sit all day at a desk, meet friends for happy hour. Who has time for exercise? Then, one weekend, he joined a pickup basketball game. Just ran right out there like the college athlete he no longer was—no warming up, no taking it easy—and *snap!* Tore my anterior cruciate ligament. It's the string that runs through my center, connecting the thighbone to the shinbone, and it keeps me from wobbling all over the

place. Worst day of my life. I heard a *pop* and felt a wave of excruciating pain wash over me as The Body fell to the ground.

That's the reason I'm so craggy before my time (I'm only 49). Surgery and physical therapy did get me working perfectly again. But ligament tears leave us knees with a fifty-fifty chance of getting arthritis within 10 to 20 years. I wouldn't take those odds to Vegas. My cartilage, the protective tissue on the ends of bones that keeps them from grinding against each other, may not ever fully recover.

Finally, The Body decides to switch the TV to the weather report. The meteorologist is calling for fair skies. Yeah, right—I know better. I get extra achy just before it rains, and I'm throbbing. The Body's doctor says he hears that complaint all the time but isn't quite sure why the pain worsens. His best guess: When air pressure drops, my already inflamed joint swells even more, irritating the nerves. Before he limps out the door, The Body grabs his umbrella to be safe. Good call, my man.

### THE SCALE MAKES ME SAD

The Body pulls into a drive-through on the way to work to get coffee. Thank goodness he's nixed those

sausage, egg, and cheese breakfast sandwiches. With all this additional weight he's put on, I'm like a toothpick supporting an anvil. Not only is The Body's belly crippling me, it's also putting my better half, the "good knee," at serious risk for arthritis. My partner is almost three times more likely to get it, due to The Body's extra-large size.

Happily, the scale has been on a downward trend lately. This past month, The Body has lost five pounds, which has taken 20 pounds of stress off me.

He shuffles into the office. Man, is it cramped under this desk. The Body feels my discomfort and swallows a couple of ibuprofen. They'll help quell the pain for a few hours, but alas,

they are not a permanent solution. Lately, the doc has been saying that eventually The Body will need to—gulp—replace me.

Actually, it sounds worse than it is. I'll say goodbye to my worn-out cartilage. My bones will be resurfaced and plated with metal. True, I'll barely recognize myself, and the other knee will probably start calling me The Terminator or some nonsense. But what's The Body's alternative? Hobble around for the rest of his life? That's not much fun for me either.



*Call me Al Roker. I can predict when it's going to rain: My joint swells and aches.*

## CAN WE GET SOME EXERCISE, ALREADY?

Ooh, it's his wife on the phone. We're going to the gym after work—hurrah!

As we head inside, The Body sees his wife sprinting toward him in heels. Ouch. Glad I'm not one of her knees. She didn't grab an umbrella and doesn't want to get drenched. Hey, lady, worry about your joints, not a few raindrops. High heels are a torture device for us, and women are more prone to knee issues than men are to begin with. But she's young and fit, which will protect her ... for now.

Not that I'm in love with The Body's "comfy" sneakers. "Stability athletic shoes" sound good, but the more rigid the shoes are, the more stress they put on me. I wish he'd swap them for flat, flexible shoes with soles that let your feet bend.

The Body looks longingly toward the basketball court. There are still plenty of activities he can do—swimming, biking, Tai Chi ... old-people exercise, he calls it. But I love it all because it keeps me from getting worn and rusty. It used to be that if I got injured, they'd put me in a cast. Boy, was that dumb. In order to regenerate, cartilage needs to move and endure weight-bearing activity. The Body takes a spin on the elliptical.

Woo-wee! I feel better than I have in days. I can't wait for the weight machines. Strong muscles help support and stabilize my joint.

## MY FAVORITE MEAL

Back at home, The Body's wife whips up a quick dinner of salmon, sweet potatoes, and broccoli. I am pumped. The Body doesn't think much about how his diet affects me, but it's important. I've got low-grade inflammation, and fatty fish like salmon may slow down my disease. See, inflammation is the body's defense against injury. It causes swelling and pain. That's great when there's an actual enemy. But with chronic inflammation, the body keeps fighting even when there's no threat. And all that heavy artillery can contribute to my arthritis.

The Body yawns, and I'm relieved. He loves to burn the midnight oil and doesn't realize that sleep can ease my pain. I think tonight's gym session tuckered him out. The Body is being sweet to me tonight—sleeping on his side with a pillow wedged between me and the other knee. He prefers snoozing on his belly, but I like this position best. And if I'm happy, The Body can get a good night's rest. Now, that's what I call a real joint effort. **R**

\*  
\*

## USE YOUR DELUSION

Friends should always tell you the truth. But please don't. **LOUIS C.K.**



Who's Right?

# GMO Foods: Dangerous or Innocuous?

BY CHRIS WOOLSTON

THE LOUDEST PUBLIC food fight right now is about GMOs, or genetically modified organisms. Scientists add genes to corn, soybeans, and other plants, usually to protect the crops from insects or herbicides. Proponents say the genetic tinkering makes crops easier to grow and cheaper. But many consumers and food-safety watchdogs worry that GMOs pose an unnatural threat to our health and the environment. Opponents say that GMOs have been linked to depression, allergies, infertility, and even cancer.

Although GMOs have been in our food supply for 20 years, the controversy has moved to center stage. Recent documentaries and experts on *The Doctor Oz Show* have fanned the flames. About 75 percent of consumers say they are concerned

about the safety of genetically modified foods, according to a *New York Times* survey. Maine and Connecticut recently passed bills requiring labeling of all foods made with GMOs; many other states are considering mandatory labeling. The European Union already requires labeling, and several countries, including France, have banned the planting of genetically modified crops. So are GMOs safe—or should you avoid them at all costs? Here, a look at the evidence.



## What You've Heard

Roughly 90 percent of the corn, canola, soybeans, and sugar beets grown in this country have bits of DNA that originally came from a lab. The soy in some multigrain breads, the canola in margarine, and the corn syrup in everything from ketchup to soda are likely genetically modified. Unless you've been eating only foods labeled *100 percent organic*—which must be GMO-free—you probably have GMOs in your system now.

In a big red-flag-raising study, French researchers reported last year in *Food and Chemical Toxicology* that rats developed huge tumors after living on genetically modified corn for two years. "Genetic engineering can have unintended consequences," says Bill Freese, science policy analyst for the Center for Food Safety. Artificial genes force plants to produce unnatural proteins, he says, and no one knows how those may affect human health.

## ... But Not So Fast

Scientists immediately criticized the French study. For one thing, the types of rats used in the study were highly prone to cancer, so it was predictable that some would develop tumors after eating GMOs, notes Nina Fedoroff, a professor of biology and life sciences at Penn State University. She adds, "We've eaten these foods for 20 years and aren't walking around with giant tumors."

Hundreds of other studies have found no trouble with GMOs, says Ruth MacDonald, professor and chair of food science at Iowa State University. After looking at more than 130 research projects—including animal studies and searches for known toxins or allergens in GMO foods—the European Union concluded that there's nothing especially risky about them.

In September, the editors of *Scientific American* denounced the efforts to label GMO foods, stating that there's no proof that so-called Frankenfoods can endanger people's health. Adding genes to crops isn't any more dangerous than traditional breeding, which farmers have done for thousands of years, the American Association for the Advancement of Science declared in 2012. Old methods of modifying crops mixed tens of thousands of genes with unpredictable results. The fact that scientists can now insert single genes into corn or soybeans shouldn't raise any new alarms, says Fedoroff.

## The Bottom Line

There doesn't appear to be a scientific reason to ban GMO foods from your pantry to protect your health. But it is healthy to limit your intake of the processed foods that often contain them. And don't assume that GMO-free packaged food is necessarily healthy. Organic cookies can still contain too much sugar or salt. **R**

Doctors' Orders

# 6 Reasons You Got a Bad Night's Sleep

BY THE PHYSICIANS OF *THE DOCTORS*

FEW THINGS ENHANCE your health as much as restorative sleep. No single pill can balance hunger hormones, boost immunity, protect against high blood pressure and diabetes, and keep your skin glowing—all well-studied benefits of getting enough slumber. But even though we often “prescribe” sleep to our patients, they frequently report that getting enough is difficult

despite their best efforts to hit the hay on time. These unexpected sleep stealers may help explain why:

## 1 YOU FEEL YOUR PARTNER'S PAIN

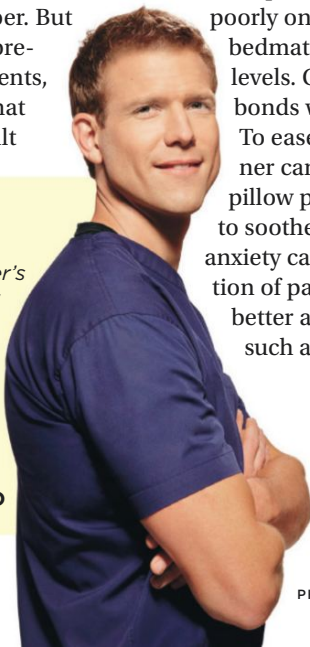
In a recent study, partners of arthritis patients reported sleeping poorly on nights that their bedmates suffered higher pain levels. Couples with the closest bonds were the most affected. To ease discomfort, your partner can try solutions like a pillow placed between the knees to soothe back pain. And because anxiety can heighten the perception of pain, you both may sleep better after a calming routine such as a soothing bath.

### YOUR DAILY DOSE

The health teams at *The Doctors* and *Reader's Digest* partner monthly to prescribe feel-great advice. Check local listings to watch the hit show every day.



Cohost Travis Stork, MD



## 2 YOU DIDN'T GIVE EXERCISE A SHOT

Exercise can help us sleep better, but only if we stick with it, ➔

**11 GRAMS OF PROTEIN**  
**21 VITAMINS & MINERALS**  
**50% DAILY VALUE OF CALCIUM**  
**100% GOOD TO GO**



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

## **BOOST NUTRITION BARS**

With flavors like chocolate and peanut butter chocolate, they're nutritious and delicious.  
**Look for BOOST in the Nutrition Aisle.**

Stay Strong,  
Stay Active with BOOST®.



shows a recent study from Northwestern University's Behavioral Sleep Medicine program. Insomnia patients who began an exercise regimen did eventually sleep longer and boost energy, but it took two to four months to see an effect. In other words, you can't expect to run on a treadmill one morning and have a blissful night's sleep that same evening. Aim for at least 20 minutes of physical activity a day, or a total of two and a half hours a week, per CDC guidelines.

### **3 A FULL MOON**

It may not turn you into a werewolf, but a full moon can make you toss and turn. Swiss researchers found that people experienced a big dip in sleep quality in the four days before and after a full moon. (They slept about 20 minutes less, spent about one third less time in deep sleep, and made less melatonin, a hormone that makes you feel tired.) Granted, there's not much you can do about this, but you can at least know when there will be a full moon and expect a slight toll on your sleep.

### **4 YOU STARTED A NEW MEDICATION**

Insomnia is a frequent side effect of many drugs, including blood pressure medications, antidepressants, and steroids. The time of day that you take certain medications matters. We often recommend that patients take

beta-blockers (for high blood pressure or arrhythmia) in the morning instead of before bed, for example. If your doctor prescribes a new drug, ask about the best time to take it.

### **5 YOUR DOG HOGS YOUR BED**

Even people with minor pet allergies may feel worse if their pillows and sheets are sprinkled with pet dander. This can cause congestion and increase your odds of snoring, which can make it harder to fall or stay asleep. One Mayo Clinic Sleep Disorders study found that more than half of patients who sleep with their furry friends say the animals disrupt their sleep. If you suspect these symptoms are affecting your slumber, declare your boudoir a pet-free zone.

### **6 YOUR PILLOW IS TOO HOT**

Resting your head on a cool pillow may help decrease core body temperature and help cause drowsiness. According to a University of Pittsburgh study, insomniacs who wore a special cooling cap fell asleep within 13 minutes (and stayed asleep for 89 percent of the night). This compared favorably with healthy sleepers who dozed off within 16 minutes. Researchers speculate that cooling the brain, which they've dubbed cerebral hypothermia, slows metabolism and encourages restfulness. Try putting your pillowcase in the freezer while you get ready for bed to achieve more restful sleep. **R**

# Be Your Healthy Best™



At Nature's Bounty®, we make vitamins and supplements for people like you... people who know good health and do their best to stay healthy, every day.

Be your healthy best with Nature's Bounty® vitamins.



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

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

©2014 Nature's Bounty, Inc.

13-NB-1549ds





NEWS FROM THE

# World of Medicine

## Intense Workouts Squelch Eating

Overweight men who did interval workouts—alternating short bursts of high-intensity exercise with brief recovery periods—ate less post-workout and consumed fewer calories the next day than those who exercised at a continuous moderate pace, found researchers at the University of Western Australia. Interval exercisers also had lower levels of ghrelin, a hormone that stimulates appetite.

## Deadly Mouth Danger

The number of Americans who went to the hospital for dental abscesses increased more than 40 percent from 2000 to 2008, according to a new study in the *Journal of Endodontics*. Many tooth infections are treatable with prompt care, but delays can be serious (for instance, if bacteria travel to the airway, where they can restrict breathing, or to the brain). Seek treatment for any persistent tooth pain, and get

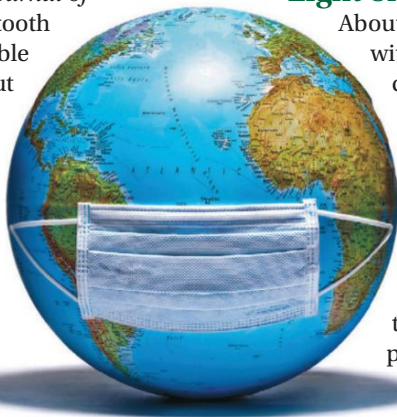
regular dental care to treat tooth decay before an abscess can develop.

## Why You Should Chew (Not Chug) Your Fruit

People who ate whole fruits—particularly blueberries, apples, and grapes—at least twice a week cut their risk of developing type 2 diabetes by up to 23 percent compared with people who ate them no more than once a month, according to a new study in *BMJ*. For fruit juice, however, the reverse was true. People who sipped a serving or more a day had up to a 21 percent increased risk of developing the metabolic disorder.

## Down Syndrome May Shed Light on Alzheimer's

About half of people with Down syndrome develop symptoms of Alzheimer's disease by their 50s, and all eventually develop the disease's trademark brain plaques. (A protein involved in the formation of the plaques is made by a gene on the 21st



chromosome, of which people with Down syndrome have an extra copy.) Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital researchers have begun a clinical trial of a drug that seems to stop plaque formation in people with Down syndrome. These subjects, who don't yet have symptoms of dementia, may be an important group in which to study how therapies work in the earliest stages of the disease, when they are believed to be most effective.

## Does Sitting Make You Sad?

Middle-aged women who sat for more than seven hours a day were 47 percent more likely to show signs of depression than those who sat for four or fewer, Australian researchers found. Those who engaged in no physical activity were 26 percent more likely to have symptoms of depression three years later than those who met exercise guidelines. Sitting for long periods has also been linked to heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

## New Tylenol Warning

To help combat the risks of acetaminophen overdose, the cap of each Extra Strength Tylenol bottle sold in the United States has a new warning in bold red letters: "CONTAINS ACETAMINOPHEN. ALWAYS READ THE LABEL." Because the pain reliever is in hundreds of over-the-counter and prescription medications used by nearly 25 percent of adults every

week, it's easy to exceed recommended levels (though more than one third of us don't realize the risk, according to a ProPublica poll). In fact, acetaminophen overdoses send tens of thousands of people to the emergency room every year and are the most common cause of sudden liver failure in the United States. Always follow dosing instructions carefully, and check the acetaminophen content of each product when taking more than one drug simultaneously.

## How to Spot a Liar via Text Message

Watch for a delayed response. When college students were asked to fib during an interview with a computer, they took 10 percent longer on average to send the message, and they made more edits than usual.

## Can Marriage Beat Cancer?

Married people were 20 percent less likely to die from the disease than those who were single, divorced, or widowed, according to a Harvard study of more than 730,000 people published in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*. They were also likelier to get the disease diagnosed at an earlier stage and receive proper treatment. A spouse (or a close partner, friend, or family member) can prod you to seek medical help and support you during grueling chemotherapy, radiation, and other treatments. **R**

COVER STORY



*New York City  
firefighter  
Jordan Carroll*

# The Brave Among Us

Does courage live in the heart or the mind? What compels some people to turn toward danger and others to run away? Science writer **Jeff Wise** investigates.

**+** PORTRAITS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE WHO BECAME EXTRAORDINARY HEROES

PROFILES BY DARYL CHEN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKE MCGREGOR

**ON A COOL NOVEMBER** afternoon in Fleming Island, Florida, Melissa Hawkinson, then 41, was driving her five-year-old twins home from school when she saw a sudden splash in Doctors Lake just ahead. What was that? she thought. As she drove up to the scene, she saw a half-submerged car sinking about 30 yards offshore. “It was going down pretty quickly,” Hawkinson recalls. She stopped the car near the boat ramp and ran toward the water. This is going to be cold, she thought.

She took off her vest and leather boots, waded into the icy water, and swam out to the car, where she found Cameron Dorsey, five, strapped into his car seat as the swirling waters rose around him.

Hawkinson tried to yank open the door, but it was locked. So she pushed and tugged on the partially open window until she could reach through and unlock the door. She pulled the boy free, swam to shore, and handed him off to bystanders on a dock. The driver, the boy’s suicidal father, swam back to land on his own. Afterward, Hawkinson sat on the shore wrapped in a blanket. “For ten or 15 minutes, I couldn’t stop shaking,” she says.

There’s nothing visibly extraordinary about Melissa

Hawkinson, an energetic stay-at-home mom with brown hair and a dimpled smile. Yet something set her apart from the dockside onlookers that day. Why do some people act quickly, willing to take a risk for a stranger? What makes them run toward danger rather than away from it? Hawkinson, the Granite Mountain Hotshots—19 of whom perished this past summer in Arizona—every hero who

puts his or her life on the line to save another: What makes them brave?

Moreover, can bravery be learned, or is it a quality with which you are born? The answer is nuanced and complex. Bravery taps the mind, brain, and heart. It issues from instinct, training, and empathy. Today, neurologists, psychologists, and other researchers are studying bravery, trying to unravel the mystery.

### THE BRAIN ON FEAR

Basic biology tells us that bravery emerges from a primal struggle between the brain’s decision-making hub, the prefrontal cortex, and the focal point of fear, the amygdala. When we find ourselves in an unexpected and dangerous situation, the amygdala



*“I learned I can be strong in a crisis,” says Hawkinson.*

PROFILE  
IN COURAGE

# The Marine

On November 21, 2010, Lance Cpl. Kyle Carpenter, 24, and Lance Cpl. Nick Eufrazio were in Afghanistan when insurgents lobbed a grenade at them. Judging from his injuries, Carpenter threw himself on the device to protect his comrade. (Neither man remembers the blast.) His jaw was blown away, his right eye was destroyed, and his right arm was fractured in 30 places. Eufrazio suffered a severe brain injury from a piece of shrapnel. In 2011, the South Carolina Senate honored Carpenter. "I'm hoping what happened to me will help remind people that brave acts like this happen every day [on the battlefield]," he said at the press conference. His recovery reminds us of the costs of bravery, but after more than 30 surgeries, Carpenter (who retired from the Marines in July) declares, "I'm at my new 100 percent." Before joining the Marines, "I wasn't that brave," he admits. "But the [USMC's] history makes us want to be brave."







On May 20, as an atomic bomb-force tornado hit Plaza Towers Elementary School in Moore, Oklahoma, at about 3 p.m., teachers scrambled to protect their charges. They herded some kids into bathrooms in the building's interior, where sixth-grade teacher Rhonda Crosswhite, 44, ran into a stall and lay on top of six students—two under her arms, two under her torso, and two under her feet—to shield them. "One kid was crying, 'I don't wanna die,' and I yelled, 'We're going to be fine.'" A cinder block landed on her back, and glass was embedded in her skin, but Crosswhite and the students were able to walk away from the ruins of the school (seven students died at Plaza Towers that day). Afterward, the teacher (a mother of three) and her colleagues were called heroes, a label Crosswhite rejects, saying, "Every morning at nine, those children become my children. I was just taking care of my kids."

PROFILE IN COURAGE

# The Teacher

sends a signal to the prefrontal cortex that interferes with our ability to reason clearly. In extreme cases, that “can be paralyzing,” says Daniela Schiller, a neuroscientist at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York.

But the brave don't succumb to fear. In some cases, they're strengthened by the muscle memory that comes from intense training. Flight attendants, for example, practice until they're able to empty a jumbo jet filled with passengers in 90 seconds.

So on July 6, when Asiana Airlines Flight 214 crashed short of the runway at San Francisco International Airport, Lee Yoon-Hye, 40, of Seoul, South Korea, knew what to do. After the plane struck the ground, its tail hit a seawall, ejecting three flight attendants. Lee and her remaining colleagues helped hundreds of passengers get out of the wreck and onto the runway. Nearly everyone survived, in part thanks to the crew's unflappable demeanor.

When an emergency slide deployed in the plane, trapping panicked people, Lee handed a knife to a copilot, who punctured the slide and freed them. When Lee saw flames erupt, she tossed a fire extinguisher to a colleague, who tried to put the fire out. “We followed our training,” she told reporters. “I wasn't really thinking ... my body just started carrying out the steps needed.” After the ordeal, doctors discovered Lee had performed her job with a broken tailbone.

Lee's ability to carry out her duties in

the face of imminent danger lies in the area of the brain known as the basal ganglia. When you practice an act again and again, the responsibility for performing the action switches from the brain's outer cortex, where it is



“I WASN'T REALLY THINKING,” SAID FLIGHT ATTENDANT LEE YOON-HYE. “MY BODY STARTED CARRYING OUT THE STEPS NEEDED.”

experienced consciously, to the basal ganglia, which executes the action automatically and isn't affected by fear.

Armies of every nation have understood this principle for thousands of years. Boot camps the world over deeply embed the fundamentals of combat into a recruit's brain through relentless repetition. That way, when intense fear shuts down a soldier's rational brain, he or she will still be able to function on autopilot.

### **THE FRIENDSHIP FACTOR**

Lance Cpl. Kyle Carpenter, a member of a Marine unit defending an Afghan village from a Taliban attack on November 21, 2010, illustrated another, equally powerful but more inherent quality that can drive courage: instinct. When a grenade landed near him, Carpenter reportedly shielded

a nearby comrade from the blast.

Military psychologists say that the instinct to protect those we love is one of the most powerful forces motivating bravery in combat: soldiers who don't do it for the medals but simply to defend their buddies. "In that moment, their love of their comrades overcomes any concern for their own well-being," says West Point psychologist Michael Matthews.



BRAVERY MAY COME FROM OXYTOCIN, THE HORMONE THAT HELPS CEMENT SOCIAL TIES AND SEEMS TO REDUCE FEELINGS OF FEAR.

Bravery on the battlefield or elsewhere may come from the release of oxytocin, the hormone that helps cement social ties, including the bond between nursing mothers and their babies. Several experiments have found that oxytocin also seems to reduce feelings of fear. Researcher Peter Kirsch placed test subjects in a brain-scanning machine and showed them fear-arousing images like faces with angry expressions and guns. When he also gave subjects whiffs of oxytocin, their amygdalas showed significantly less activation. So substantial is the hormone's effect that experts are investigating how to turn

oxytocin into a medication, a bravery pill, if you will.

### OUT-OF-BODY EXPERIENCE

When a massive tornado ripped through Moore, Oklahoma, in May, teacher Rhonda Crosswhite used her body to shield six students in a school bathroom stall as 200 mph winds turned the building into splinters. Crosswhite discovered that she was injured only after her adrenaline wore off. "I had cuts everywhere that I didn't even realize I had," she told a reporter.

Surprisingly, a state of intense fear can actually facilitate extraordinary acts of bravery because circuitry within the brain triggers the release of the hormone and neurotransmitter noradrenaline, which mimics the effects of amphetamines. Under its influence, a person's attention focuses, and time seems to slow down. Compounds similar to the active ingredient in codeine dull pain, preventing some people in extreme danger from realizing they've broken bones. And cortisol released into the bloodstream spurs the body to mobilize its energy stores so that it can move with otherwise unfeasible speed and strength in the face of danger.

### KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

Understanding your surroundings and the task at hand may also figure into the ability to act bravely. The Granite Mountain Hotshots certainly had a grasp of their job on June 30, 2013. At 9 a.m., 20 members of the



PROFILE IN COURAGE

# The Firefighters

For about four months every year, the elite Granite Mountain Hotshots ate, drank, and breathed fire. Based in Prescott, Arizona, the men logged 16-hour days battling the country's worst wildfires. Yet despite their training and best efforts, on June 30—in the worst American firefighter tragedy since 9/11—19 Hotshots perished in a quick-shifting wildfire in Yarnell, Arizona (the crew's 20th member, Brendan McDonough, was on lookout duty and survived). In their obituaries, the words *passion* and *calling* were used to describe the career they had all chosen. "They died doing what they loved," says Darrell Willis, Prescott Fire Department Wildland Division Chief. Earlier this year, Eric Marsh, the superintendent of the Granite Mountain Hotshots crew, wrote an open letter to the town of Prescott to explain the crew's dedication. "Why do we want to be away from home so much, work long hours, risk our lives, and sleep on the ground 100 nights a year?" he wrote. "Simply, it's the most fulfilling thing any of us have ever done." He concluded, "We are not nameless or faceless, we are not expendable, we are not satisfied with mediocrity, we are not quitters." After their bravery, the Granite Mountain Hotshots will never be forgotten.



On July 4, Army Specialist Michael Menchaca, 21, of Fort Myer, Virginia, wearing an off-duty outfit of a Batman T-shirt and pajama pants, performed a superhero feat. He was at the Metro Center station in Washington, D.C., when a man in a motorized wheelchair rode off the platform and onto the tracks. Menchaca immediately jumped down to help even though the electrified third rail was nearby. "I was worried about the guy," he says. Three other people jumped down, and they hoisted the man and then his chair onto the platform. Menchaca stayed with the man until an ambulance arrived. The specialist's wife, Carmen Alvarado-Menchaca, isn't surprised that her husband was the first to act. "He's only afraid of the man upstairs," she says.

PROFILE  
IN COURAGE

# The Citizen



team clambered out of their F750 pickup trucks and set off on foot toward a 300-acre fire that had been sparked by lightning atop Yarnell Hill, some 90 miles north of Phoenix, two days before. The men were all highly trained members of the local fire department in Prescott, Arizona. But none of them could have anticipated what would happen that day.

Just six hours later, a freak thunderstorm rolled in and triggered a sudden change in wind direction, causing the fire to encircle the crew with a 3,000-degree, 40-foot-high wall of flames. Within minutes, 19 firefighters were dead.

For those of us who don't fight fires, the courage it would take to willingly put oneself in such danger seems all but unimaginable. Psychologists have found that fear subsides when people believe that they understand a threat. The reason may be that we're naturally afraid of the unknown: Put a person inside a brain-scanning machine and show him an unfamiliar face, and his amygdala will activate; show him a face he knows, and it won't.

A Harvard sociologist and former wildland firefighter, Matthew Desmond writes in his book *On the Fireline: Living and Dying with Wildland Firefighters* that most are experienced outdoorspeople. "Courage is based on the idea that you recognize the danger in the thing you see," Desmond says. For experienced firefighters, a sense of mastery erodes the perception of

danger and with it the feeling of fear. "When you start, you're in awe," he says. "But once you've seen a hundred fires, the adrenaline goes away."

For many of us, a feeling of intense danger is itself an unfamiliar place. The strange mental state in which we feel as though we're watching a movie of ourselves can provoke



"COURAGE IS BASED ON THE IDEA THAT YOU RECOGNIZE THE DANGER IN THE THING YOU SEE," WRITES MATTHEW DESMOND.

further anxiety and leave us feeling paralyzed. The numerous witnesses to Melissa Hawkinson's feat may have been flummoxed because they'd never been in such a situation before. For her part, Hawkinson had prior experience. Years earlier, she and her husband had come across a car accident and performed CPR on the unconscious driver until paramedics arrived. Before that encounter, she says, she didn't know how she'd handle herself in an emergency. Since then, she's had confidence in her ability to perform under pressure. "I can remain calm and do what I need to do," Hawkinson says.

In other words, she's found her own answer to the mystery of bravery. **R**





# Laughter

THE BEST MEDICINE

---



HELLO. I AM LOOKING FOR MY FRIEND JEREMY, WHO IS AN ANT. JEREMY! JEREMY, ARE YOU IN THERE? DO YOU STILL WANT TO GO TO THE LIBRARY TODAY OR NOT?

*From Animals Talking in All Caps by Justin Valmassoi*

**A SURVEYOR DROPS BY** Will's farm in eastern Minnesota and announces that he has some bad news. "I discovered that your farm isn't in Minnesota," he says. "It's actually in Wisconsin."

Will lets out a sigh of relief. "That's the best news I've heard in a long time," he says. "I was just telling my wife this morning that I don't think I can take another winter in Minnesota."

**THE NEW YORK CITY** Department of Education says that only 26 percent of the city's students in grades three through eight passed the English portion on a recent standardized test. But on the bright side, they're too bad at math to realize how bad that is.

**JIMMY FALLON**

**SICK OF HAVING TO GO** to two different huts to buy pizza and sunglasses.

**@LEEMANISH**

**A BIOLOGIST, A CHEMIST,** and a statistician are out hunting. The biologist shoots at a deer and misses five feet to the left, the chemist takes a shot and misses five feet to the right, and the statistician yells, "We got 'em!"

**I HAVE A FEAR** of speed bumps, but I'm slowly getting over it.

@RICKCOUCHMAN

**TWO HOLLYWOOD STUDIOS** want to bring Lance Armstrong's fuel-injected story to the big screen. What should they call it?

- *L.A. Overconfidential*
- *There Will Be Blood Tests*
- *Needlejuiced*
- *Goon with the Schwinn*

From [topfive.com](http://topfive.com)

**SARAH SILVERMAN** tweeted, "When ur relatives drive you crazy just close your eyes & pretend it's dialogue in a woody allen movie." She got this response from Mia Farrow: "Tried that. Didn't work."

**IT'S IMPORTANT** to have a good vocabulary. If I had known the difference between the words *antidote* and *anecdote*, one of my good friends would still be living.

Comedian **JOHN MCDOWELL**

**A SAUDI PRINCE** goes to America to study. A month later, he e-mails his father: "New York is wonderful, but

I'm ashamed to go to school in my gold Mercedes because all my teachers travel by subway."

A few minutes later, his dad writes back: "Stop embarrassing us. Go and get yourself a subway too!"

---

Comedian **Daniel Tosh** is no fan of the expression "The worst day of fishing is better than the best day at work."

"I've watched *The Deadliest Catch* on Discovery," he said. "I've never once been at work, capsized in 40-degree water, watched all my coworkers die, and been like, 'Hey, at least we're fishin.'"

---

**A FATHER SHOWS UP** at his daughter's home and finds his son-in-law angrily packing his bags.

"What's wrong?" he asks.

"I texted my wife that I was coming home today from my golfing trip. And what did I find when I walked through the door? Her making out with Joe Murphy! I'm leaving!"

"Now, calm down," says his father-in-law. "There must be a simple explanation. I'll find out what happened." Moments later, he reappears. "I told you there was a simple explanation, and there is," he says. "She never got your text."

---

Send us your favorite new joke, funny anecdote, or crazy news story—it might be worth \$100! See page 9 for details.

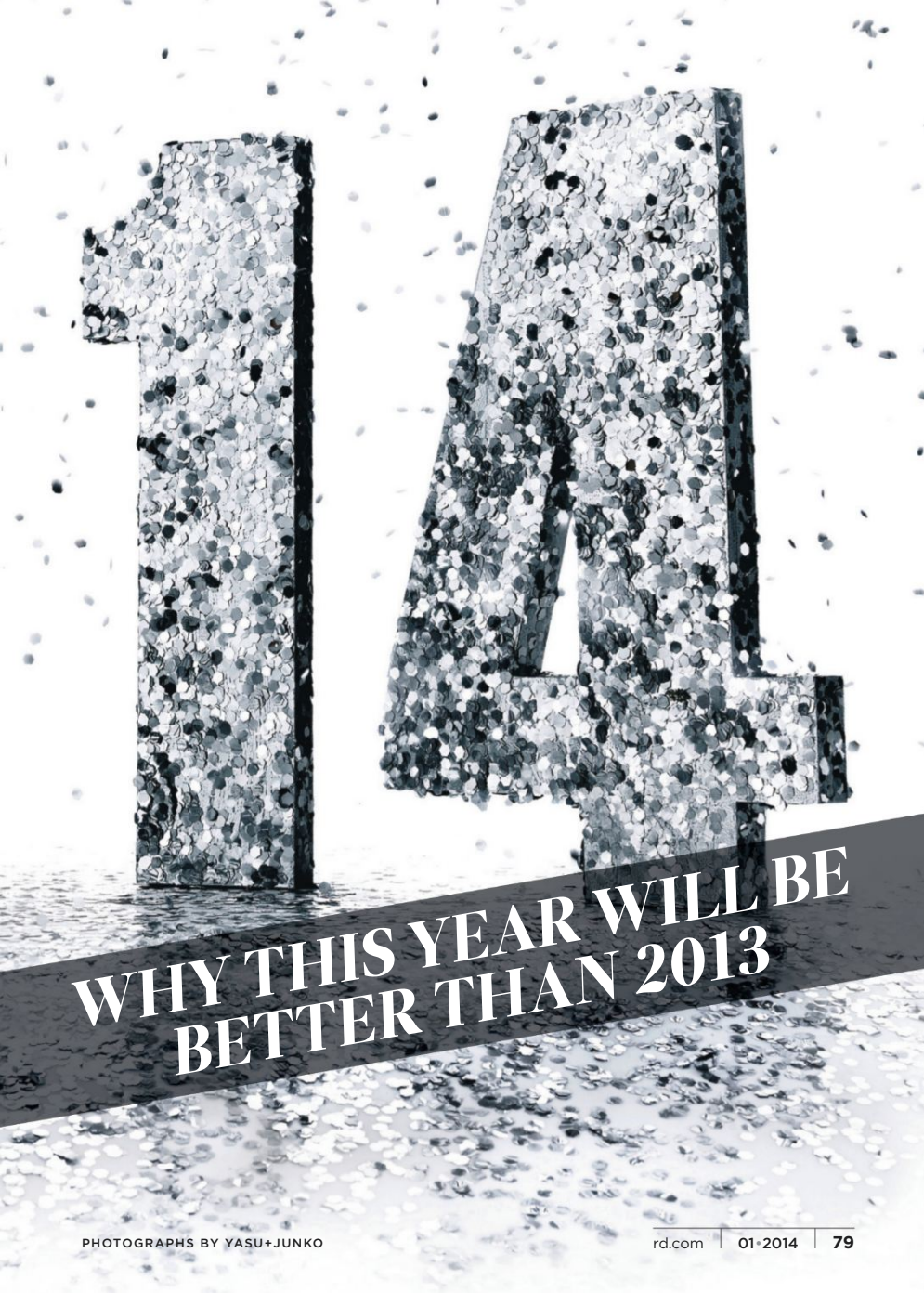


INSPIRATION



20 REASONS





**WHY THIS YEAR WILL BE  
BETTER THAN 2013**

**O**PTIMISM IS *READER'S DIGEST'S* middle name. Not only is our glass half full, it's topped with cookie dough ice cream, hot fudge, whipped cream, a splash of Grey Goose, and the keys to a Porsche 918 Spyder. Still, we're no Pollyannas, so we reached out to thought leaders, authors, and experts in various fields to make our case. Some wrote from the heart, while others thought globally. Some were serious; others, funny. But they all agreed—2014 will be a very good year.

## Hope Makes a Comeback

It has to be better because even with all the awful things in 2013—the Boston Marathon massacre, floods in India, an NSA scandal, the Trayvon Martin case—still the world got excited over what? The birth of a baby. A royal baby, admittedly. But a baby. That's because hope, no matter how buried, wants to find the light of day and rises from within us until it does.

**MITCH ALBOM**, author of *The First Phone Call from Heaven*



## 2 The Stars Shine Brighter

Mark your calendars: This year will offer sky watchers far more celestial delights than 2013. On April 14, Mars will make its closest approach to Earth since 2008. That same night, we'll have a ringside seat to see a total lunar eclipse. On October 23, the moon will return the favor, casting its own shadow across North America to produce a partial eclipse of the sun. But the most dramatic event should come on May 24, when our planet is expected to sweep through a slew of dusty trails left behind by a comet, resulting in an amazing display of shooting stars.

**JOE RAO**, guest lecturer at the Hayden Planetarium in New York City

## 3 Our Heroes Are Coming Home

As a libertarian, I'm tempted to say, "Because the U.S. government will have permanently shut down." But that would be cynical, and I'm trying to be less cynical as I get older. My godson, who serves as a helicopter pilot in the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (the unit that got Osama bin Laden), just returned home from yet another very dangerous tour of duty. It was his last overseas tour in harm's way. So 2014 will be better than 2013 because I will no longer have to worry about my godson dying for his country.

**CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY**, whose book *But Enough About You* will be published in 2014

## 4 Medical Marijuana Flourishes

In 2014, more states will be taking up legislation to make it easier for doctors to prescribe medical marijuana. As a doctor, I'm fascinated by the possibilities. So far, the evidence of its benefits is anecdotal, but I've seen amazing individual cases of children with life-threatening seizure disorders that can be kept under control only with the use of a certain strain of cannabis—taken by mouth, not smoked.

**DR. SANJAY GUPTA**, Emmy Award-winning chief medical correspondent for CNN

## Kids Connect Globally

What's happening with youth and technology is going to only get better. All our silly streamlined texting and obsessions with our phones means we're connecting in a global language. When kids all over the world come together to play Grand Theft Auto online, they'll be shooting each other up digitally, not on the streets. And no kid is going to agree to go to war with a country that has a member of his World of Warcraft clan in it.

**COMEDIAN BO BURNHAM**, whose new book is *Egghed*



## 6 Small-Town America Roars Back

Communities are turning their backs on mall-centric, automobile-focused growth in favor of walkable neighborhoods. The reason? To accommodate Millennials and seniors alike, two groups who tend to prefer jobs and entertainment in close proximity and enjoy the health benefits of walking. More and more towns will relocate schools, banks, shops, restaurants, theaters, and offices closer to homes and build wider sidewalks and thinner car lanes to encourage strolling over driving. The result: thriving, homey, safer town centers of the sort our grandparents might remember.

**DAN BURDEN**, executive director of the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute



## Trees Stand Tall

This will be a great year for sequoias and redwoods. We will be attempting something that has never been tried on a large scale before: planting thou-

sands of clones from old-growth giants around the world, helping to restore our global forests. Why these behemoths? Sequoias can breathe in CO<sub>2</sub> faster and more effectively than almost any other species on earth, mitigating the adverse effects of climate change.

**DAVID MILARCH**, cofounder of Archangel Ancient Tree Archive, which locates, clones, and archives tree genetics

## 8 People Will Get Tired of Twerking

**DAVE BARRY**, whose new book is *You Can Date Boys When You're Forty*

## 9 Washington Airs Out

This year will be better because we'll get rid of politicians. I predict this: They raise hundreds of millions of dollars for their 2014 congressional campaigns, it dawns on them just how much money that is, and they run off with it, seeking asylum in Ecuador.

**P. J. O'ROURKE**, author of *The Baby Boom: How It Got That Way (And It Wasn't My Fault) (And I'll Never Do It Again)*

## 10 Our Vocabulary Improves

Every year I think, That's it for interesting words; we can't possibly top this. Yet we always do. I suspect *nocializing*—"being preoccupied with a mobile device while in company"—will be popular. Might it eventually be consigned to the dustbin of usage? Sure. But what is certain: Never second-guess our language.

**FIONA MCPHERSON**, senior editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*



## No More Smurfettes

In 1991, Katha Pollitt coined the term the *Smurfette Principle* to explain a curious phenomenon in pop culture: “a group of male buddies ... accented by a lone female, stereotypically defined.” In the two decades since, there were many “firsts”—think Hillary Clinton’s legitimate bid for president in 2008 and Kathryn Bigelow’s winning the Best Director Oscar in 2010. But in many areas, women were still “onlys”—the only comedian in the lineup or the only keynote at the tech conference.

That’s changing. Look around: Women are everywhere—leading, making, doing. It is virtually impossible to ignore the fiercely talented women swelling the ranks in every industry: Sheryl Sandberg, Marissa Mayer, Tina

Fey, Shonda Rhimes, Lena Dunham, Gwen Ifill, Mellody Hobson, Anne Sweeney, Ursula Burns, Elizabeth Warren, Susan Collins. There are more, of course, and that is the point. In 2014, these lists will be more notable for how impossible it is to include everyone.

RACHEL SKLAR, CNN contributor



## Baby Names Get Classier

The two most notable baby names of 2013—young Prince George Alexander Louis and little North West, daughter of Kim Kardashian and Kanye West—conspire to nudge baby naming in a positive direction next year. Quirky classics like George seem more appealing, while outrageous names, like North, chosen primarily to be trendy, seem more cruel than cool.

PAMELA REDMOND SATRAN,  
cocreator of [nameberry.com](http://nameberry.com)



# 13

## An Ode to 2014

We’ll sit under the apple tree  
and keep each other company,  
wrapped in diamonds and furs.

Drier or wetter,  
it’s bound to be better.  
Unless, that is, it turns out worse.

GARRISON KEILLOR, creator of *A Prairie Home Companion* and author of *O, What a Luxury*



## A Great Generation Takes Shape

This is the year the last Boomers will reach 50. We're celebrating because we're in the process of redeeming our youthful legacy as we reinvent lifestyles and find new ways to stay productive and give back. I think we'll be known as the innovation generation.

**JANE PAULEY**, former talk show host and author of *Your Life Calling: Reimagining the Rest of Your Life*

## 15 The War Against Terror Is Funded

Despite the enormous threat that terrorism represents, there has been little attempt to put an infrastructure in place to take it head-on. Until now. In 2014, thanks to anti-extremist organizations, along with Secretary of State John Kerry's Global Counterterrorism Forum, society will finally have the

resources, money, and time invested to challenge extremist viewpoints.

**MAAJID NAWAZ**, author of *Radical: My Journey Out of Islamist Extremism*

## 16 Underdogs Prevail

- Addicts and alcoholics seek and then, miraculously, sustain recovery.
- Poets pop up on the bestseller lists, and Hollywood makes films for all of us non-pubescents.
- Prison cells once occupied by the poor are occupied instead by the 21st-century robber barons, who can afford lawyers.
- Hair grows back on my head.
- In those age-old battles—compassion vs. indifference, love vs. hatred—compassion and love emerge victorious.

Sure, you may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. As John Lennon sang: Imagine.

**WALLY LAMB**, author of *We Are Water*

## 17 We'll Be Stylin'

As big-box retailers become omnipresent, consumers seem more inclined to find their unique style. Self-expression—from fashion to art—and showing off through digital media will only get bigger. If looking at



a picture of someone's newly invented cocktail isn't your bag, it's easy to find people doing interesting things. It's never been a better time to be creative.

**CYNTHIA ROWLEY**, fashion designer

## 18 I'll Get a Dog

After several years of illness and sorrow, I'll celebrate life. First step? A sheepad puppy. When every leaf and tree is brand-new to your canine companion, you start to see the world with different eyes too. Bring on the long walks, nights by the fire, and real loyalty.

**ALICE HOFFMAN**,

whose book *Survival Lessons* is available now

## 19 Our Intellect Grows

More and more people are talking to one another online this year. Consider Twitter alone: We write about 400 million tweets a day, and that's projected to grow by about one third in 2014. Critics say this is just narcissistic rambling, but that's shortsighted. In reality, it's what I call public thinking: We now broadcast our ideas, hunches, and questions and then connect with like-minded people to get answers. Studies show that when we write for an audience, the pressure to seem clever works. We think more deeply and work harder at being smart.

**CLIVE THOMPSON**, author of *Smarter Than You Think: How Technology Is Changing Our Minds for the Better*



## Gratitude Goes Global

What do people around the world have in common? We're done with being saturated in negative energy from all the economic and political crises that have occupied us all for years. We crave something better and are interested in learning how to find it. We are not ignoring reality; instead, we know that collective optimism lifts the global malaise. **R**

**DAVID MEZZAPELLE**, author of *Contagious Optimism*

The road was wet, our dad had been drinking—and we crashed, flipping our horse trailer. Then a mysterious man appeared out of nowhere.

# The Horse Whisperer



KRISTEN IVERSEN  
*is the author  
of Full Body  
Burden:  
Growing Up  
in the Nuclear  
Shadow of  
Rocky Flats,  
now in  
paperback.*

BY KRISTEN IVERSEN

**IT WAS A SATURDAY** morning in early June, a day my sister Karma and I believed would end in triumph. For weeks, we had been preparing for the gymkhana at the county fairgrounds, sponsored by our local riding club. My horse, Tonka, was a sleek pinto with patches of white and brown, long white stockings, and a star on his forehead. Tonka and I could run a three-barrel race faster than any kid in the county, or so I thought, and I hoped to bring home a blue ribbon. Karma's horse, Comanche, was a pro at pole bending, a timed race that involved galloping between tall poles. My sister also hoped to win a blue ribbon.

Clouds began to gather in the sky. Not a good sign. A little rain could turn a riding arena from dust to mud. "It won't last," Karma said. I hoped she was right.

My mother usually drove us to our riding events, but on this day, my father emerged from the house, briefcase in hand. He spent a lot of time at his law practice, even on weekends, and he planned to drop us off at the arena with

ILLUSTRATION BY JOE MCKENDRY (IVERSEN)







the horse trailer. My father counseled people with all kinds of legal problems, big and small, and he accepted barter if they couldn't pay their bills. His clients loved him, but the father we knew was distant and troubled.

Although we never discussed it, my father's struggle with alcoholism had become the silent center of our family life. My three siblings and I were accustomed to the scent of bourbon that clung to his breath. My mother was paralyzed with fear and indecision. Her salary as a part-time nurse couldn't possibly support four children, and no one talked about alcoholism in those days. It was our family secret.

We couldn't talk about feelings either, but we all loved animals, and we shared in the joys of taking care of our ever-changing menagerie of dogs and cats, as well as our horses. For Karma and me, Tonka and Comanche were constant companions.

We hitched the trailer to our Blazer and led the horses up the ramp. I shut the trailer gate and got in the front seat. Karma sat in the back. We wore identical outfits of jeans, T-shirts, and dusty brown cowboy boots. My hair was in pigtails. The rain was now falling at a steady rate. My father pulled out of our driveway and headed toward the fairgrounds, picking up

speed once we hit the main road. The pavement was dark and wet.

It wasn't until we felt a big bump that Karma and I realized the car was out of control.

For a moment, I thought we were flying. The road rose up an incline to a railroad track and then dipped, and we soared out of the dip like a launched rocket. I glanced at the rearview mirror and could see the horse trailer swinging back and forth.

My side of the vehicle, the passenger side, hit the shoulder of the road, and the trailer broke off. The car and trailer rolled and tumbled away from each other as if in slow motion. There was an eruption of metal, glass, and dirt, and then all was quiet.

I could feel rain on my cheek. I realized I was lying in the back of the Blazer, next to Karma, and we were facing the back window of the car, which was oddly open.

"We have to get out," Karma said.

We could see our father in the front seat, struggling with the door.

I crawled across what had been the roof of the car and pulled myself out after my sister. She stood looking at the car, upside down in a gully, belly to the sky, surrounded by twisted metal and crumbled glass. My father's door moved slightly, and he

“  
***No words were possible. My sister and I were sure that our horses were dead.***  
 ”

wriggled out. "I'll flag someone down," he said, his voice rasping.

Karma and I stood in shock. The dream of our gymkhana disappeared. Our eyes found the horse trailer, wedged into a ravine a few yards away. Together we walked over, afraid to peer inside.

Tonka and Comanche lay on the floor, their cheeks flat against the floorboards, legs tucked at their sides. Unlike the car, the interior of the trailer was surprisingly intact. The horses were completely still. Karma and I looked at each other. No words were possible. We knew they were dead.

Suddenly a man appeared. A man younger than our father but perhaps old enough to be the parent of one of our friends. He wore jeans and a T-shirt. I remember a straw cowboy hat; my sister recalls only his face.

"Are you all right?" he asked.

"Yes," we answered together, although we knew that nothing was all right.

"Sit here on the grass," he said, and I sank to the ground. My legs were shaking. Karma sat next to me.

He stooped down to look into the trailer. The horses were motionless. He reached inside and touched first Tonka's flank, then Comanche's. Suddenly Comanche's flank quivered.

The man turned to face us. "They're going to be OK," he said. "They've



*The author holds Tonka, while siblings Karin, Karma, and Kurt sit astride, about four years before the crash.*

just been knocked unconscious." He talked to them, rubbing their cheeks and gently pulling their ears. "It's probably what saved them."

He kicked the trailer door open, and both horses struggled to their feet. He backed them out, one by one. Like us, they were trembling from the shock and the cool rain.

He tied them to the fence at the side of the road and helped us to our feet. "Do you live far?" he asked.

"No," we said.

"You should walk them home. They probably won't want to get in a trailer again."

"OK," Karma said.

"Are you sure you're all right?"

“We’re fine,” I said.

“Good,” he said. “You’ll all be OK.”

Our father was talking to a police officer. He was distraught and in pain and took little notice of us. If the officer knew our father had been drinking, he didn’t do anything about it. We untied our horses from the fence to begin our walk home, nearly a mile.

I looked back; the man was gone.

My sister and I never found out who he was, and we never forgot him. It was as if he had brought our horses back to life, and some of that magic

had rubbed off on us too. He gave us strength in the short run to gather our wits, to take our two horses by their halters and lead them home. But the experience also helped sustain us during the days and weeks that followed. Many years would pass before my father could face his demons and our family grew close again. But this calm and caring stranger gave us a sense of hope, optimism, and human connection in a dark and frightening moment. He told us that we would be OK—and in time, we were OK, all of us. **R**



---

COMING IN THE FEBRUARY ISSUE

---

## EXTREME WAYS THEY SAID “I LOVE YOU”

*Ten incredible expressions of devotion*

---

### Schizophrenic. Killer. My Cousin.

What can happen when families are left to face mental illness on their own.

### Dolphins Aren’t Smiling

By believing they can heal us,  
we’re harming them.

### Louis C.K.

... sounds off on cell phones.

### Life Lessons People Learn Too Late

Wise practices to connect meaningfully  
with friends and family.

### PLUS

- 50 Secrets Your Grocer Won’t Tell You
  - The RD Interview: Bob Costas
- What Cardiologists Need to Learn About Heart Disease

# That's Outrageous!

REAL-LIFE 911 CALLS

**THE CALL:** A ten-year-old Brockton, Massachusetts, boy called 911, then abruptly hung up.

**WHEN THE DISPATCHER CALLED BACK:**

She discovered the problem: Much to the boy's annoyance, his mother was insisting that he go to bed.

Source: [boston.com](http://boston.com)

**THE CALL:** A woman in Dacula, Georgia, contacted police when her Chevy van went missing.

**BEFORE POLICE COULD ACT:**

The woman called back, saying she'd found the vehicle in her yard, hidden behind some weeds.

Source: [dacula.patch.com](http://dacula.patch.com)

**THE CALL:** A Romanian man called the police to report hearing a strange noise in a house.

**WHEN COPS ARRIVED:** They realized the man was in fact burglarizing the place, so they arrested him.

**UPON FURTHER INVESTIGATION:**

The noise he'd heard was made by the homeowner's cat.

Source: [metro.co.uk](http://metro.co.uk)



**THE CALL:** A man in Lincoln, Nebraska, arrived home one day to find he'd been burglarized—his favorite hookah pipes were missing.

**WHEN COPS**

**ARRIVED:** They stumbled upon the

pot plants that the man was growing and took him in.

Source: [azcentral.com](http://azcentral.com)

**THE CALL:** When a British man saw a mysterious flying object that lit up the sky, he immediately phoned the authorities.

**BEFORE POLICE COULD ACT:**

The man called back, saying the mystery was solved. The UFO was actually the moon.

Source: [web.orange.co.uk](http://web.orange.co.uk)

**THE CALL:** A Norwegian man dialed the police to complain that he was unable to leave the hair salon where he was getting a trim.

**UPON FURTHER INVESTIGATION:**

Police learned the man couldn't leave because he so loathed his haircut, he was too embarrassed to be seen.

Source: [newsinenglish.no](http://newsinenglish.no)



DRAMA IN REAL LIFE

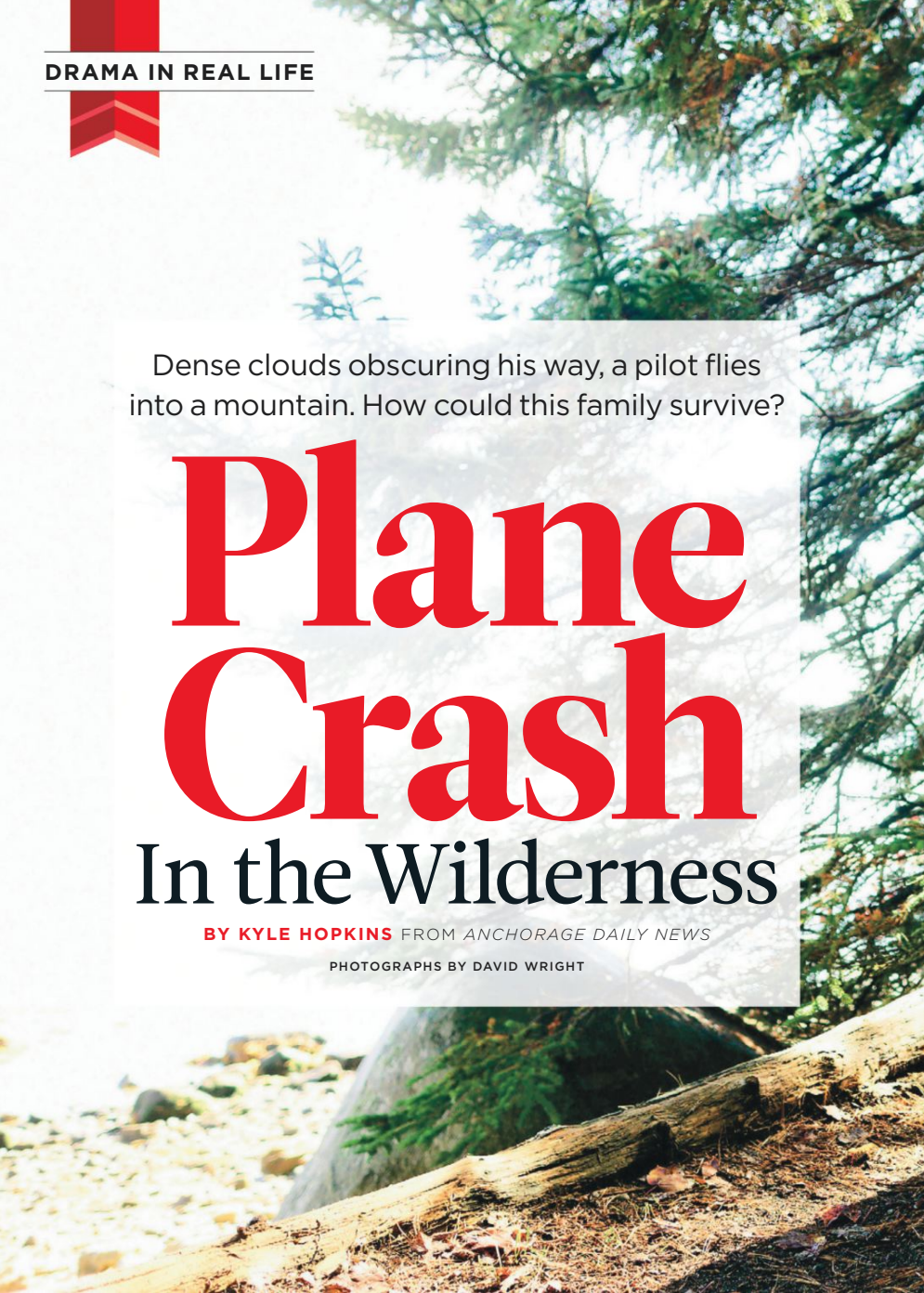
Dense clouds obscuring his way, a pilot flies into a mountain. How could this family survive?

# Plane Crash

## In the Wilderness

BY **KYLE HOPKINS** FROM *ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID WRIGHT





*Donnie, Mckenzie,  
Rosemarie, Willow,  
and Donald Evans*





**T**he last thing Donald Evans remembered was shouting, “Pull up!” to the pilot seated beside him before the single-engine propeller plane slammed into a low mountain 37 miles west of McGrath, Alaska. One look now told him the pilot was dead. So was the woman sitting behind Donald, a popular schoolteacher named Julia Walker, who lived in Anvik, Alaska. Donald twisted in the six-seat Cessna 207 and looked behind him. The plane, hardly larger than a minivan, had snapped in half on the mountainside. He couldn’t see or hear his two children, Mckenzie, eight, and Donnie, ten. His wife, Rosemarie, 32 and two months pregnant, was slumped motionless in her seat. Donald’s mind filled with a single, horrifying thought: Everybody’s gone.

### **TENDING TO THE WOUNDED**

Still buckled in his seat, Donald, 32, tried to get his bearings. It was pouring rain. Some of his teeth were missing. Later he’d find out that the impact had broken his back, legs, feet, and jaw.

Then Donald heard Mckenzie crying somewhere outside the crumpled Cessna. She’d been sitting in the back row before the crash, and the impact had thrown her 20 feet from the plane. Although Donald didn’t know it yet, his daughter’s arm was broken and her intestines were severed, possibly by her seat belt.

Despite his injuries, Donald crawled out to Mckenzie, who lay soaking wet in the rain. Worried about hypothermia, Donald removed his daughter’s wet clothing and wrapped her in a quilt the family had packed. Together father and daughter dragged themselves back to the plane, where Rosemarie was starting to regain consciousness.

Her back, feet, ankles, and right arm were broken. She was terrified that the baby she was carrying had been hurt. The only part of her body that she could move was her left arm, which she used to reach out the window, feeling behind her. Donnie was somewhere back there, alive; now they could hear him screaming.

After the crash, Donnie had rolled partially beneath the plane before the floorboards came to a rest on his legs and waist, trapping him. “There was no way I was going to be able to yank him up,” Donald says. He heaved himself to the roof and crawled to Donnie, letting himself fall from the top of the Cessna to land beside his son.

Donald feared the boy might die if he wasn’t stabilized and his head wasn’t elevated. He noticed a splintered log nearby from a willow tree that had probably snapped in the

## ALASKA



crash. "I was able to take that and brace him," Donald says. Then he found the pruning tool he'd packed and used it to cut away the floorboards to stop them from crushing Donnie. "Give Daddy a couple more minutes," he reassured his son. "I'll cut you out of here."

Meanwhile, Rosemarie was slipping in and out of consciousness in the middle row, coughing up dark blood. "I can't breathe!" she yelled. Donald turned his attention to her.

His adrenaline had ebbed, and now he was feeling the pain of his injuries. He forced himself to crawl back to the

front of the plane and shift the pilot's body away from his wife.

### AN ALASKAN ADVENTURE

Donald and Rosemarie had been headed to Anvik, the rural Yukon River village 350 miles northwest of Anchorage, to begin their first year of teaching. It was August 13, 2011.

They had grown up one county apart in upstate New York. They were 15 when they first met at a Poughkeepsie movie theater and started dating. At 17, Donald joined the U.S. Marine Corps.

During a 30-day leave, Donald told

Rosemarie he wanted to visit someplace spectacular. He caught a flight to Fort Richardson, near Anchorage, Alaska, on a military plane. "Within the first four or five hours after landing, I knew this was it," Donald says. When he arrived back home, his truck had Alaska plates.

After four years in the Marines, Donald enlisted again, this time with the Army. The couple hoped to be stationed in Alaska, but Donald was sent to Iraq instead. When Donald's military service ended in 2007, he and Rosemarie settled in Wasilla, Alaska, and enrolled in Alaska Pacific University. After graduating with teaching degrees, they were hired to job-share a teaching position at the Blackwell School, a two-classroom elementary school in Anvik.

A village of fewer than 100 people, Anvik is where the southern route of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race meets the Yukon River. Snowmobiles outnumber pickup trucks. A head of lettuce sells for \$5.50.

The family arrived in the village in June 2011, weeks before the start of school, eager to start their Alaska adventure. Their first flight in a small plane was smooth, and the weather was sunny. "As soon as we landed, a big black bear ran across the airstrip and stood up," Donald says.

They met Julia Walker, the only other teacher in the village. Donnie and McKenzie made fast friends with the kids in town, and Donald spent

the summer erecting the school's new playground set. At night, they played basketball in the school gymnasium.

A week before classes were scheduled to begin, the teachers flew to the district headquarters in McGrath for a series of meetings. On a hunch, Rosemarie bought a pregnancy test at the McGrath general store and confirmed her pregnancy. The prospect of another baby left her and Donald excited and nervous. Suddenly the decision to share a single teaching job, rather than moving to a district where they could each earn a full salary, made more sense. Donald would be able to teach during Rosemarie's maternity leave.

At the end of the week, the family packed groceries and school supplies in the little Cessna and waited for a break in the weather to fly back to Anvik. Pilot Ernie Chase, 66, had grown up in Anvik and flown the route countless times. Shortly after 7 p.m., he decided they had an opening.

## A MOUNTAIN LOOMS

As their plane prepared to leave McGrath, Donald and Rosemarie felt the split-second whirl of apprehension familiar to all village fliers. Would the weather hold? Would this be the flight where something went wrong?

Rosemarie, in her first trimester, felt sick, her stomach queasy as they lifted off. The Kuskokwim River disappeared hundreds and then thousands of feet below. Donald watched for moose and bears. The children sat

---

with books. Even with little turbulence, Rosemarie vomited. Julia Walker, belted beside her, helped Rosemarie clean up and then retreated into her iPod.

Within minutes after take-off, the plane was encased in clouds. "This is pretty bad," Donald remembers the pilot saying. All he could see was white. Donald swiveled in his seat, disappointed. "Sorry, babe. We're probably going to turn around," he told Rosemarie.

"No big deal," she replied.

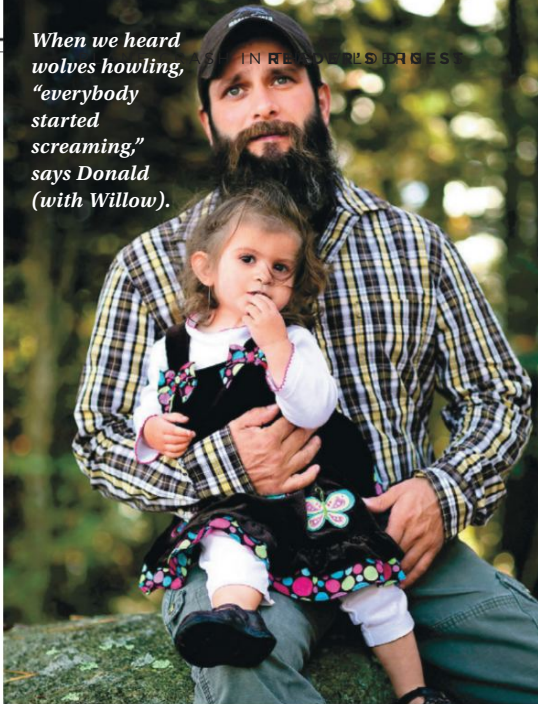
Chase dipped the plane close to the ground, looking for clearer sky. The Cessna climbed and dipped again. Then the pilot must have spotted something to his left, Donald says. The plane banked hard to the right; the clouds broke just in time for Donald to see the mountainside fill the windshield. "Please, God, protect my family," he prayed.

## HOWLS IN THE DARKNESS

Less than an hour had passed since the crash. Rosemarie could hear birds chirping. It was still light out but growing colder. Donald crawled to the front of the plane and tried to make radio contact to call for help. No one answered. He pressed the button on the emergency locator again and again.

The device sent a satellite message to the pilot's family in Wasilla at 8:30 p.m. The airline, Aniak-based

*When we heard  
wolves howling,  
"everybody  
started  
screaming,"  
says Donald  
(with Willow).*



Inland Aviation Services, immediately launched planes to search Chase's flight path. Bad weather cut short the effort, but pilots in other small planes in the area told the Alaska Air National Guard that they had heard a distress signal from an emergency locator transmitter.

Donald could hear, but not see, airplanes above the clouds. The family knew they were only a 20-minute flight from McGrath. Surely they would hear the chop of a rescue helicopter soon. The combination of wind and rain left Donald as cold as he had ever felt. Sometime before nightfall, he heard wolves howling in the fog. "Everybody started scream-

ing,” he says. “I was just begging everybody to stop screaming.”

The sun went down at about 10:45 p.m. The wolves never appeared. Neither did the helicopter.

## A RAY OF LIGHT

Rosemarie gripped Donnie’s hand, and Donald held Mckenzie. As darkness fell, Donald yelled to his family every few seconds and tried to get them to yell back. He was afraid that they would die if they fell asleep.

To stay awake, the family sang a children’s poem Donald and Rosemarie used to read to Donnie when he was a baby: “These little hands are held in prayer. To thank you God for being there ...”

An Air National Guard HC-130 left Anchorage at 1:25 a.m., tracking the emergency locator signal. It flew over the crash site at about 3 a.m. But cloud cover prevented rescuers from seeing the wreckage. After two hours, the HC-130 returned to Anchorage to refuel. The family could hear the plane circling. Then silence.

By morning Donald was afraid the search had gone on for so long that it would shift from a rescue mission to a recovery effort. “We didn’t have much longer,” he says. He found a bag of clementine oranges the family had purchased in McGrath and tossed one to each family member. “Here, guys, this will bring a little sunshine into our lives right now,” he said.

It was a last meal. After they ate,

Donald told the family they could go to sleep. “I guess he just wanted us to be at peace,” Rosemarie says.

The family wasn’t aware that at 9 a.m., a National Guard HH-60 Pavehawk helicopter had left Anchorage to return to the crash site. The refueled HC-130 followed minutes later. Less than five minutes after eating their oranges, the family heard the whoosh of helicopter blades.

## BORN FROM TRAGEDY

Pararescuers, known in the Alaska Air National Guard as Guardian Angels, hit the ground at 11:05 a.m., after a break in the clouds. Two rescuers dropped from the helicopter, which was unable to land at the sloping, wooded crash site. Another three jumped from the HC-130 to a nearby field.

“We’re going to help you,” the rescuers said as they studied the crash site.

“My wife’s pregnant. Take her first,” Donald told them.

The Evans family had been stranded for more than 15 hours when guardsmen hoisted Rosemarie to the Pavehawk in a long basket. She was flown to McGrath, where she waited for the helicopter to pick up the rest of the family. Then they were all flown to a hospital in Anchorage.

Surgeons removed Mckenzie’s appendix and reattached her intestines. They cut Donnie from ear to ear to pull a section of his skull back in place. Rosemarie and Donald were confined to wheelchairs because


of broken backs and told that their unborn child might not make it.

As the weeks passed, the warnings stopped. Rosemarie—rods and screws still lodged in her back—gave birth to a healthy baby exactly seven months after the crash. The couple named the girl Willow for the tree branch that Donald used to save his son, Julia for the teacher who lost her life in the crash, and Grace “because it’s by the grace of God that we’re all here,” says Rosemarie. Willow Julia Grace Evans is now a healthy toddler.

### THE ROAD AHEAD

After the crash, the Evanses moved to Searsport, Maine, to be closer to family in New York as they heal. “A piece of us is still in Alaska and probably always will be,” says Rosemarie. “But our circumstances have led us back east.”

Mckenzie and Donnie have recovered quickly from their injuries and are thriving in their new environment. Mckenzie has taken up the saxophone and loves soccer and horseback riding. Donnie loves to run.

Donald and Rosemarie haven’t fared as well physically, though their attitudes remain upbeat. A string of surgeries has kept the couple from returning to work—they get by on money from the airline’s insurance. “We will never have full use of our bodies,” says Rosemarie. “But we choose happiness. We endured for one another.” 

ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS, MAY 11, 2013. COPYRIGHT © 2013 BY THE ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS, A SUBSIDIARY OF THE MCCLATCHY COMPANY, ADN.COM.

# GUARANTEED RELIEF

## FOR DRY HANDS THAT CRACK & SPLIT

Odorless & Non-Greasy



Made in USA 




My hands were red and cracking - I thought I'm going to have to quit dentistry because my hands can't take all of this abuse. I tried everything - every product. Finally, I found something that works! At first I thought it was a guy's product, but no - Working Hands is for anyone who is working. Without this product, I would not be able to continue in dentistry.

*Jill*, Dental Hygienist

 Like Us at [fb.com/OKeefes](https://www.facebook.com/OKeefes)


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

Also available:  
O'Keefe's for Healthy Feet 





*Dartanyon Crockett (left) and Leroy Sutton charge down a hall of their former high school, with the author (right).*



I went to meet these two young athletes for a TV story I was doing. I stayed because I could not walk away.

LET'S  
HEAR IT  
FOR THE  
BOYS

BY LISA FENN FROM ESPN.COM

**“WHY DID YOU STAY?”** he asked as we waited for the light to turn green. I always thought he knew. “I love you,” I answered. “That’s what I thought you’d say,” he replied. “But ... why ... why did you stick around and do everything you did?” The answer to Dartanyon Crockett’s second question was not as tidy as the first. Because life can be a knotted mess and, sometimes, love is not enough.

Dartanyon and Leroy Sutton found their way into my heart four years ago. As an ESPN television producer, I chronicled human-interest stories in sports. I covered everything from legends like Derek Jeter and Michael Jordan to disabled amateurs and terminally ill Little Leaguers. But what I found on the wrestling

mats at Cleveland's Lincoln-West High School in 2009 caused my spirit to sink and soar, all in the same moment.

**D**artanyon was Lincoln's most talented athlete. A winner in multiple weight classes, he was five-foot-seven, with muscles bunched like buckeyes. He was also homeless. His mama had died of an aneurysm when he was eight, then relatives took him to live in a crack house. Where it was Dartanyon could not say, because he is legally blind. Born with Leber optic atrophy disease, he can barely make out the facial features of a person a few feet away.

Perched atop Dartanyon's back—yes, riding on his back—was teammate Leroy Sutton. Dartanyon carried his friend to and from the wrestling mats at meets because Leroy had no legs. When he was 11, he was hit by a train. His left leg was amputated below the knee, his right leg below the hip. His mother, ravaged by guilt, slipped into drug use and disappeared for stretches, leaving Leroy to care for his sister. His father spent nearly all of Leroy's youth in jail. The boy learned to mask his torment with a quick smile.

The one with no legs being carried by the one who could not see. At first,

I stayed because I simply could not look away.

Dartanyon and Leroy shared a handful of classes, always sitting side by side. Dartanyon would get up to sharpen Leroy's pencils; Leroy would read the small print for Dartanyon. Yet each time I reveled in their tenderness, they reverted to teenage humor with a twist only they could share. "Did you guys do the homework?" the teacher asked. "Dartanyon tried," Leroy said, "but he couldn't see it." "Leroy ran over," Dartanyon said, "and read it to me."

They barreled down the hallways

together. Dartanyon kept a hand on Leroy's wheelchair, in part as a guide for himself but also to act as a protector, a brother. Their teachers told me that they were "some of the good ones."

Their cheerfulness stood out at Lincoln. Teens poured through metal detectors each morning, many stopped for pat-downs. Less than 50 percent would ever graduate. Yet Dartanyon and Leroy moved through the chaos with grace, with a refusal to have their hope tainted. Dartanyon

scribbled on pages in his notebooks "Destined for Greatness."

In order for their friendship's nuances to unfold on camera, I needed to



*When Dartanyon carries Leroy, he is Leroy's legs, and Leroy is his eyes.*

be a part of it. This was difficult at first because I grew up on the other side of Cleveland. My parents had scrounged up money for private school to protect me from “those people,” and I’d always silently wondered what was so bad about them. Now I realized their discomfort was akin to the uneasiness I wore in Lincoln’s halls.

But Dartanyon and Leroy eased me in. They taught me their lingo and poked fun when I used it. They opened up about their struggles—Dartanyon with eagerness, as I suspect he had waited all his life for someone to want to know him. Leroy’s revelations emerged more reluctantly. He had been abandoned too many times. But sharing his past became a type of therapy for him.

**I stayed because** I would not be next on the list of people who walked out on them. After wrestling season, Dartanyon and Leroy competed in power lifting, a sport in which they both excelled. Leroy held the state record in bench press, Dartanyon in dead lift. Immediately following a conference championship win in April 2009, Dartanyon discovered that all his belongings had been stolen.

That week, I drove him around to replace his items. A new bus pass. A cell phone. A trip to the Social Security office for a state ID, which required a birth certificate, which had been confiscated during his dad’s eviction. His was a cruel world, and how he endured

it baffled me. I paid for his items, crossing a journalistic line. But this was becoming less about a story and all about soothing the suffering. Dartanyon later told me that that was when he grew convinced God had placed me in his life for reasons beyond television.

I traveled to Akron to film Leroy’s old neighborhood. This required a police escort. “Welcome to Laird Street,” a police officer said. “We call it Laird Country because once they’re born into Laird, they never leave. They just move from house to house, up and down, following those drugs.”

I stayed because my heart was too heavy for my legs to walk away.

That summer, I edited their story, “Carry On,” praying that one viewer would be moved to help. After the airings, hundreds of e-mails flooded my inbox, offering money and sharing how this friendship shook their souls awake. Dartanyon and Leroy were no longer invisible. I curled up and wept.

I responded to nearly 1,000 e-mails. Each time I shared exciting developments, Dartanyon gushed with thanks and hugs. But Leroy’s stoic posture never budged. “Leroy, if at any point you don’t want this, you need to speak up,” I said. “The last thing I want is to inflict my desires on you.”

“No, it’s all good,” he said.

“But usually when it’s all good, people smile or say something,” I said. “Each time I call with good news, you are so quiet. I’m not even sure you’re on the line.”

"No one's ever called me with good news before," he said. "I don't know what I'm supposed to say."

**I stayed because** I vowed then to fill Leroy's life with a thousand good things until he burst with joy. In November 2009, thanks to viewers' generosity, he moved to Arizona to study video game design at Collins College. I had doubts that he could manage on his own, but time and again, he disarms his skeptics. He was the first in his family to graduate from high school, and in August, he was the first to receive a college diploma, as Dartanyon and I applauded.

Dartanyon received his life-changing offer from the U.S. Olympic Committee in March 2010. Coaches invited him to train in Colorado to learn the Paralympic sport of judo. This was like winning the lottery: shelter, sports, mentors, school, medical care, and, as he proudly showed me, his first bed.

"Top judo athletes begin training at a very young age," his coach confided. "We don't know that he can make up the years by 2016." But he worked his fingers into calluses and swiped a spot on the 2012 team. At the Paralympics in London, Leroy and I celebrated as a bronze medal was draped around Dartanyon's neck. Once forgotten by the world, he stood on top of it.

"Things like this don't happen to kids like us," he cried that night, his tears soaking my shoulder. He's right.

Blind and legless kids from the ghetto don't get college degrees and medals, but they should. And that is why I stayed. Because hope, love, and redemption can happen to kids like them. And people like me, people from the "other side," who can soften life's blows for them, ought to help.

Those who know the story heap a lot of credit onto me for dedicating four years to improving Dartanyon's and Leroy's lives. I've removed obstacles from their paths, exposing new horizons and piling on encouragement. I taught Leroy how to pay a bill. I sat with Dartanyon at the Social Security office to apply for disability, something he could have received all his life had anyone submitted the forms. I soothed the burn of Leroy's broken heart and phantom limbs. Through it all, we grew into an eclectic family. We carried on.

When he visited the eye doctor, I asked Dartanyon to include me on the consent form so I could access his records. Later, the administrator called. "I just thought you should know what Dartanyon wrote on his form," she said, somewhat undone. "Next to your name is a space that says 'relationship to patient.' He wrote 'guardian angel.'"

**I stayed because** we get only one life, and we don't truly live it until we give it away. I stayed because we can change the world only when we enter into another's world. I stayed because I love you. **R**

# Laugh Lines

WHAT THE TECH?

A computer once beat me at chess, but it was no match for me at kickboxing.

EMO PHILIPS

I'd like the window that says "Are you sure you want to do this? OK/Cancel" to pop up less often on my computer and more in my real life.

@AARONFULLERTON

There are only two types of computers in the world: those that waste your precious time and those that waste your precious time faster.

ANONYMOUS

Taking pictures with an iPad is the new fanny pack.

@CLARKEKANT

*User:* the word computer professionals use when they mean "idiot."

DAVE BARRY

"One can play at this game ..." —me to my computer solitaire.


@MEGANAMRAM

My dog licked the crumbs out of my computer keyboard and earned an online college degree.

@SCBCHBUM







A lifelong fussy eater, this writer is unapologetic about saying, “No, thank you!”

# *I'm So Not Eating That*

BY CHUCK THOMPSON FROM *OUTSIDE*

**THE GUY IN THE FLANNEL SHIRT** really wanted me to eat his crab. “Have a claw!” he said, waving a steaming pincer in my face with tongs. “No, thanks. I’m good. You go ahead,” I said. I’ve suffered through this gastronomic showdown a million times, from Paris to Paducah, and it always ends the same way. I turn down food I don’t want to eat. At best, I offend somebody. At worst, I make a new unfriend.



The crab pusher came at me last summer at a beach party in Gustavus, Alaska, a little town on the fringes of Glacier Bay National Park. Golden sun shining off the water. Friendly locals. Cans of Rainier on ice. Alaskan king crab pulled from the frigid Pacific just hours earlier, now boiling in a giant kettle. A bighearted fisherman pulling out my prize from the pot.

"Have a claw!"

After my third refusal, the cheery offer started to sound more like a prison warden's order to get back in line. The fisherman's expression said, I am the executor of your once-in-a-lifetime experience. So take the claw, and we'll both walk away happy.

Now here it was, the inevitable moment when the personal capital I'd accrued was about to get squandered with a single confession: "I don't eat crab." I don't care how much butter and garlic you soak it in, that crustacean spider's gnarled clasper is not coming anywhere near my mouth.

"Don't eat crab?" His mariner eyes narrowed. "What the hell's wrong with you?"

**BEING A PICKY EATER** is more than a simple nuisance or an emasculating badge of shame (for someone like me, who has spent most of his adult life as an international traveler). It's a flaw that has ruined dinner parties, derailed relationships, and led to countless hungry nights.

Economy class, parasites, and



crappy hotel pillows I can handle. What torments me is the prospect of being the honored guest at some exotic native banquet and being presented with a sizzling plate of halibut ovaries. A short version of my "no, thanks, I'm good" food roster includes: all seafood, eggs, ham, tofu, milk, jellies, jams, cocktail wieners, convenience-store pump cheese, game animals, most things pickled, all face parts, the entire organ oeuvre, chicken thighs and legs, anything in casings, cream of whatever, cheeses that float in jars of cloudy liquid, wheatgrass shots, anything



associated with lactation or reptiles, bok choy, raisins (would it kill someone to make a plain oatmeal cookie?), the spines of romaine lettuce leaves, apricots, most plums, orange juice pulp, the last bite of a banana, green tomato sludge, and all mushrooms, which to me taste like soil and have the mouthfeel of sputum.

Then there are my maddening inconsistencies. Tomatoes are magnificent in pizza, edible as soup, fatal as a juice. Black beans are an impenetrable mystery; sometimes they're perfect, sometimes a pile of repulsive goop.

Beef is fine, as long as it's well-done. For you, steak houses are places to reconnect with masculinity and big, bold Cabernets. For me, they're places to confront haughty waiters who act like it's an outrage to leave my \$45 rib eye on the grill a few extra minutes.

We hide ourselves well, but we are legion. There are so many fussy eaters in the world, in fact, that we're now being studied. The editors of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (the bible of psychiatric reference books) have added a description of our plight to the 2013 edition's list of officially recognized pathologies.



***My “no, thanks, I’m good”  
roster includes  
anything in casings.***

“There will be a diagnosis called avoidant restrictive food intake disorder that will apply primarily to children but that theoretically could apply to adults,” says Marsha Marcus, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Pittsburgh, who has studied 10,000 self-described “selective eaters.”

The biggest problem picky eaters face is peer pressure from people who think that if we “just have a taste,” everything will be fine. Oxtail soup in Italy. Beetroot in Australia. Plantains in Honduras. I've shocked the world by refusing them all, but the world

keeps coming. The evangelists of squid ink, mayonnaise, and rhubarb have ruined so many nights for me that I've often pondered what motivates people to badger others ceaselessly into eating things they don't want to eat.

Marcus thinks it's a form of positive cultural exchange. "Food sharing is often meant to cement and reinforce hu-

man connection and show caring and appreciation," she says.

Jason Sheehan, a former chef and current food editor at *Philadelphia* magazine, suggests that food is how we literally and figuratively internalize national pride. "To [reject] a country's food is to say something nasty about its mothers and grandmothers, about the most dearly held traditions and tenderest moments."

In other words, politely decline someone's sweet potato bisque, and you're not just saying no. You're telling them their nana's mustache needs waxing.

On the plus side, some of the deepest friendships of my life have been sealed over the common denominator of food hate. Back in the '90s, I taught English as a second language at a college in Okayama, Japan. During my first month, I barely spoke to an aloof colleague named Glasser. One lunch hour, we discovered a mutual aver-

sion to nori, that repulsive dried sea alga that the Japanese use to wrap, garnish, and flavor everything from rice to soup to spaghetti. Glasser and I have remained great buddies ever since. We still talk about foods we can't tolerate

the way some guys talk about women or Xbox.

I grew up in southeast Alaska, dodging cedar-planked salmon flesh and veni-

son chili, my mother keeping me alive with a steady supply of grilled-cheese sandwiches and Tater Tots. I thought moving to Japan would finally teach me how to eat fish. Instead it taught me how to say no.

I remember the night I declared that enough is enough. I was the guest of honor at a banquet thrown by the local Rotary Club. I'd been in Japan long enough to have endured a number of these miseries, forcing tortured smiles while compliantly swallowing chunks of rubbery sea carnage and glugging down pails of Asahi Super Dry to keep the eels and clams and tentacles from coming back up.

At the Rotary dinner, I'd vowed that my days as a human disposal were over and put down my chopsticks. Halfway through the meal, darkness spread over the face of affable Mori-san, the club president and a man for whom the term *respected elder* was invented.

“  
***A colleague and I talk about foods we dislike the way other men talk about women.***  
 ”



"*Chakku-sensei*, you do not eat," he said, gritting his teeth and sucking in air—an intensely polite display of Japanese opprobrium. "You do not like our sushi?" I straightened my back and laid the bad news on Mori-san and his klatch of drunken cronies.

"Yes," I said. "I do not like your sushi. Not just your sushi. The whole country's sushi. Every country's sushi. I cannot stomach this food."

I was fed up at not being fed up.

"This is no trouble," he said warmly. "You are American, so you must like beef. Would you like us to order you some beef?"

I nearly kissed the man. Yes, beef would be good. Beef would be a miracle.

Then came the beef. A full plate of it, set in front of me like a Tokugawa treasure. Two pounds at least, sliced in perfect, thin little pieces. All of it as raw and bloody as open-heart surgery.

Mori-san showed me how to savor the meat, chewing it provocatively, then leaning back and letting the fleshy mulch slide down his throat. He was enjoying his revenge. I looked at the man. I looked at the sweaty circle

of expectant faces around the room. I looked at the plate of shiny, wet meat. Then I reached for my beer.

Only the eternally crucified picky eater can fully appreciate the sense of deliverance that comes with working up the nerve to say "No, thank you" to a roomful of samurai Rotarians who have just dropped \$300 on a plate of inedible meat in your honor.

The thing is, no matter how good you get at rejecting the culinary kindness of strangers, there are some people you really do wish you could please—that crabber in Gustavus comes to mind. So invite us over for dinner; despite our phobic ways, we really are a sociable lot, and we may even make a valiant stab at your mango-encrusted trout casserole. But if the culinary going gets too tough for our tender sense of taste, please allow us both to maintain some dignity by graciously ignoring our gag reflex and accepting a simple but emphatic "No, thank you." **R**

Chuck Thompson is editorial director for [cnn.go.com](http://cnn.go.com) and the author of *Better Off Without 'Em: A Northern Manifesto for Southern Secession*.

OUTSIDE (SEPTEMBER 2013), COPYRIGHT © 2013 BY MARIAH PUBLICATIONS CORP., OUTSIDEONLINE.COM.

## DID YOU KNOW?

You can now take *RD* with you on your mobile phone!

Magazine subscribers can download it free starting December 11.



Education has become an American institution—of the worst kind

# School Is A Prison And Damages Our Kids

BY PETER GRAY FROM SALON.COM

**PARENTS SEND THEIR CHILDREN** to school with the best of intentions, believing that formal education is what kids need to become productive, happy adults. Many parents do have qualms about how well schools are performing, but the conventional wisdom is that these issues can be resolved with more money, better teachers, more challenging curricula, or more rigorous tests. But what if the real problem is school itself?



The unfortunate fact is that one of our most cherished institutions is, by its very nature, failing our children and our society.

Children are required to be in school, where their freedom is greatly restricted, far more than most adults would tolerate in their workplaces. In recent decades, we've been compelling them to spend ever more time in this kind of setting, and there's strong evidence that this is causing psychological damage to many of them. And as scientists have investigated how children naturally learn, they've realized that kids do so most deeply and fully, and with greatest enthusiasm, in conditions that are almost opposite to those of school.

Compulsory education has been a fixture of our culture now for several generations. President Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan are so enamored of it that they want even longer school days and years. Most people assume that the basic design of today's schools emerged from scientific evidence about how children learn. But nothing could be further from the truth.

Schools as we know them today are a product of history, not of research. The blueprint for them was developed

during the Protestant Reformation, when schools were created to teach children to read the Bible, to believe Scripture without questioning it, and to obey authority figures without questioning them.

When schools were taken over by the state, made compulsory, and directed toward secular ends, the basic structure and methods of teaching remained unchanged. Subsequent attempts at reform have failed because they haven't altered the basic blueprint. The top-down, teach-and-test method, in which learning is motivated by a system of rewards and punishments rather

than by curiosity or by any real desire to know, is well designed for indoctrination and obedience training but not much else. It's no wonder that many of the world's greatest entrepreneurs and innovators either left school early (like Thomas Edison) or said they hated school and learned despite it, not because of it (like Albert Einstein).

Most students—whether A students, C students, or failing ones—have lost their zest for learning by the time they've reached middle school or high school. In a telling research study, professors Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Jeremy Hunter fitted more than 800 sixth through 12th graders, from

“  
Schools as  
we know  
them today  
are a product  
of history,  
not of  
research.”

33 different schools across the country, with special wristwatches that emitted a signal at random times of day. Each time they received a signal, the students filled out a questionnaire indicating where they were, what they were doing, and how happy or unhappy they felt at the moment. The lowest levels of happiness, by far, were reported when the children were in school, where they were often bored, anxious, or both. Other researchers have shown that, with each successive grade, students develop increasingly negative attitudes toward the subjects taught, especially math and science.

**A** S A SOCIETY, we tend to shrug off such findings. We're not surprised that kids are unhappy in school. Some people even believe that the very unpleasantness of school is good for children, so they will learn to tolerate unpleasantness as preparation for real life. But there are plenty of opportunities to learn to tolerate unpleasantness without adding unpleasant schooling to the mix. Research has shown that people of all ages learn best when they are self-motivated, pursuing answers to questions that reflect their personal interests and achieving goals that they've set for themselves. Under such conditions, learning is usually joyful.

The evidence for all of this is obvious to anyone who's watched a child grow from infancy to school age. Through

their own efforts, children figure out how to walk, run, jump, and climb. They learn from scratch their native language, and with that, they learn to assert their will, argue, amuse, annoy, befriend, charm, and ask questions. Through questioning and exploring, they acquire an enormous amount of knowledge about the physical and social world around them, and in their play, they practice skills that promote their physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development. They do all of this before anyone, in any systematic way, tries to teach them anything.

This amazing drive and capacity to learn does not turn itself off when children reach five or six. But we turn it off with our coercive system of schooling. The biggest, most enduring lesson of our system is that learning is work, to be avoided when possible.

The focus of my own research—I'm a psychology professor at Boston College—has been on learning in children who are of "school age" but who aren't sent to school, or not to school as conventionally understood. I've examined how children learn in cultures that don't have schools, especially hunter-gatherer societies, the kind in which our species evolved. I've also studied learning in our culture by students who are trusted to take charge of their education. In these settings, children's natural curiosity and zest for learning persist all the way through adolescence into adulthood.

Another researcher who has



documented the power of self-directed learning is Sugata Mitra. He set up outdoor computers in very poor neighborhoods in India, where many children were illiterate and most did not go to school. Wherever he placed such a computer, dozens of kids would gather around and, with no help from adults, figure out how to use it. Those who could not read began to do so by interacting with the computer and with other children around it. The computers gave these young people access to the whole world's knowledge—in one remote village, children who previously knew nothing about microorganisms learned about bacteria and viruses through their interactions with the computer and began to use this new knowledge appropriately in conversations.

Mitra's experiments illustrate how three core aspects of human nature—curiosity, playfulness, and sociability—can combine beautifully to serve the purpose of education. Curiosity drew the kids to the computer and motivated them to explore it; playfulness motivated them to practice many computer skills; and sociability allowed each child's learning to spread like wildfire to dozens of other children.

**I**N OUR CULTURE TODAY, there are many routes through which children can apply their natural drives and instincts to learn everything they need to know for a successful adulthood. More than two

million children in the United States now base their education at home and in the larger community rather than at school, and an ever-increasing proportion of their families have scrapped set curricular approaches in favor of self-directed learning. These parents do not give lessons or tests, but they do provide a home environment that facilitates learning, and they help connect their kids to community activities from which they learn. Some of these families began this approach long ago and have adult sons and daughters who are now thriving.

My colleague Gina Riley and I recently surveyed 232 such families. According to these families' reports, the main benefits of this approach lie in the children's continued curiosity, creativity, and passion for learning, and in the freedom and harmony the entire family experiences when relieved of the pressures and schedules of school and the burden of manipulating kids into doing homework that doesn't interest them. As one parent put it, "As an educator, I see that my daughter has amazing critical thinking skills that many of my adult college students lack ... My daughter lives and learns in the real world and loves it. What more could I ask for?"

But not every family has the ability, means, or desire to facilitate their children's self-directed education at home. For many, a better option is a so-called democratic school, where kids have charge of their education in

a setting that optimizes their opportunities and where there are many peers with whom to socialize and learn. (Such schools should not be confused with Montessori schools or other types of “progressive” schools that permit more play and offer more choices than standard schools but nevertheless maintain a top-down, teacher-to-student system of authority and a relatively uniform curriculum that all students are expected to follow.)

Over many years, I’ve observed learning at one such place, the Sudbury Valley School, in Framingham, Massachusetts. The students, who range in age from four to about 18, are free all day to do whatever they want, as long as they don’t break any of the school rules. These regulations, which have been created democratically by the children and staff together, have nothing to do with learning; they have to do with keeping peace and order. The school currently has about 150 students and ten staff members, and it operates on a per-child budget that is less than half that of the surrounding public schools. It accepts essentially all the students who apply and whose parents agree to enroll them.

Today there are about two dozen schools in the United States that are

explicitly modeled after Sudbury Valley, and still others that have most of its basic characteristics. Compared with other private institutions, these schools charge low tuitions, and some have sliding tuition scales. Students come from a wide variety of backgrounds.

To people who haven’t witnessed it firsthand, it’s hard to imagine how such a school could work. Yet Sudbury Valley has been in existence for 45 years and has hundreds of graduates who are thriving in the real world.

Many years ago, my colleague David Chanoff and I conducted a follow-up study of Sudbury Valley graduates. We found

“  
**We don’t  
 have to force  
 them to learn.  
 All they  
 need is  
 freedom and  
 opportunity.**

that those who had pursued higher education (about 75 percent) reported no particular difficulty getting into the schools of their choice and doing well there once admitted. Some, including a few who had never previously taken a formal course, had gone on successfully to highly prestigious colleges and universities. As a group, regardless of whether or not they had pursued higher education, they were remarkably successful in finding employment. They had gone into a broad range of occupations, including business, arts, science, medicine, other service professions, and skilled trades. Most said that a major benefit

of their Sudbury Valley education was that they had acquired a sense of personal responsibility and capacity for self-control that served them well in all aspects of their lives. Many also commented on the importance of the democratic values that they had acquired at the school. More recently, two larger studies of graduates have produced similar results.

Students in this setting learn to read, calculate, and use computers in the same playful ways that kids in hunter-gatherer cultures learn to hunt and gather. They also develop more specialized interests and passions, which can lead directly or indirectly to careers. For example, a highly successful machinist and inventor spent his childhood playfully building things and taking things apart to see how they worked. Another graduate, who became a professor of mathematics, had played intensively and creatively with math. And yet another, a high-fashion patternmaker, had played at making doll clothes and then clothes for herself and friends.

**I**'M CONVINCED THAT Sudbury Valley works well because it provides the conditions that optimize children's natural abilities to educate themselves. These include a) unlimited opportunity to play and explore, allowing them to discover and pursue their interests; b) access to caring and knowledgeable adults

who are helpers, not judges; c) liberal age mixing among children and adolescents (age-mixed play is far more conducive to learning than is play among those who are all at the same level); and d) direct participation in a stable, moral, democratic community in which they acquire a sense of responsibility for others, not just for themselves. None of these conditions are present in standard schools.

I don't mean to paint self-directed education as a panacea. Life is not always smooth, no matter what the conditions. But research in these settings—both mine and others'—has convinced me that the natural drives and abilities of young people to learn are fully sufficient to motivate their entire education. We don't have to force them to learn; all we need to do is provide them with the freedom and opportunities to do so.

Of course, not everyone will learn the same things, in the same way, or at the same time. That's good. Our society thrives on diversity. We need people with different skills, interests, and personalities. Most of all, we need people who pursue life with passion and who take responsibility for themselves throughout life. **R**

---

This article covers research and ideas that are developed more fully in the author's book *Free to Learn: Why Unleashing the Instinct to Play Will Make Our Children Happier, More Self-Reliant, and Better Students for Life* (Basic Books, 2013).



## THE REACTION

**The article “School Is a Prison” inspired a lively discussion on salon.com after it was published. Here is a selection of perspectives:**

■ Personally, I think the biggest issue with school—particularly in K-6—is not the teaching or the tests but the inability (or unwillingness?) to group kids by their ability for fear of “labeling” them. So the children who are struggling get the bulk of the teachers’ time, while the rest are bored.

SABRINA\_SF

■ As someone who has tried to start an alternative school, [I think] the idea that kids will learn naturally is romantic but flawed. It’s a huge burden to put on children that they’ll somehow discover how to do math or read on their own. The key is to provide a balance, giving kids leeway to maintain a sense of exploration while providing a framework to learn how to read and write.

CZEISZPERGER

■ I’m skeptical that our natural inclination to learn directs children to seek out what they’ll need to know later [in life]. During summer, children are free to learn what they please, when they please, and from what I’ve observed, the vast majority learn mostly about video games, TV shows, and bickering. The assumption in the self-directed model is that an adult (other than a professional teacher) will wisely nudge a child’s curiosity in productive directions. In the wider world, a few children have such an adult, but most don’t.

FINNEGANSFATHER

■ After several years of teaching in public schools, I quit last spring. I realized that the problem wasn’t poor teachers or bad students but a basic systemic problem with compulsory education. As the new school year begins, I’ve gotten e-mails from [my] former students expressing dread at the thought of starting another year. No one can learn anything in that frame of mind.

GEORGE POPHAM

■ So much of this echoes what I have long felt in my bones. The education critic John Taylor Gatto says, “In my experience, genius is as common as dirt.” What if we treated every kid as though this were true and dispensed with ranking and leveling them according to standardized criteria? What could those enthusiastic, precious youngsters we send off to kindergarten become then?

NRFRIEND





**Photograph by Carolyn Drake, 2010**  
**Chosen by Casey Kelbaugh**

*Founder and chairman of Slideluck*

“Drake generously donated a print of this photograph to my fund-raiser two years ago, so I had the pleasure of spending time with it. The picture is from an extremely rich body of work about two rivers that cut through often-overlooked parts of Central Asia. Taken in a border town in the Fergana Valley in Karasu, Kyrgyzstan, the image is divided by the tree branches into three vignettes, each with a different type of villager at a particular stage of life. The photograph is as timeless as any Pieter Bruegel the Elder painting from the 16th century.”



A woman wearing a black headscarf and a patterned dress is walking across a rustic wooden bridge made of logs and planks over a stream. The bridge is supported by wooden posts. To the left, a large, gnarled tree with sparse green leaves leans over the stream. The background shows a dirt path and some buildings. The overall scene is rural and natural.

**PHOTO**  
OF  
LASTING INTEREST

---

# WHO ? KNEW

## 13 Things Lottery Winners Won't Tell You

BY MICHELLE CROUCH

**1** Whether we win \$500 million or \$1 million, about 70 percent of us lose or spend all our money in five years or less.

**2** Do we still play the lottery? Absolutely. And we're sure we're going to win again.

**3** Now that I can buy anything I want, I've learned that what really matters—and what I enjoy most—is being able to do things that help other people.

**4** Always play the second-chance drawings. Some games require you to mail in your losing ticket. Others tell you to go online and



register the ticket's serial number. People either don't know about the drawings or don't take the time to enter, so your odds of winning are always better.

**5** Everyone who wins thinks they're going to have the same friends and do the same things. But if you have \$100 million and you want to fly to Hong Kong for the weekend, you need to either find someone who can afford to go with you or be willing to subsidize someone. And subsidizing people gets old.

**6** If you think you're going to win and remain anonymous, you'd better check your state laws. Many states require that you do a news conference and hold up a big check.

**7** It drives me nuts when people ask where I keep the money, how I spend it, and if I still have it. No one would dream of asking a CEO those questions.

**8** If you win \$6 million and find yourself in a room full of lottery winners who won \$100 million or more, all of a sudden, you feel like the poor one. It's all relative.

**9** After we won the lottery, we bought an eight-bedroom, seven-bath, 10,000-square-foot mansion because we could, and it sounded amazing. Well, now we're selling

the eight-bedroom, seven-bath mansion because it's impractical for a family of four.

**10** I had one friend who told me this sob story about how behind she was on her local taxes, how they were going to take her house because she couldn't pay. After she left, I got on my computer, looked up her tax records, and saw that she wasn't behind. When I printed out that page and sent it to her, well, that was the end of our friendship.

**11** After we won and moved into an exclusive neighborhood, we planned a huge Fourth of July party and invited all our neighbors. None of them came—they thought we didn't earn our money.

**12** If you want to give a charity a big sum of money, never give it all at once. It's better to donate \$100,000 a year for ten years so you can retain some control and make sure the cash is being spent wisely.

**13** You haven't lived until someone picks up the laundry from your front porch and brings it back to you that night, completely done and neatly folded. **R**





Sources: Donna Mikkin, who won \$34.5 million in the New York State Lottery in 2007; Sandra Hayes, a social worker who split a \$224 million Powerball with her coworkers in 2006 and wrote *How Winning the Lottery Changed My Life*; seven-time lottery game grand-prize winner Richard Lustig, who wrote *Learn How to Increase Your Chances of Winning the Lottery*; and Don McNay, a financial consultant to lottery winners and the author of *Life Lessons from the Lottery*.



FedEx's charter business has taken on some seriously crazy shipments. What's come ...

# Outside the Box

BY DAVID ZAX FROM *FAST COMPANY*

<p><b>DELICATE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Two giant pandas, Mei Lan and Tai Shan, to China</li> <li>■ 70,000 endangered sea turtle eggs, to Florida</li> <li>■ 19 penguins and two sea otters, returned to a New Orleans aquarium after Hurricane Katrina</li> </ul>	<p><b>ANIMAL</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Cupid, a rescued two-year-old bottle-nose dolphin, to Six Flags Marine World</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A trio of 11-month-old grizzly bears, to Detroit</li> </ul>  <p><b>DANGEROUS</b></p>
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The 800-pound capsule that rescued the trapped Chilean miners in 2010, to the Smithsonian Institution</li> <li>■ The 3,000-pound Spirit of Liberty Bell, to Fort Hood, Texas</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A 3,000-pound piece of the <i>Titanic's</i> hull, to Atlanta</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A Sikorsky Black Hawk helicopter, to Narita, Japan</li> </ul> <p><b>ARTIFACT</b></p>

FRANK LUKASSEK/GETTY IMAGES (PANDAS), MIKE HILL/GETTY IMAGES (DOLPHIN), STEVEN KAZLOWSKI/CORBIS (BEARS), DARRELL GULIN/GETTY IMAGES (PENGUINS), TERRY MOORE/CORBIS (HELICOPTER), GETTY IMAGES (BELL), AP PHOTO (TITANIC), CLAUDIO SANTANA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES (CAPSULE)

# To Have And to Hold

This husband and wife wouldn't let religion, custom, or even burial come between them

BY ALISON CAPORIMO

AFTER 42 years of marriage, in 1880, Lady van Aefferden buried her husband, Colonel J.W.C. van Gorcum, in the Protestant cemetery of Roermond, a small town in the Netherlands. Custom dictated that van Aefferden would be buried in the Catholic cemetery upon her death, eight years later. To stay close to her spouse, van Aefferden requested the burial plot next to her husband's grave, beside a brick wall separating the two cemeteries. Then she added interlaced stone hands to connect their tombstones so that they would embrace for eternity. Today, the tombstones are called *het graf met de handjes*, which translates to "grave with the little hands."





What it feels like to ...

# Return From Space

FROM READER'S DIGEST CANADA



*Last year, Chris Hadfield, author of *An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth*, became an Internet sensation when a video of him singing David Bowie's "Space Oddity" from the International Space Station went viral. After spending five months orbiting the planet, Hadfield returned to Earth on May 13, 2013, landing in the steppes of Kazakhstan. This is his account of that epic touchdown:*

**YOU PLUMMET** into the atmosphere in a crash seat custom-poured for your body. You're in a pressure suit, a four-point harness across your shoulders and waist, all laced through a big buckle in the middle. Plus, there are straps across your knees to hold your legs in place so they don't splay at impact. You're utterly belted in. You've been warned to stop talking before impact so you don't bite off your tongue. That's how violent it is. A huge parachute opens above you, but the spacecraft weighs tons. The parachute slows you down a lot. Just before you land, retro-rockets fire, which slows you down some more.

But you still hit the ground like a Dumpster of bricks. Except now you're tumbling over sideways, plowing your way through the earth. You come to a stop, and where there was space outside your window, there's now dirt. You can smell it. It's something you haven't smelled in half a year.

I felt a great kinship with newborn babies. They've been inside a womb, weightless, just wonderfully protected and nurtured. Suddenly, this violent painful process squirts you out, and, *wham*, it's cold and noisy and windy, and you feel horrible. It's no wonder that newborn babies cry. Because it's a rude welcoming to the world. **R**

FROM LEFT: BILL INGALLS/COURTESY NASA (2); ROBERT MARKOWITZ/COURTESY NASA; NASA

# No Contract. No Risk.\* Great Value.



## Affordable cellular service without a binding contract.

### PLANS FROM JUST \$10/MONTH

Easy plans that will save you money. We can even transfer your existing phone number for you at no extra cost. Family Shared Use Plans are also available.

### 100% SATISFACTION GUARANTEE\*

With our no obligation return policy, you have nothing to lose.

### NO CONTRACTS

Upgrade, change, or cancel your plan at any time, and for any reason.

### POST-PAID BILLING

Consumer Cellular is not a pre-paid plan, so there is no worry of running out of or reloading minutes. We will conveniently bill you each month.

### A VARIETY OF PHONES

From simple phones, to options with large, bright screens and big buttons, or even top-of-the-line smartphones.

### USE YOUR OWN PHONE

You can use any phone that is compatible with Consumer Cellular. We will ship you a SIM card for FREE and there's no activation fee!

### AARP MEMBERS

Ask for your special discounts when starting new service. Consumer Cellular was selected as the exclusive wireless provider for AARP members because we meet the high-level of service and quality standards of AARP.

#1 RATED\*  
CELL-PHONE  
SERVICE



**FREE!**  
ACTIVATION  
A \$35 Value

**CALL CONSUMER CELLULAR TODAY (888) 502-9245**  
**OR VISIT [www.ConsumerCellular.com/9245](http://www.ConsumerCellular.com/9245)**  
**ALSO AVAILABLE AT [sears](#)**

# Consumer Cellular®

**AARP®** | Member **Advantages**

© 2014 Consumer Cellular, Inc. New service activation on approved credit. Cellular service is not available in all areas and is subject to system limitations. Terms and Conditions subject to change. \*If you're not satisfied within the first 30 days, 30 minutes, 30 text messages or 30MB of data use, whichever comes first, cancel and pay nothing, no questions asked. \*Visit [www.ConsumerCellular.com](http://www.ConsumerCellular.com) for further details on our number one rating.

AARP member benefits are provided by third parties, not by AARP or its affiliates. Providers pay a royalty fee to AARP for the use of its intellectual property. These fees are used for the general purposes of AARP. Some provider offers are subject to change and may have restrictions. Please contact the provider directly for details.



We tested the ten most tempting household helpers—read up before you put your money down

# As Seen on TV

BY PERRI O. BLUMBERG

## For Garden Gurus

### The Pocket Hose

\$12.99 + \$7.99 S&H

★★★☆☆

**Company says:** It's the portable garden hose "that fits in your pocket" and has a powerful spray. Order today, and "say goodbye to those

old-fashioned giant hoses that become a tangled mess."

**We say:** "I had a hard time keeping it screwed onto my outdoor faucet without the nozzle leaking," complained one green-thumbed tester. "Yeah, it leaked," said a soaked farmer. "But I like the space it saved."

The final verdict: If your yard is cramped “and you like getting wet, this hose is for you.”

## The Sneaky Gourmand

### Stone Wave Microwave Cooker

\$10 + \$6.99 S&H

★★★★★

**Company says:** This “handmade nonstick ceramic stoneware” uses a special “steam-release chimney” to cook “gourmet foods right in your microwave.” You don’t have to be Julia Child, because the gizmo comes with five-minute recipes “so quick and easy, anyone can cook like a pro!”

**We say:** “I love how quickly and evenly it cooks omelets!” raved one egg head. Another liked that the cooker was “an elegant addition to

a dinner party spread” that “didn’t reveal my secret to guests!” (*Psst, she’s a microwaver! Secret’s out!*) And move over, *Joy of Cooking*—the accompanying recipe book with “dishes from shrimp scampi to baked apple crisp” also got high marks.

## Sweat & Strut

### Slimming Sauna Shorts

\$19.95 + \$6.95 S&H

★★★☆☆

**Company says:**

Slap on this Velcro-secured compression garment if you want

“shapelier buttocks.” The shorts “retain body heat for fast trimming of your waist, hips, and thighs.”

**We say:** “I felt like I was wearing a diaper,” said a staffer who did not care for the “*swish-swish-swish* noise” that the shorts made as he moved his “neoprene-enrobed buttocks” from the couch to the fridge. Another tester found the shorts “comfortable enough” and motivational: “Just wearing them made me embrace the day like a Tough Mudder champ.”

## Hot Surface Helper

### ‘Ove’ Glove

\$19.95 + \$6.95 S&H

★★★★☆

**Company says:** “Ever wished you could use all five fingers when

removing pans from the oven? Well, now you can,” claim the gods of heat resistance. “Made from the same material as a firefighter’s clothing,” the ‘Ove’ Glove can withstand temperatures of up to 540°F.

**We say:** “Way more convenient than a pot holder,” and “the glove allowed flexibility that oven mitts don’t give you.” While some praised the glove as “durable” and “easy to use,” others compared using it with “wearing winter mittens that felt like they were rapidly heating up.”

### Key to Ratings

★★★★★

**Need we say more?**

★★★★☆

**Don’t waste your money**

★★★☆☆

**Works, sort of**

★★★☆☆

**Do waste your money**

★★★★★

**Overnight delivery!**



## No Yoking Around

### The EZ Cracker

\$9.95 + \$6.95 S&H

★★★★☆

**Company says:** If your grandma threatened to disown you over an ill-fated shell shard in her treasured chocolate cake recipe, fear no more! Be they raw or hard-boiled, you can “crack eggs without the mess” with this handheld contraption, and an attachment makes separating yolks from whites a breeze.

**We say:** One delighted reviewer insisted that the EZ Cracker revolutionized her life: “It worked seamlessly ... the satisfying feel of shattering eggshells became addicting. In mere seconds, I had EZ-cracked a dozen.” A less enthused egg breaker said, “Umm ... doesn’t this tool require the same amount of dexterity as cracking eggs manually? A total waste of utensil space.” Tiebreaking perk: “It keeps your hands clean!”

## A Dapper Dryer

Lint Lizard \$10.99 + \$6.99 S&H

★★★★☆

**Company says:** “Clear out dryer-clogging lint at its source! Attach the Lint Lizard to the end of your vacuum cleaner, and its nozzle reaches easily into your lint catcher and even your dryer vent outside.” What’s more, “keeping your dryer free of lint maximizes energy efficiency” and “saves money.”

**We say:** We’re choking on the fluff! If the gadget’s only purpose is to suck up lint, “then it probably shouldn’t be entirely useless at it.” In the end, “I had to pull out lint the old-fashioned way—by sticking my hand in there.”

## Shake It Up

NutriBullet \$119.94, free S&H

★★★★☆

**Company says:** Blender? *Pfft.* Unlike “everyday juicers and blenders,” the “superfood nutrition extractor completely breaks down ingredients into their most nutritious, easily absorbed state.”

**We say:** Blenders, beware! “An appliance hasn’t changed my life this drastically since I traded in my Walkman for an iPod!” raved one fawning foodie. Others loved the “blend-and-go cups” and the “easy cleanup.” One smoothie aficionado enthused, “It even ground flaxseed and walnuts to dust!” The NutriBullet was “too expensive” for some, but



others thought the price was justified because the appliance “reduced smoothie-making from several minutes to 30 seconds!” One note to manufacturers: “Can’t they make these things quieter? It sounded like a Texas Chainsaw Massacre!”

### Dazzling Hairdos

**Twist n Clip** \$9.95 + \$6.95 S&H



**Company says:** “The best way for your hair to stay up all day.” This patented clip adjusts for any type of hair as you swirl and twirl your strands into stylish updos. Just “grab your hair into a ponytail, twist, and slide the Twist n Clip through your hair like a giant bobby pin, and then lock it like a safety pin.” Hello, glamour! Goodbye, gross, stringy hair!

**We say:** “If you have more than ten strands of hair on your head, this product is useless.” Thick-haired ladies further lamented, “All this did was give me a good laugh!”

### A Lean, Mean Mopping Machine

**Hurricane 360° Spin Mop**

\$39.98 + \$12.99 S&H



**Company says:** “Clean floors in one simple step—no harsh detergents needed. Thousands of microfiber mop strands attract dirt, grime, and liquids without drips, cleaning and drying floors in half the time.” When you’re finished, place the “Spin

Mop in the Spin Bucket, pump the handle, and watch the mophead spin at over 1,000 rotations per minute,” cleaning the mop and transferring the dirt to the bucket.

**We say:** “It’s perfect for everyday cleaning,” gushed one tester. “In minutes, I can clean the entire kitchen floor, rinse the mop, clean the living room, rinse, hallways, rinse ... and be done.” (Someone cast her in a commercial!) Green cleaners also liked that the mop pad was reusable: “I’m not cluttering landfills with paper towels and pads.”

### Tupper-flair

**PlateTopper**

\$9.99 + \$6.99 S&H



**Company says:** “Transform your plates into airtight containers” with these resealable suction cups that fit over your dishes and keep your food fresh for days.

**We say:** While some testers didn’t see how it was any better than a regular storage container or plastic wrap, convenience addicts liked that they “didn’t have to waste plastic and that the suction feature kept my meals fresh.” Another possible use: emergency umbrella. **R**



**Funny videos alert:** Watch us test the best and worst gizmos at [rd.com/january](http://rd.com/january).

# Connections

*your link to values and insights each month*

## New Year, New You

Get a FREE copy of Health... The Reader's Digest Version book and a FREE make-up pouch when you purchase one of the featured products at Rite Aid for a limited time. For more details about how to get your free gift, visit:

[ReadersDigest.com/Connections](http://ReadersDigest.com/Connections)



PHARMACY

With us, it's personal.

—Sponsored by—



## Fresh Step® Triple Action Litter

Fresh Step® Triple Action Scented Litter fights odor from all three sources for a litter box that's fresher than ever. Block odors caused by urine, feces, and bacteria with a formula that has your bases covered.

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



## Text to Win!

Text **RD1** to **51684** to enter the *Reader's Digest Reimagined* sweepstakes to win 1 of 5 Kindle Fires! Text as many times as you like to increase your chances. For more information visit: [RD/DoubleTake.com](http://RD/DoubleTake.com)

**WIN 1 of 5**  
Kindle Fires!



**Text RD1 to 51684**

**Check out the  
inside cover for  
sponsor bonus  
entry codes!**

No purchase necessary to enter or win. Sweepstakes begins 12/5/2013 and ends 1/13/2014. Sweepstakes open to residents of the U.S., its territories and possessions age 21 and over. Void where prohibited. Go to [www.rd.com/reimagined](http://www.rd.com/reimagined) for official rules and further details. Data and Message Charges may apply.


go to [readersdigest.com/connections](http://readersdigest.com/connections) for more!

# Word Power

*Prefixes are the key to vocabulary mastery. From auto- (“self”) to zoo- (“animal”), they introduce meaning to whatever follows. Parse these words with prominent prefixes, then check the next page for answers.*

BY EMILY COX & HENRY RATHVON

1. **ambivalent** (am-'bih-va-lent) *adj.*—A: uncertain. B: in the open air. C: left-handed.
2. **neonatal** (nee-yoh-'nay-tul) *adj.*—A: inert, as gases. B: relating to the newborn. C: completely bald.
3. **omniscient** (om-'nih-shint) *adj.*—A: all-knowing. B: spooky. C: pertaining to insects.
4. **exonerate** (ig-'zahn-er-ayt) *v.*—A: curse. B: dig up. C: clear of blame.
5. **anagram** ('an-ah-gram) *n.*—A: telegraph message. B: word or phrase formed by mixing the letters of another. C: metric weight.
6. **hyperbole** (hy-'per-boh-lee) *n.*—A: speeding. B: overstatement. C: eclipse of the sun.
7. **antebellum** (an-tih-'bel-lum) *adj.*—A: ringing softly. B: moving in a herd. C: before the Civil War.
8. **abject** ('ab-jekt) *adj.*—A: extremely bad. B: inclined to disagree. C: as hard as a rock.
9. **epiphany** (ih-'pih-fuh-nee) *n.*—A: temper tantrum. B: hearing aid. C: revelation.
10. **pseudonymously** (soo-'don-eh-mus-lee) *adv.*—A: as a group. B: under a pen name. C: using both feet.
11. **contravene** (kon-tra-'veen) *v.*—A: violate. B: dance in a circle. C: travel widely.
12. **transverse** (trans-'vurs) *adj.*—A: set crosswise. B: rendered in poetry. C: short-lived.
13. **peripheral** (puh-'rif-er-uhl) *adj.*—A: foggy. B: ever-present. C: outer part of field of vision.
14. **malfeasance** (mal-'fee-zens) *n.*—A: magic spell. B: poverty. C: wrongdoing.
15. **retrograde** ('reh-troh-grayd) *adj.*—A: average. B: continuous. C: moving backward.

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

## Answers

**1. ambivalent**—[A] uncertain (*ambi-* = both). Should I date Homer or Troy? I'm *ambivalent*.

**2. neonatal**—[B] relating to the newborn (*neo-* = new). Tabby dispenses lots of *neonatal* care to her kittens.

**3. omniscient**—[A] all-knowing (*omni-* = all). The *omniscient* Santa knows who's being naughty or nice.

**4. exonerate**—[C] clear of blame (*ex-* = not). Fido has been *exonerated* in the mystery of the missing hamburger.

**5. anagram**—[B] word or phrase formed by mixing the letters of another (*ana-* = up, back). *Meg Ryan* is an *anagram* of *Germany*.

**6. hyperbole**—[B] overstatement (*hyper-* = beyond). The boast "I am the greatest" was not *hyperbole* in the case of Muhammad Ali.

**7. antebellum**—[C] before the Civil War (*ante-* = before). Greek Revival architecture was popular in the *antebellum* South.

**8. abject**—[A] extremely bad (*ab-* = away, off). The shortstop's postseason batting average is an *abject* .195.

**9. epiphany**—[C] revelation (*epi-* = upon). Did a falling apple spark Isaac Newton's *epiphany* about gravity?

**10. pseudonymously**—[B] under a pen name (*pseudo-* = false). I'm writing my next novel *pseudonymously* as Rapunzel J. Hightower III.

**11. contravene**—[A] violate (*contra-* = against). Don't dare *contravene* Mom's order not to eat the brownies.

**12. transverse**—[A] set crosswise (*trans-* = across). The *transverse* oars blocked my path to the boat's stern.

**13. peripheral**—[C] outer part of field of vision (*peri-* = around). Lamar's *peripheral* vision was obstructed by his clumsy goggles.

**14. malfeasance**—[C] wrongdoing (*mal-* = bad). After the teacher left

the classroom, *malfeasance* was rampant.

**15. retrograde**—[C] moving backward (*retro-* = back). For Merlin the magician, life ran in a *retrograde* fashion.

### TRICKY STARTERS

It's easy to stumble over **pod-** and **ped-**. *Pod-* is for "foot," as in *podiatrist* (foot doctor) and *podium* (place to stand). *Ped-* can also mean "foot," as in *pedestrian* (one on foot). But confusingly, *ped-* sometimes means "child," as in *pediatrician* (children's doctor). To stay on solid footing, you might check with an etymologist (expert on word origins)—but don't consult an entomologist (that's a student of insects).

### VOCABULARY RATINGS

**9 & below:** Mediocre  
**10-12:** Proficient  
**13-15:** Superlative

## Chicago Doctor Invents

# Affordable Hearing Aid

## Outperforms Many Higher Priced Hearing Aids

**CHICAGO:** A local board-certified Ear, Nose, Throat (ENT) physician, Dr. S. Cherukuri, has just shaken up the hearing aid industry with the invention of a medical-grade, affordable hearing aid. **This revolutionary hearing aid is designed to help millions of people with hearing loss who cannot afford—or do not wish to pay—the much higher cost of traditional hearing aids.**

Dr. Cherukuri knew that untreated hearing loss could lead to depression, social isolation, anxiety, and symptoms consistent with Alzheimer's dementia. **He could not understand why the cost for hearing aids was so high when the prices on so many consumer electronics like TVs, DVD players, cell phones and digital cameras had fallen.**

- **Designed By A Board-Certified ENT Doctor**
- **Doctor-Recommended, Audiologist-Tested**
- **Free Shipping Available**
- **FDA-Registered**
- **Save Up To 90%**
- **★★★★★ Top rated hearing aid online— thousands of satisfied customers**
- **Batteries Included! Comes Ready To Use**
- **100% Money Back Guarantee!**



**For the Lowest Price Call Today**

**1-800-873-0680**

**Phone Lines Open 24 Hours EVERY DAY**

**MDHearingAid® >>> PRO**

## Superb Performance From Affordable Hearing Aid

The high cost of hearing aids is a result of layers of middlemen and expensive unnecessary features. Dr. Cherukuri concluded that it would be possible to develop a medical grade hearing aid without sacrificing the quality of components. **The result is the MDHearingAid PRO®, starting well under \$200 including FREE batteries for a full year. Order on our 45 Day Risk Free Trial.**

## Tested By Leading Doctors And Audiologists

The MDHearingAid PRO® has been rigorously tested by leading ENT physicians and audiologists who have unanimously agreed that the **sound quality and output in many cases exceeds more expensive hearing aids.**

### DOCTORS AND PATIENTS AGREE: "BEST QUALITY SOUND" "LOWEST AFFORDABLE PRICE"

*"I have been wearing hearing aids for over 25 years... Their sound quality rivals that of my \$3,000 custom pair of Phonak Xtra digital ITE."* —Gerald Levy

*"I have a \$2,000 Resound Live hearing aid in my left ear and the MDHearingAid PRO® in the right ear. I am not able to notice a significant difference in sound quality between the two hearing aids."*

—Dr. May, ENT Physician

**Use Offer Code SZ32 to get  
FREE Batteries for a Full Year!  
FREE Shipping Available**



**45 DAY  
RISK FREE  
TRIAL**



Proudly assembled in the USA  
from Domestic & Imported Components.



**www.MDHearingAid.com/SZ32**







**SEE**

THE WORLD

Turn the page ➡➡

## ... DIFFERENTLY

The latest sporting craze is called the Color Run, also known as the happiest 5K on the planet. Runners don white clothes and are doused in different hues of powder at each kilometer, culminating in a rainbow "finish festival."







THE COLOR RUN  
13455  
THE COLOR RUN

THE COLOR RUN  
THE COLOR RUN

THE COLOR RUN  
13455  
THE COLOR RUN

THE COLOR RUN  
13456  
THE COLOR RUN

Eat to feel great! Just in time for the new year, *Reader's Digest* unveils its breakthrough diet plan to slim and soothe your belly. Lose weight, end heartburn, and ease digestion for life. Here's an excerpt.

# Get a 21-Day Tummy

BY LIZ VACCARIELLO

Editor-in-Chief, *Reader's Digest*

FROM THE BOOK *21-DAY TUMMY*







Sorry, Mom. I know it's not proper to confess an embarrassing problem to millions of readers. But a few years ago, I began to notice that my digestion was becoming less regular. I had almost constant pain and bloating and had gained nearly ten pounds. A physical revealed nothing amiss, and technically, I was at a healthy weight. But my clothes didn't fit, and the discomfort was constant and distracting.

As I started talking about my digestive challenges, other people confided their own struggles. Then I read the stats: From burps and groans to discomfort and moans, millions of Americans have tummy issues. So I did what any health journalist would: I researched the issue, and I asked my staff of editors at *Reader's Digest* to help.

We made a discovery that would change my body and my life. The foods that make your belly feel better are the same ones that make it flatter. It is a diet dream: an eating regimen that trims my tummy and solves GI problems like heartburn and reflux, gas and bloating, constipation, diarrhea, and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

While dietitians, doctors, and GI sufferers have long suspected a connection between your gut and

the rest of your body, science is only now beginning to catch up. We uncovered reams of pioneering studies, many of which upended my notions of what's good for weight loss and health.

## The Weight-Gut Connection

There are two factors that deliver a one-two punch when it comes to weight gain and digestive woes—an imbalance of gut flora (the bacteria in our GI tract) and inflammation.

**1) An unhealthy mix of gut bacteria** can lead to constipation, diarrhea, gas, bloating, and IBS. Scientists have also identified strong links between an imbalance of digestive tract bacteria and weight gain. The bacteria in the guts of overweight people are different from

the bacteria in the guts of thin people, and those differences may determine one's weight. Gut bacteria can also contribute to inflammation, the other big player here.

**2) Inflammation**—the immune system's normal response to injury—can upset your stomach and pack on pounds if it becomes chronic. Seventy percent of our immune function takes place in the gut, which explains why your stomach churns when your immune system reacts to stress. Inflammation can also lead to weight gain. Your body naturally produces chemicals to stop inflammation, but these substances interfere with leptin, a hormone that tells your brain to stop eating because the belly is full. When inflammation

becomes chronic (often due to stress), your brain no longer gets the message. Though you've consumed enough to fuel your body, you still feel hungry, so you overeat and gain weight.

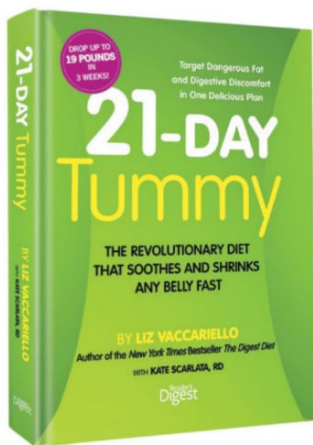
To convert this science into an eating plan, I teamed up with Kate Scarlata, a registered dietitian who specializes in digestive disorders. Kate created a plan that works to balance gut bacteria and cool inflammation at the same time. The 21-Day Tummy diet loads up on foods that soothe your stomach (I call them Belly Buddies) and eliminates those that aggravate it (I call them Belly Bullies). The diet relieves the most common digestive complaints while also trimming your tummy.

## 21-DAY TUMMY IN A NUTSHELL

The Reader's Digest book contains the exclusive meal plan, recipes, and workout that helped our test panelists lose weight and ease digestive issues. It features:

- An exclusive three-week plan (described here on page 147), including a five-day jump start for fast weight loss
- More than 50 slimming, soothing recipes, including snacks and desserts
- Frequently asked questions
- An expertly designed road map to spotlight your personal trigger foods so you can reintroduce the foods you tolerate well.

Available at [21daytummy.com](http://21daytummy.com) and wherever books are sold.



## Real-Life Success

The plan works. I know because I did it and lost ten pounds in three weeks. My symptoms disappeared almost immediately, and I haven't seen them since. Yes, my digestion problems are gone—and so is that extra pooch.

I also recruited 11 colleagues, friends, and readers to try the plan with me. We were weighed and measured before and after following the plan by an independent dietitian. The grand tally of our weight loss in three weeks: 90 pounds! Our testers collectively shed 29 inches from their waists (that's a lot of belly fat!), and every one of them reported improved digestion. (See their inspiring success stories at [21daytummy.com](http://21daytummy.com).)

My new book, *21-Day Tummy*, is the first one I've written that addresses a personal problem of mine. Here I reveal the foods that most commonly challenge digestive systems.

## 7 Worst Foods for Your Belly

When people who are prone to GI problems eat too many Belly Bullies—foods that can throw your gut bacteria out of whack, promote inflammation, and pack on

pounds—symptoms flare up (and so does the scale). I found some of these shocking—how could apples or asparagus be bad? They aren't, but some healthy foods can upset your digestive tract.

The 21-Day Tummy plan will cleanse your system of irritating Belly Bullies. Then, when you gradually reintroduce them, you'll identify what your particular bullies are and know how to handle them.

**1 CARB-DENSE FOODS** This may change the way you look at “good carbs” and “bad carbs” forever. Carb-dense foods can alter the balance of our gut flora, triggering inflammation. Foods are considered carb-dense if they have a high ratio of carb grams relative to their

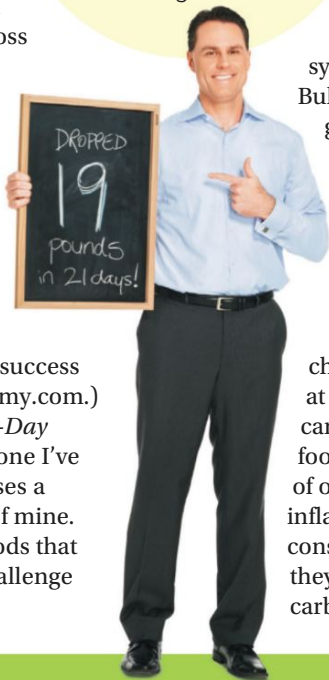
### Rob McMahon

Vice president of consumer marketing, *Reader's Digest*

**AGE:** 42

**LOST:** 19 pounds and 2½ belly inches

**PROUDEST ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** dropped more than his goal weight; stopped taking heartburn medication altogether



weight. A small potato, which many consider a bad carb, weighs 170 grams, but it's mostly water; only about 23 percent of it is carbohydrate. A plain rice cake, by contrast, weighs only nine grams, but almost 80 percent of it is carbohydrate!

*Found in:* bagels, bread (including whole-grain breads), crackers, pasta, cereals, white rice, pretzels.



## **NUTRITION SHOCKER: GLUTEN INTOLERANT? MAYBE NOT.**

Research published in *Gastroenterology* in 2013 suggests that people who believe they are sensitive to the protein gluten may actually have a problem with certain FODMAPs. These carbs are fermented quickly by gut bacteria, which can lead to gas and bloating. FODMAPs and gluten are both found in many foods, such as bread, cookies, and pasta.

**2 UNHEALTHY FATS** Three types of dietary fat are linked to inflammation and thus contribute to excess belly fat: trans fats, saturated fats, and omega-6 fats.

*Found in:* packaged foods (trans fats), processed and high-fat cuts of meat, full-fat dairy, some candy (saturated fat), corn oil, grape-seed oil, soybean oil, safflower oil, sunflower oil (omega-6 fats).

## **3 MILK AND HIGH-LACTOSE DAIRY FOODS**

One of the most cutting-edge components of the 21-Day Tummy is the avoidance of FODMAPs, or rapidly fermentable carbohydrates that can aggravate your gut. Some people aren't sensitive to any FODMAPs, some experience symptoms after eating only certain ones, and other people develop gradually worsening effects with each exposure. Lactose, found in all animal milks, is the best known FODMAP. Lactose is broken down in the small intestine by an enzyme called lactase. Our bodies produce less lactase as we get older (since its main purpose is to help babies digest breast milk), which means dairy foods that contain lactose can torment our tummies over time even if they didn't before.

*Found in:* milk, regular (non-Greek) yogurt, soft cheeses, dairy-based desserts.

## **4 EXCESS FRUCTOSE (IN APPLES, HONEY, ASPARAGUS)**

Foods with a lot of fructose (another FODMAP) compared with glucose can contribute to gas, bloating, and diarrhea. A 2008 study in the *Journal of Clinical Gastroenterology* found that patients with IBS who followed a non-fructose diet had fewer symptoms.

*Found in:* certain fruits (apples, mangoes, watermelons), certain

vegetables (asparagus, sugar snap peas), sweeteners (high-fructose corn syrup, agave nectar, honey).

## 5 GARLIC, ONIONS, AND HIGH-FIBER COUSINS

The body's inability to digest a kind of fiber, called fructan, in these foods can cause flatulence. This fiber (another FODMAP) seems to cause more symptoms than some other kinds, but that may simply be because we eat so much of it.

*Found in:* grains (barley, wheat), vegetables (artichokes, onions, garlic), legumes (black beans, kidney beans, soybeans), additives (inulin).

## 6 BEANS AND NUTS

We lack the enzyme to break down a FODMAP in these foods, so our gut bacteria must digest them, which produces gas.

*Found in:* Most beans and some nuts (cashews, pistachios).

## 7 NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS

Sugar alcohols, low-carb sweeteners naturally found in some

foods and added to others, are another FODMAP. They don't easily pass through our cell walls, so gut bacteria digest them, which can cause gas and bloating.

*Found in:* some fruits (apples, blackberries, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums), vegetables (cauliflower, mushrooms, snow peas), artificial sweeteners (isomalt, mannitol, polydextrose), sugar-free foods.

### Dorothy Nuzzo

Human resources associate,  
*Reader's Digest*

**AGE:** 55

**LOST:** 6½ pounds and  
2½ belly inches

**PRODEST ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**  
wasn't tempted by cake;  
walked farther and faster



## 7 Best Foods for Your Belly

At this point, you might be wondering if there are any foods that don't bully your belly. The answer, happily, is yes.

The 21-Day Tummy plan is loaded with delicious options that combat the twin evils of inflammation and imbalanced gut flora.

## 1 HIGH-FIBER AND ANTIOXIDANT-RICH VEGETABLES

All veggies are good for you. They are high in vitamins, phytonutrients, antioxidants, and fiber and are generally low in calories and low in fat. But certain varieties do contain FODMAPs that are difficult for some



people to digest. Our plan focuses only on low-FODMAP veggies, especially those rich in anti-inflammatory magnesium and other important minerals.

*Found in:* leafy green veggies (kale, Swiss chard, spinach), bell peppers, cucumbers, eggplant, tomatoes, potatoes.

## 2 TUMMY-TRIMMING FRUITS

Many sweet fruits have a balanced glucose-to-fructose ratio, which may be easier on your gut than those with more fructose.

*Found in:* bananas and blueberries, cantaloupe and honeydew, grapes, oranges, pineapple, papaya, strawberries, raspberries.

## 3 CARB-LIGHT GRAINS

Almost all grains are carb-dense and therefore may be bad for your tummy. Many, like wheat, are also high in FODMAPs. But since grains are such powerful (and delicious) sources of fiber, we included those that are high-fiber, low-FODMAP, and relatively carb-light.

*Found in:* quinoa, oats, brown rice.



### IDENTIFY YOUR PERSONAL TUMMY TRIGGERS

Not all FODMAPs affect everyone equally. Apples may give you belly-aches, say, while milk may be fine. The 21-Day Tummy has an exclusive way to ID *your* Belly Bullies, then add back trigger foods gradually so you can eat what you want.

## 4 NUTS, SEEDS, NUT BUTTERS

Nuts and seeds are great sources of energizing protein, low-fermentable (read: belly-soothing) fiber, and anti-inflammatory fats. But some nuts contain FODMAPs, so stick to this list. Nut butters made from these are also great options.

*Found in:* almonds, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, pine nuts, walnuts, chia seeds, flaxseeds, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds.

## 5 LEAN PROTEIN

Naturally carb-light, protein usually doesn't cause digestion issues. But choose lean sources, since many are high in saturated fat, which can trigger inflammation.

*Found in:* eggs, fish, lean cuts of beef, pork, skinless poultry, seafood, tofu, and tempeh.

## 6 GREEK YOGURT

It has twice the protein of regular yogurt and less belly-irritating lactose.

## 7 MAPLE SYRUP

It has the least fructose compared with other sweeteners. You may tolerate maple syrup better than high-fructose honey or agave nectar.

## HOW THE MEAL PLAN WORKS

Our easy-to-follow menu guides you away from Belly Bullies and toward Belly Buddies. You will be eating more anti-inflammatory foods, especially those rich in magnesium, and fewer carb-dense foods and FODMAPs. This plan helped my fellow testers and me shrink our stomachs (by up to 4½ inches in one case!) and ease our tummy troubles. At least two people stopped taking prescription drugs for heartburn entirely, and GI symptoms disappeared completely for several testers. Visit [21daytummy.com](http://21daytummy.com) for sample recipes.

### PHASE 1: FLATTEN (DAYS 1 TO 5)

Calm your sensitive system as you shed fat quickly. To jump-start your weight loss, the first phase is designed to supply the fewest calories, replacing one meal per day with the Belly Soother Smoothie. Very low in FODMAP foods and grain-free, this phase features foods that are the absolute easiest to digest healthfully. While you will immediately feel leaner and cleaner, this is not a “detox” diet of liquid meals or bland foods. You’ll eat real food—and get real results. Our testers lost an average of 5½ pounds after this phase!



Curried  
Chicken Soup

Tomato Ginger  
Flank Steak



### PHASE 2: SOOTHE AND SHRINK (DAYS 6 TO 15)

Maximize belly-fat loss by boosting anti-inflammatory foods that are high in magnesium and monounsaturated fatty acids. You’ll continue to enjoy one Belly Soother Smoothie per day, but your other meals will be larger, to keep your metabolism humming. Here, we introduce fiber-rich and carb-light grains—quinoa and oat bran—and pair them with magnesium-rich fruits, veggies, nuts, and seeds, plus MUFA-rich oils and other foods, to create filling stir-fries and protein-packed dinners that will keep you fueled up and feeling good.

### PHASE 3: BALANCE (DAYS 16 TO 21)

Stoke your body with meals that combine belly-friendly fiber, lean protein, and healthy fats so you never feel hungry. We’ll stay largely carb-light, but now you’re ready to reintroduce sweets to your diet, with a delicious dessert every other day. Meals feature an ideal balance of 40 percent carbs, 30 percent protein, and 30 percent fat, which research indicates is the best mix for decreasing inflammation and improving digestion. It’s the combination we recommend you stick with for life.

Twice-Baked Potatoes  
with Pepper Hash



ADVERTISEMENT  
ADVERTISEMENT

Hearty all-in-one meals  
to slim and calm your belly



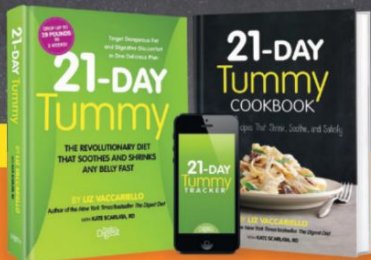
The **21-Day Tummy** plan is designed to alleviate chronic stomach issues, including acid reflux, gas and bloating, constipation and more.

Discover which surprising foods promote weight loss and help **get your body into better shape – both inside and out!**

BEEF & QUINOA  
STUFFED EGGPLANT

**Get it all & SAVE \$10**

Only at [21DayTummy.com](http://21DayTummy.com)



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT, READ IT ON ...

# Rd.com



## EVERYDAY WELLNESS

### 6 Natural Cough Remedies

We found recipes for a half dozen homemade soothers: thyme tea, flaxseed tea, black pepper tea, lemon-pepper juice, honey milk, and almond-orange juice. One of them should ease your hacking.

 MOST POPULAR ON TWITTER



## HAPPINESS

### This Magic Word Will Change Your Outlook

*Some.* Instead of declaring everything in your life “all wrong,” try: “Some things are going right; some things aren’t.” Immediately, your glass will look half full.

READ UP AT [RD.COM/JANUARY](http://RD.COM/JANUARY)

## INSPIRING QUOTES

**“We can do no great things. Only small things with great love.”**

MOTHER TERESA

 MOST POPULAR ON FACEBOOK



## HEALTHY EATING

### What’s the Best Brain Food?

Fish (with omega-3) and eggs (with choline) are proven boosters, but the antioxidants in blueberries, red wine, and vitamin E-rich walnuts may also protect brain cells from damage.



## FUNNY STUFF

### Weird Vending Machines

How convenient: Devices dispense bras in Japan, eggs in Romania, and creamy mashed potatoes with or without gravy in Singapore’s 7-Eleven stores.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: GETTY IMAGES, MIKE KEMP/GETTY IMAGES, JEAN-CLAUDE FRANCOLON/GETTY IMAGES, GETTY IMAGES, L. A. HEUSINKVELD/ALAMY



# Reader's digest

Liz Vaccariello **VP, Editor-in-Chief | Chief Content Officer**

**Design Director** Dean Abatemarco  
**Executive Editors** Barbara O'Dair, Courtenay Smith  
**Managing Director, Content Operations** Kerrie Keegan  
**Executive Digital Director, RD.com** Diane Dragan  
**Director of Digital Operations, RD.com** Brenda Schmerl

**Features Editors** Daryl Chen (National Interest), Beth Dreher,  
Lauren Gelman (Health), Dawn Raffel (Books), Andy Simmons (Humor)

<b>Senior Associate Editor</b>	Alison Caporimo	<b>Art Director</b>	Marti Golon
<b>Associate Editors</b>	Damon Beres, Perri O. Blumberg, Caitlin O'Connell	<b>Associate Art Director</b>	Lauren Stine
<b>Deputy Managing Editor</b>	Paul Silverman	<b>Assistant Art Director</b>	Jennifer Klein
<b>Assistant Managing Editor</b>	Lauren Gniazdowski	<b>Photo Director</b>	Rebecca Simpson Steele
<b>Copy Editor</b>	Sarah Wharton	<b>Photo Editor</b>	Emilie Harjes
<b>Research Manager</b>	Francis K. Lostys	<b>Art &amp; Photo Assistant</b>	Alexa Speyer
<b>Assistant Research Editor</b>	Alyssa Jung	<b>RD.com Site Manager</b>	Amy Pollak
<b>Magazine Rights</b>	Tara Zades (Manager), Drew Anne Scarantino	<b>Digital Production Director</b>	Jeff Nesmith
<b>Head Librarian</b>	Ann DiCesare	<b>Digital Design &amp; Production Associate</b>	Michael Hipwell
		<b>Digital Design Associate</b>	Jonah Schrogin

**Executive Assistant to the Editor-in-Chief** Adrienne Farr

**Editorial Assistants** Elizabeth Kelly, Brandon Spektor

**Contributing Editors** Derek Burnett, Michelle Crouch, Kenneth Miller,  
Brian Mockenhaupt, Lenore Skenazy, Gary Sledge, B. J. Summers

---

**THE READER'S DIGEST ASSOCIATION, INC. President and Chief Executive Officer** Robert E. Guth

Founders: DeWitt Wallace, 1889-1981; Lila Acheson Wallace, 1889-1984

---

Howard Halligan **COO North America**

---

Mark S. Josephson  
**VP, Chief Sales Officer**

**Associate Publisher** Mark Bernardini

**Advertising Services Director**

Kristine Wimmerstedt Bihm

**Advertising Sales**

**New York** Joanne Parlamis, Tara Primiano,  
Beth Roth, Lori Scelzi **Atlanta** Melissa Evertsen  
**Chicago** Nora Healy **Dallas** Carol Contestabile

**Los Angeles** Erin Foy-Vian

**VP, Digital Ad Sales North America**  
Steven Sottile

**Digital Account Executives**

Tim Baarda, Colin Herbst

**Advertising Operations/Business  
Development Manager** Eric Silverstein

Alain Begun

**VP, Business Development and Marketing**

**Marketing** Shauna Hepburn, Robert Kline,

Alyssa Kopelman, Jarred Milich, Risa Miller, Kristin Schuck,  
Darya Schwartz, Mary Ellen Winslow

**Public Relations Manager** Paulette Cohen

**Retail Sales** The Media Source

**VP, Magazine Marketing** Dave Fiegel

**Director of Customer Care** Brenda M. Wendt

**Production Director** Patricia Nolan

**Advertising Production Manager** Leslie Kogan

**President and Publisher, Books and Home Entertainment**  
Harold Clarke

**VP, Consumer Marketing** Robert McMahon

**VP, North American HR and Global Talent Management**

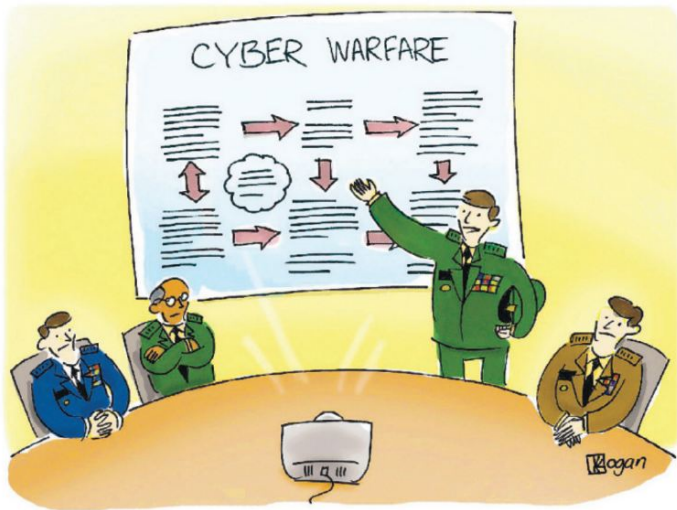
Phyllis E. Gebhardt, SPHR



Braille and audio editions of *Reader's Digest* are available from the American Printing House for the Blind ([aph.org/products/magsubsc.htm](http://aph.org/products/magsubsc.htm)). A *Reader's Digest* Large Print edition is available by writing to: Reader's Digest Large Print, PO Box 6097, Harlan, Iowa 51593-1597. For information about our digital editions, go to [rd.com/readers-digest-digital-editions](http://rd.com/readers-digest-digital-editions).



# Humor in Uniform



*"First, we inundate them with pop-ups."*



**YOU MIGHT** recognize comedian Rob Riggle from *Fox NFL Sunday* and *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*,

but he was a proud jarhead long before he was a professional talking head. We asked him, "What smells worse: a pro football player at halftime or a Marine after a day in the field?" He replied, "I can say this unequivocally: It's a stinky Marine in

Send us your funniest military anecdote or news story—it might be worth \$100! See page 9 for details.

the field. The smell? Indian food ... with just a slight amount of dog poo ... and some old Odor-Eaters from your grandfather's orthopedic shoes."

*Interviewed by* **BRANDON SPEKTOR**

(Watch the full interview at [rd.com/january](http://rd.com/january))

**ELAYNE BOOSLER** is not happy that the U.S. Army won't put women on the front lines. "They don't know if we can fight," she says. "I think we can. All the general has to do is walk over to the women and say, 'You see the enemy over there? They say you look fat in those uniforms.'"

# Quotable Quotes



**THE MOST DANGEROUS PHRASE IN THE LANGUAGE IS “WE’VE ALWAYS DONE IT THIS WAY.”**

**GRACE HOPPER,**  
*computer scientist*

America, everybody is in too big of a rush. Lie back, take a sip of tea, mow a little grass, and if you get tired, take ya a nap.

**SI ROBERTSON,**  
*star of Duck Dynasty*



I’m not interested in blind optimism, but I’m very interested in optimism that is hard-won, that takes on darkness and then says, “This is not enough.”

**COLUM MCCANN,** *writer*

**WHOEVER ESTABLISHED THE HIGH ROAD AND HOW HIGH IT SHOULD BE SHOULD BE FIRED.**

**SANDRA BULLOCK**

**Something happens when your subconscious goes to work ... That’s why “Sleep on it” is an adage that’s been passed on for thousands of years.** **JON VOIGHT**



If you retain nothing else, always remember the most important rule of beauty, which is: Who cares?

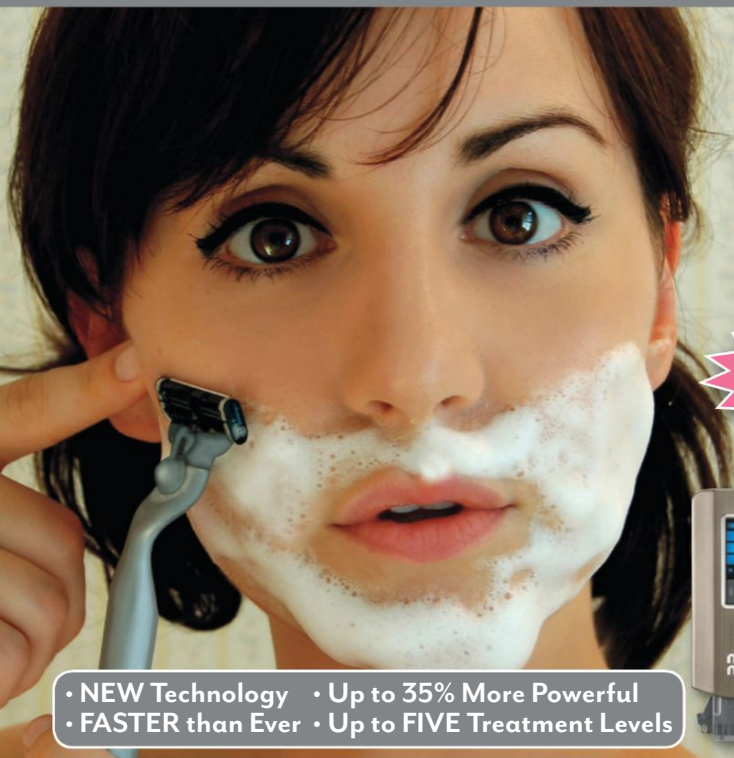
**TINA FEY**

**EVERYBODY LIKES THE GUY WHO OFFERS THEM A STICK OF GUM.**

**STEVE CARELL,**  
*as Michael Scott on The Office*

Reader’s Digest (ISSN 0034-0375) (USPS 865-820), Vol. 183, No. 1095, January 2014. © 2013. Published monthly (subject to change without notice) by The Reader’s Digest Association, Inc., 44 South Broadway, White Plains, New York 10601. Periodicals postage paid at White Plains, New York, and at additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Reader’s Digest, PO Box 6095, Harlan, Iowa 51593-1595. All rights reserved. Unauthorized reproduction, in any manner, is prohibited. Reader’s Digest, The Digest, and the Pegasus logo are registered trademarks of The Reader’s Digest Association, Inc. Marca Registrada. Printed in U.S.A. You may cancel your subscription at any time and receive a refund for copies not previously addressed. Your subscription will expire with the issue identified above your name on the address label. **SUBSCRIBERS:** If the Post Office alerts us that your magazine is undeliverable, we have no further obligation unless we receive a corrected address within one year. A special Reader’s Digest Large Print with selected articles from Reader’s Digest is published by The Reader’s Digest Association, Inc. For details, write: Reader’s Digest Large Print, PO Box 6097, Harlan, Iowa 51593-1597. **CONSUMER INFORMATION:** Reader’s Digest may share information about you with reputable companies in order for them to offer you products and services of interest to you. If you would rather we not share information, please write to Reader’s Digest Customer Care, PO Box 6095, Harlan, Iowa 51593-1595.

# HAVE YOU RESORTED TO THIS?



Introducing  
no!no! PRO



- NEW Technology
- Up to 35% More Powerful
- FASTER than Ever
- Up to FIVE Treatment Levels

## Say no to waxing and shaving.

no!no! PRO is backed by our  
60 day triple guarantee.

We are so confident that you'll  
love your no!no! PRO that if  
you are not fully satisfied we will:

1. Refund the full product price!
2. Refund the shipping & handling!
3. Pay the cost to ship it back to us!

**CALL FOR DETAILS**

100%  
risk-free  
trial!

**no!no! is:**

- professional results
- easy & painless
- safe & effective
- all skin types & hair colors
- face & body
- over 5 million sold

**no!**  
**no!**  
HAIR PRO

**ORDER NOW!**

[www.nonoPro10.com](http://www.nonoPro10.com)

1.800.930.4690

# WORST COLD & FLU SYMPTOMS TAKING OVER?

# #BlameMucus



DAY TIME

NOW  
NIGHT TIME



Mucus is a cold and flu's best friend. That's why there's Maximum Strength Mucinex Fast-Max liquid. They relieve your worst cold symptoms with mucus busting power and maximum strength medicines. And now there's new Fast-Max Maximum Strength Night Time to relieve your worst cold symptoms and help you get to sleep.

**Mucinex**  
Mucinex in. Mucus out.®

\*Per 4 hour dose. Mucinex® Fast-Max® Night Time products don't contain guaifenesin. Acetaminophen included for relief of headache, fever and sore throat pain.

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

#BlameMucus