

Reader's digest

JUNE 2014

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Editor's Note

My Most Unforgettable Read



THE SUMMER I REMEMBER AS MAGICAL wasn't defined by sleepaway camp, a teenage crush under a boardwalk, or even my girls' first steps in the ocean. My magical summer was in 1978. That was the year I read *A Wrinkle in Time*, by Madeleine L'Engle.

I was 11, on the cusp of sixth grade. MTV didn't exist yet, so I spent my days at the pool, my nights in a book. Sadly, there's never again been a time when I've read with such feverish abandon. ("Elizabeth, turn off that light and go to sleep!") By middle school, reading would be lost to me as a pastime. Friends and boys, TV and music, sports—then serious study and work—would take its place for years.

But that summer, I pedaled to the library on Tuesdays (why Tuesday I haven't a clue now) to fill my bike basket with every Newbery Medalist I could find. That's how L'Engle's science fiction fantasy found its way to me.

I devoured it. It had a fifth-dimension tesseract, a brother who could read minds, a missing father, a "happy medium," even a schoolgirl crush. It dealt with themes of social conformity and the personification of good and evil. Hey, nothing less than the fate of the universe was at stake! Part of my joy was that I could understand the thing: "You have to write the book that wants to be written," L'Engle is quoted on her website. "And if the book will be too difficult for grown-ups, then you write it for children."

Maybe that's why *A Wrinkle in Time* stuck with me. When you're 11, anything that explosively imaginative owns the season.

Go to rd.com/june for other staff recollections like this one. And be sure to read our winning 100-word stories on page 122. You submitted more than 7,000 entries. They were a joy to judge. **R**

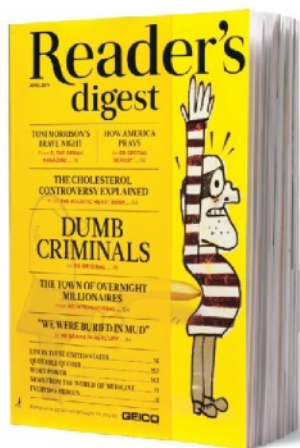
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Letters

COMMENTS ON THE APRIL ISSUE



NOT SO DUMB

You obviously found it amusing that a man convicted of armed robbery was spared a life sentence only after his lawyer discovered, following the conviction, that his client was in jail during the robbery (“Dumb Criminals, Bosses & Politicians”). I say thank God for small miracles: But for the lawyer’s dedication, LaDondrell Montgomery would be languishing away in state prison. Funny, indeed.

CRAIG M. MILLER, *Leland, North Carolina*

SAVIOR OF TREES

I have read *Reader's Digest* for 50 years, and I don't remember ever being as moved as I was by “A Man Among Giants.” It was so exciting and inspiring to learn about the lasting gifts that David Milarch has given and continues to give us. He is an American hero.

SHARON MITCHELL, *Lubbock, Texas*

STILL PONDERING

I discovered my all-time favorite *Reader's Digest* Point to Ponder in 1966 while serving as a Mormon missionary in England: “Imagination

is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire, you will what you imagine, and at last you create what you will” (George Bernard Shaw). I wrote this down on a scrap of paper and put it in my wallet, and there it stayed. After returning home, I studied industrial design and created a series of contemporary lighting pieces using single-faced corrugated parchment. Thanks to *RD* and Shaw, these products are sold to this day, 30 years later. I still have and cherish that scrap of paper.

ROLAND SIMMONS, *Cowley, Wyoming*

SAFETY FIRST

I am so thankful that Michelle Grainger; her husband, Steve; and their neighbors were able to survive the mudslide (“Buried in Mud”). My only concern is that they refused to evacuate when officials asked them to and then expected first responders to risk their lives to save them.

DARLA SEATON, Omaha, Nebraska

IS FOOD FUNNY?

Lucky for me, I didn’t read Kelly MacLean’s article, “Surviving Whole Foods,” in a crowd of strangers—they would have thought I was a lunatic for laughing every ten seconds. Her humor is a burst of sunshine!

KAY HOUGHTON, Payson, Arizona

Shame on Kelly MacLean for making light of food restrictions. They are not a laughing matter. My son is allergic to wheat and eggs. Yes, it is expensive, but he has to eat, and we have our priorities where they need to be.

BRENDA SMITH, Ethridge, Tennessee

PATH TO INDEPENDENCE

I appreciated your recent article on muscular dystrophy (Everyday Heroes, “A Class in Kindness”). As a

nana with two grandsons who suffer from this, I find it heartrending to watch the ones we love lose mobility. Thanks to the engineering students who helped Nick Torrance open his locker and keep his independence.

CAROL SKONDIN, Eugene, Oregon

ARE YOU SITTING DOWN?

The article “Can You Pass the Longevity Test?” cites a study declaring that people unable to perform the sitting-rising test are more likely to die within six years. I’m in my 50s and decided to try it—the results were not impressive. Then I asked my slender, athletic 13-year-old daughter to attempt the exercise. The hardest thing I’ve ever done is tell her she probably won’t make it to 20.

LINDA FLYNN, Overland Park, Kansas

EDITOR’S NOTE:** Your result on the sitting-rising test (“Can You Pass the Longevity Test?”) is not your health destiny. Increasing your risk of death by more than fivefold sounds enormous, but the absolute risk is far from it. For example, people in the study who scored between eight and ten had just a 3.6 percent chance of dying in the follow-up period. Those scoring three or lower had a 19 percent risk. **R

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*"I thought he
was going to die
in front of me,"
says Andi Davis.*




EVERYDAY HEROES



Hiker Andi Davis saves the life
of a 50-pound pit bull


“I Carried Him Down the Mountain”

BY MELODY WARNICK

 THE TRAIL THROUGH the Phoenix Mountains Preserve wasn't usually so deserted. Even on her regular predawn trek, Andi Davis, 49, regularly crossed paths with a handful of other hikers. On this morning, however, she heard only coyotes howling among the cacti and spiky ocotillos.

A half mile in, where the trail sloped steeply, Andi used her hands to clamber up to the highest peak. When she finally reached the summit,

she noticed a dark shape inches from her left foot. She startled, then stared. It's a dog, she said to herself, and it's dead. She took a moment to realize that the dog's eyes were open. A thin, dirt-caked pit bull was looking at her.

Instantly, Andi was afraid. She was a sucker for strays; she, her husband, Jason, and their ten-year-old daughter, Jessica, had three at home. But ever since a pit bull had attacked her German shepherd 

when she was out walking him one day, she'd been wary of pit bulls. She murmured a greeting to show she was friendly. At the sound of her voice, the pit bull trembled violently.

Andi inched closer and dripped some water into the dog's mouth. He tried to stand up but then collapsed. Something was wrong with his left front leg. Andi pulled out her phone to contact her husband, but he didn't respond. Pity overwhelmed her, and she knew that if she didn't carry the dog down the mountain, he would die.

She carefully put her arms under the injured dog's body. He was so weak, "he literally fell into my chest," she says.

Staggering down the steep, rocky mountainside with the 50-pound animal in her arms, Andi repeated, "It's OK. It's OK," more to soothe herself than the dog. Would she fall? Would he bite her? When her arms and back started aching, she refused to give in to the pain. The trip up had taken 30 minutes; going back down took twice that.

At home, Andi's husband finally received her messages. He and Jessica jumped into the car and drove to the parking lot. Just as Jason was pulling up, Andi stumbled into the lot with the dog cradled in her arms. "He's hurt!" Andi warned as her daughter leaped from the car. "Stay back, and be careful." Jessica began to cry when she saw the dog's injuries.

Then the pit bull lifted his head and tenderly licked Jessica's cheek. Once in the backseat, he laid his head on Jessica's lap, and she pulled the thorns from his matted coat on the way to the Arizona Humane Society.

Later that morning, an X-ray revealed that a bullet had landed in the dog's shoulder and shattered the bone, but it was too close to surrounding blood vessels to be safely removed. There was a chance, too, that the dog would lose his damaged leg, though the vet thought it might heal on its own. (It did.)

A few days later, the Davises returned. Andi reports that "the first thing he did was give me a kiss, then go right to my daughter." Any reservations Andi might have had evaporated right there. They named the dog Elijah and brought him home that day.

Since then, "he's been perfect," says Andi. He plays happily with the family's Boston terrier and jumps into Jessica's bed to snuggle every morning. Elijah's calm, affectionate nature makes the wounding and abandonment on the mountain inexplicable. "He's so sweet. Why would someone shoot him?" Andi asks.

The Davises realize they'll never know. They're just relieved the story has had a happy ending.

Says Jessica, "He was meant to be ours."



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Friends film good deeds to inspire other kind acts

A Lens on Giving

BY ALYSSA JUNG

☞ A \$200 TIP for a hotel maid. Free car repairs for the adoptive parents of two special-needs daughters. A \$2,000 engagement ring for a cash-strapped college couple. These are just a few of Kyle Orrefice and Josh Gibson's good deeds that they documented for their video channel, GiveBackFilms, on YouTube.

"We can personally help only a certain number of people," says Kyle, 18, a high school senior in Atlanta. "But we're hoping the videos will start a movement of good deeds."

The first video, in which Josh, 25, films Kyle giving \$100 bills to eight homeless people in Salt Lake City, has been viewed more than three million times. "Instead of giving money, I bought [the homeless] food," one viewer wrote on the GiveBackFilms online comment thread about his own gesture inspired by the guys. "This has been one of my dreams," wrote another. "I want to make enough money so that I can give back."

Kyle and Josh post a new video each week, showing acts of kindness



Kyle Orrefice, left, and Josh Gibson started GiveBackFilms in 2013.

both simple—tipping a hairstylist \$100, paying for someone's gas—and more involved—buying new clothes and groceries for a homeless couple, paying for job-interview training and a two-week hotel stay.

In January, Kyle brought on Udi's Gluten-Free Foods to sponsor three recent actions. The guys are now looking for more partners to help build the buzz about GiveBackFilms.

Kyle says, "We hope people realize [by watching the videos] that the feeling of giving back is better than the feeling of receiving."





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VOICES & VIEWS

Department of Wit

I Am Man: Hear Me Snore

BY DAVE BARRY

FROM THE BOOK
YOU CAN DATE BOYS
WHEN YOU'RE FORTY



DAVE BARRY
*is a humorist
whose latest
book, You
Can Date
Boys When
You're Forty,
is available
now.*

LIKE MANY MODERN American men, I don't know how to do anything manly anymore. And by "manly," I do not mean "physical." A lot of us do physical things, but these are yuppie fitness things like "spinning" and "crunches" and "working on our core."

These aren't manly. I'll tell you who was manly: the early American pioneers. Those guys didn't even know they had cores. They set out into the wilderness with nothing but a musket and a sack of hardtack and hominy, and they had to survive out there for months, even years, completely on their own, sleeping on the ground in bear-infested forests. That's why they brought hardtack: to throw at the bears. They had no idea why they brought hominy. Like you, they had no idea what "hominy" meant. It sounds like some kind of disease. ➤

But the point is, these pioneering men did not do “crunches.” These men crunched the damn continent—blazing trails, fording rivers, building log cabins, forging things with forges, etc. We modern men can’t do any of that. We don’t have the vaguest idea how to ford a river. We’d check our phones to see if we had a fording app, and if not, we’d give up, go back home, and work on our cores.

We American men have lost our manhood, and I say it’s time we got it back. To get us started, I’ve created a guide to some basic skills that every man should have. You may rest assured that these instructions are correct. I got them from the Internet.

How to Jump-Start Your Car When The Battery Is Dead

1. Obtain a working car from somewhere and park it next to your car.
2. Or, if the owner isn’t around, you could just take off in the working car.
3. No, that would be wrong.
4. On both cars, locate the hood, which is the big flat piece of metal in the front with bird poop on it.
5. Open both hoods. There will be a button or lever inside the car on the driver’s side that you need to push or pull, and then a latch somewhere under the front of the hood that you need to squeeze and release. So your best bet is to use a crowbar.
6. Locate your car’s battery. It will

be a black box partly covered with whitish-greenish fuzz. This is car leprosy. Do not touch it.

7. Obtain some jumper cables.
8. Call 911 and let them know there might be an emergency soon.
9. Do this next part *very, very carefully, or you will die.*
10. Connect one end of the red jumper cable to the positive terminal (also called the ignition or carburetor) on your car’s battery. Then connect the other end of the red cable to an electronic part of the opposing car, such as the radio. Repeat this process in the opposite order with the black jumper cable.
11. Try to start your car. If the engine explodes into a giant fireball, something is wrong.
12. Maybe you should have somebody else try to start your car while you go get coffee a minimum of 150 yards away.
13. If by some miracle your car actually starts, do not turn it off ever again.
14. When you drive, be alert for further signs of trouble such as flickering headlights, which is an indication of a problem in your electrical system, or a collision with a building, which is an indication that you forgot to put the hood back down.

How to Order a Bottle of Wine in a Restaurant

1. Look at the wine list and tell the waiter which wine you want.

2. When the waiter brings it to you, take a sip.
3. If it's OK, say it's OK.
4. Then shut up about the wine.
5. Don't talk about the wine anymore.
6. Nobody gives a damn how much you know about wine, OK?
7. And above all, don't keep sloshing the wine around and looking at it as if it's magical unicorn blood.
8. It's wine, for God's sake.
9. In an hour it will be urine, same as Bud Light.

How to Survive if You Are Lost in a Forest and Night Is Falling

1. Always remember that the most important rule of wilderness survival is: Do not panic.
2. Granted, there are probably dangerous wild carnivorous animals lurking nearby.
3. Wolverines, for example.
4. And venomous snakes.
5. But you must not panic.
6. *For the love of God, get a grip on yourself.*
7. Gather flammable wood to make fire. The best kind of wood in this situation is the "fire log," which is easy to identify by its box of six.
8. Check your pockets to see if you have matches or a cigarette lighter, which of course you will not. You would not dream of smoking

cigarettes, because you are a modern, crunch-doing, health-conscious, risk-averse individual.

9. A fat lot of good that's doing you now with the wolverines closing in.
10. Fortunately, there are other ways to start a fire. An old Native American trick is to rub two sticks together rapidly to create friction.
11. This method has never once, in human history, resulted in fire.
12. It's just one of those things that Native Americans enjoy tricking white people into doing. Like canoeing, face painting, and "hominy."
13. Since there will be no fire, your only hope is to stay up all night making noises that will keep animals away. Many wilderness survival experts advise that you sing "Macarena."
14. If you are still alive in the morning, carefully scan the horizon, noting landmarks—a river, a hill, a Motel 6 sign, etc. Use these to create a "mental map" of your current position.
15. Keeping all this information in mind, calmly, and without panicking, run in a random direction, throwing your hands into the air and shouting, "I don't want to die!"
16. If you are anywhere in North America, within 20 minutes you will come to a Starbucks.
17. There you can purchase emergency scones while the staff calls for help.



Life

IN THESE UNITED STATES



"New system: Guess how many jelly beans."

I WAS ALONE in an elevator when a girl stepped in with a phone pressed to her ear. "I have to go," she told the person on the other end. "There's a cute guy standing here." Before I could react, she turned to me and said, "Sorry for lying. I just wanted to end that conversation." Source: fmylife.com

WHEN I STEPPED on the scale at my doctor's office, I was surprised

to see that I weighed 144 pounds.

"Why don't you just take off that last four?" I joked to the nurse's aide as she made a notation on my chart.

A few moments later, my doctor came in and flipped through the chart.

"I see you've lost weight," he said. "You're down to 14 pounds."

RACHEL WAGNER, *Bixby, Oklahoma*

A HEADLINE in my local newspaper: "Appleton Airport May Soon Be Known as Appleton Airport."

ALLISON NASTOFF, *Brookfield, Wisconsin*

I THINK I'VE finally decoded the language of sale-a-day websites:

■ *Statement jewelry* = large and ugly

■ *Lots of personality* = odd and ugly

■ *Cutting-edge* = disturbing and ugly

DEBBIE SKOLNIK, *Scarsdale, New York*

MY MOTHER WAS standing on the bus when she noticed that a man holding on to the same pole was staring at her. Finally, he said, "Excuse me. This is my stop."

"Well," she said, "go ahead."

"This is my pole," he said.

My mother was confused until he added, "I just bought it at a store to hold up my shower curtain." From gcf.net

GRADUATE SCHOOL students spend a lot of effort writing their thesis papers, often in arcane, smarty-pants-speak. However, a few designed to simplify their findings:

■ "Some mice lick one foot more, and some mice lick the other foot more; it depends on the mouse."

(Psychology, McGill University)

■ "People don't care what their subway stop is called, so it's a good thing I stood outside in the rain and asked them." (Urban Studies, University of Pennsylvania)

■ "A kind of string theory nobody thought was true is probably not true." (Physics, Brown University)

Source: lolmythesis.com

Want to pay off your college loan? You might get \$100 by sending us a funny anecdote. Go to page 7 or rd.com/submit.



THAT REMINDS ME OF A JOKE!

FROM THE NEWS:

A correction in the *New York Times*: "A column earlier this month about introverts and extroverts misquoted the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre. The correct quote is 'Hell is other people,' not 'Hell is other people at breakfast.'"

Source: poynter.org

THE LAUGH:

Jean-Paul Sartre is sitting at a French café, revising his draft of *Being and Nothingness*. He says to the waitress, "I'd like a cup of coffee, please, with no cream." The waitress replies, "I'm sorry, monsieur, but we're out of cream. How about with no milk?"

One teacher's strategy to stop violence at its root

Looking Out for The Lonely

BY GLENNON DOYLE MELTON FROM MOMASTERY.COM



GLENNON DOYLE MELTON writes the popular blog *momastery.com* and is the author of *Carry On, Warrior: The Power of Embracing Your Messy, Beautiful Life*.

☪ A FEW WEEKS AGO, I went into my son Chase's class for tutoring. I'd e-mailed Chase's teacher one evening and said, "Chase keeps telling me that this stuff you're sending home is math—but I'm not sure I believe him. Help, please." She e-mailed right back and said, "No problem! I can tutor Chase after school anytime." And I said, "No, not him. Me. He gets it. Help me."

And that's how I ended up standing at a chalkboard in an empty fifth-grade classroom while Chase's teacher sat behind me, using a soothing voice to try to help me understand the "new way we teach long division." Luckily for me, I didn't have to unlearn much because I'd never really understood the "old way we taught long division." It took me a solid hour to complete one problem, but I could tell that Chase's teacher liked me anyway. She used to work with NASA, so obviously we have a whole lot in common.

Afterward, we sat for a few minutes and talked about teaching children and what a sacred trust and responsibility it is. We agreed that subjects like math and reading are not the most important things that are learned in a classroom. We talked about shaping little hearts to become contributors to a larger community—and we discussed our mutual dream that those communities might be made up of individuals



who are kind and brave above all.

And then she told me this.

Every Friday afternoon, she asks her students to take out a piece of paper and write down the names of four children with whom they'd like to sit the following week. The children know that these requests may or may not be honored. She also asks the students to nominate one student who they believe has been an exceptional classroom citizen that week. All ballots are privately submitted to her.

And every single Friday afternoon, after the students go home, she takes out those slips of paper, places them

in front of her, and studies them. She looks for patterns.

Who is not getting requested by anyone else?

Who can't think of anyone to request?

Who never gets noticed enough to be nominated?

Who had a million friends last week and none this week?

You see, Chase's teacher is not looking for a new seating chart or "exceptional citizens." Chase's teacher is looking for lonely children. She's looking for children who are struggling to connect with other children. She's identifying the little ones who

are falling through the cracks of the class's social life. She is discovering whose gifts are going unnoticed by their peers. And she's pinning down—right away—who's being bullied and who is doing the bullying.

As a teacher, parent, and lover of all children, I think this is the most brilliant Love Ninja strategy I have ever encountered. It's like taking an X-ray of a classroom to see beneath the surface of things and into the hearts of students. It is like mining for gold—the gold being those children who need a little help, who need adults to step in and teach them how to make friends, how to ask others to play, how to join a group, or how to share their gifts. And it's a bully deterrent because every teacher knows that bullying usually happens outside her eyeshot and that often kids being bullied are too intimidated to share. But, as she said, the truth comes out on those safe, private, little sheets of paper.

As Chase's teacher explained this simple, ingenious idea, I stared at her with my mouth hanging open. "How long have you been using this system?" I said.

Ever since Columbine, she said.

Every single Friday afternoon since Columbine. Good Lord.

This brilliant woman watched Columbine knowing that all violence begins with disconnection. All outward violence begins as inner loneliness. She watched that tragedy knowing that children who aren't being noticed may eventually resort to being noticed by any means necessary.

And so she decided to start fighting violence early and often in the world within her reach. What Chase's teacher is doing when she sits in her empty classroom studying those lists written with shaky 11-year-old hands is

saving lives. I am convinced of it.

And what this mathematician has learned while using this system is something she really already knew: that everything—even love, even belonging—has a pattern to it. She finds the patterns, and through those lists she breaks the codes of disconnection. Then she gets lonely kids the help they need. It's math to her. *It's math.*

All is love—even math. Amazing.

Chase's teacher retires this year. What a way to spend a life: looking for patterns of love and loneliness. Stepping in, every single day, and altering the trajectory of our world. **R**

“
*It's like taking
an X-ray of a
classroom to see
deep into the
hearts of
students.*”

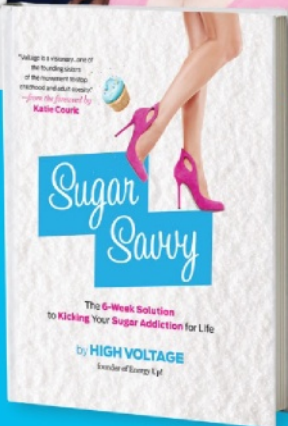
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Should a tenant with a disability be allowed to break a ban on animals?

The Case Of the Prohibited Pooch

BY VICKI GLEBOCKI

BY NOVEMBER 2000, six months after Joyce Grad had moved into Royalwood Cooperative Apartments in Royal Oak, Michigan, she was getting anxious about her seasonal descent into depression. “It always gets worse in winter,” says the now-64-year-old, who describes her feelings at that time as “suicidal.” She adds, “I was watching the leaves fall and thinking, I don’t think I can do this.”

Grad had been living alone on Social Security disability for years due to bipolar disorder, causing severe depression that prevented her from working. Sometimes it was so bad, she could barely get out of bed. Worried about her inactivity, she

reasoned, If I had a dog, I would have to go outside for walks. But the co-op board had a no-pet policy.

Grad wrote to the board, asking it to waive the policy and allow her to have a small dog. Grad stated that according to the Fair Housing Act, “it is unlawful discrimination to deny a person with a disability ‘a reasonable accommodation of an existing building rule or policy if such accommodation may be necessary to afford such person full enjoyment of the premises.’”

She included letters from her psychiatrist and psychologist stating that a dog would help with her “debilitating depressive disorder.” ➔

But the board rejected Grad's request.

Two months later, Grad moved to an apartment in a building a few miles from Royalwood that allowed pets, and she acquired a ten-pound gray poodle from a family in the neighborhood. Grad named the dog Lady and trained the poodle to coax her out of bed in the morning and to take her home if she was out and experienced a panic attack.

About ten months after leaving Royalwood, Grad filed a complaint against the apartment complex with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD

investigated and, in August 2003, filed a civil complaint against Royalwood, claiming that it had, in fact, discriminated against Grad and violated the Fair Housing Act.

"The legal question was whether the requested accommodation would have lessened the effect of the disability," explains Grad's attorney, Gabrielle Frampton. "Would the dog have helped? Or would it have just been a pet?"

Did Royalwood Cooperative Apartments discriminate against Joyce Grad by not waiving its no-pet policy? You be the judge.



THE VERDICT

Instead of having HUD settle the matter, Royalwood opted to let a federal jury decide. In February 2005, in the U.S. District Court in Detroit, Royalwood's attorney, Patrick Rode, argued that the defendants didn't "believe" Grad was disabled. One co-op board member testified, "We all observed her walking around the property happy as a lark, very friendly, very gregarious. What disability?" The defendants also claimed there wasn't enough evidence to prove that a service animal would lessen the impact of Grad's alleged disability, as it would for, say, a blind person. "The dog is nothing more than a pet that need not be accommodated," explained Rode.

"They were so completely rigid," says Frampton, Grad's attorney. "It was mind-boggling." In the end, the jury ruled for Grad—the first federal verdict that recognized mental illness as a disability under the Fair Housing Act. Grad was awarded \$14,209 in actual damages and settled with the defendants for additional punitive damages. R

Agree? Disagree? Sound off at rd.com/judge.

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- Paul A., Denver, Colorado



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Maybe I should...

Christmas Valley, OR



Boise, ID

...praise more people

for what they did right rather than point out what they did wrong.

ANNETTE KRAUSE

...have built

the outhouse first.

MARK JOSEPH RUSSELL

...take my parents out

to dinner in gratitude for all the dinners they provided for me and my seven siblings.

REBECCA BODMAN

Las Vegas, NV



...get a massage

instead of just giving them.

MARIA JAMES

...pray more.

LUPITA ESPINOSA

San Diego, CA



...do less Facebook and do more

“face in a book.”

CESAR DINGLE

Laredo, TX

**...see a
psychiatrist.**

SHANNON LEE

...dance

in the moonlight
more than once
a year.

BOBBI FEINAUER
COMBS

...marry

my best friend.
JON WILCOXSON

...ignore the insults and
**remember the
compliments.**

RITA TRULINOS

...stop

trying to sing.
MARY WARD

...accept

that I will recover
from my car
accident in God's
time, not my time.

AUTUMN DUNCAN

...write a letter asking

Billy Joel

if he would like to compose
songs with me. What's the
worst that can happen?
And he might say yes.

KRISTINE B. MCANELLY

**...keep my
mouth shut**

more often.

SUMMER HUGHES

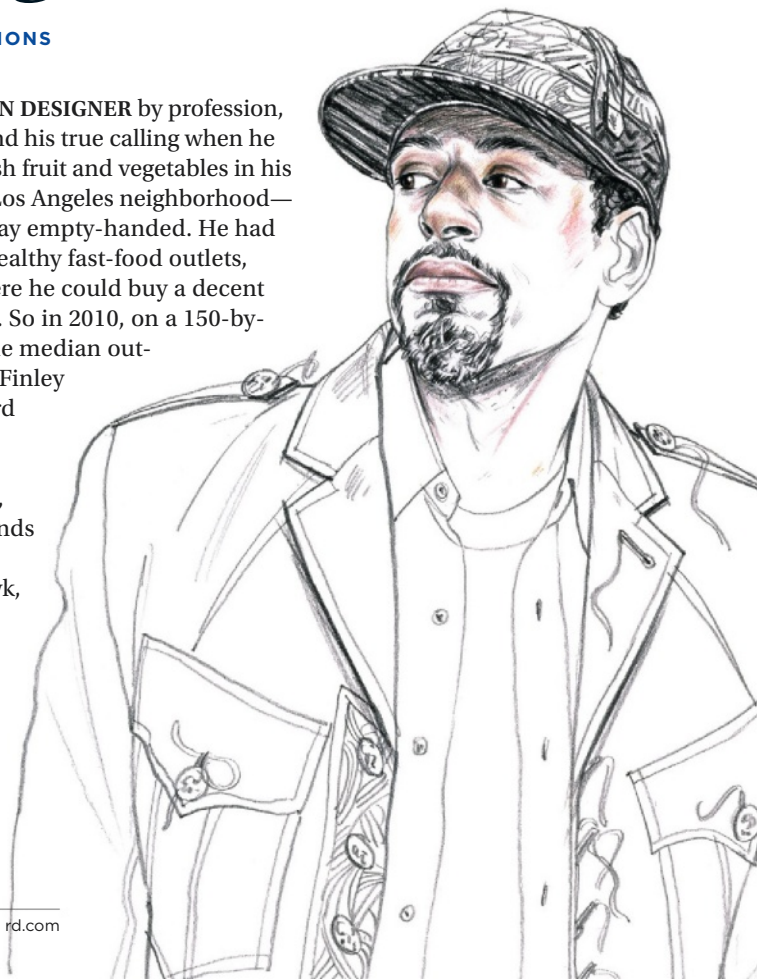
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for the chance to finish
the next sentence.

Ron Finley's garden is not extraordinary.
What he's done with it is.

Gangsta Gardener

BY ANDY SIMMONS

🌀 A FASHION DESIGNER by profession, Ron Finley found his true calling when he tried to buy fresh fruit and vegetables in his South Central Los Angeles neighborhood—and walked away empty-handed. He had his pick of unhealthy fast-food outlets, but a store where he could buy a decent apple? No luck. So in 2010, on a 150-by-10-foot curbside median outside his home, Finley planted mustard greens, carrots, banana and tangerine trees, and more. Friends and strangers came by to gawk, and Finley told them to help themselves. For many, it was the first fresh produce they'd eaten in years. Finley taught



neighbors how to grow their own gardens. Then he gave a speech that was posted online and went viral, reaching an audience outside Los Angeles. Now he's traveling the world to spread the gospel and is planning a string of health food restaurants in underserved areas. "I put a seed in the ground in South Central," he tells *Reader's Digest*, "and next thing you know, I'm in Qatar."

Tell me why you call yourself the gangsta gardener.

If you're gardening, you're a gangsta. I don't care if you're a 70-year-old mom in Maine or a four-year-old in South Central. Gardening is gangsta. Drugs, robbing—that's not gangsta. Building community—that's gangsta. I'm changing the vernacular. If we have to have gang wars, I want them over who has the biggest zucchini.

Were you always a gardener?

We're all gardeners. Think about it: The first job ever on this planet was gardening. God said to Adam, "Hey, dude, take care of my garden." Eve, she had the fig leaf and the snake, and then God told Adam, "OK, don't mess with that." But the guy didn't listen, so now we have plastic. You don't remember that story? [*Laughs*]

I think we have different Bibles.

That's Genesis. We all came from gardens.

How does it work? You and a team go to people's homes, to churchyards, to schools, and start digging?

What I do is show people how to be self-sufficient. But am I gonna do it for you? No! I'm a gangsta gardener, not a guerrilla gardener. I don't come at midnight, plant, and leave. To me, there has to be ownership. If I'm planting something, I want it maintained.

Why are you doing all of this?

I'm trying to repair a dysfunctional system of food "prisons" around the United States. I call them food prisons, not food deserts, because to find healthy food in poor areas, you've got to escape them. We're imprisoned by bad choices, which result in real harm. Here in Los Angeles, I've heard of grade school kids having heart attacks. I'll repeat that: Kids are having heart attacks! And it's not for lack of food; it's just the opposite.

So it's the quality of the food?

I call it unfood food. A lot of what is available for poor kids to eat is made in a lab. Have you seen the Hot Cheetos and Taquitos videos? Kids are watching a video about a snack food. It's got a fast beat and high production values. That's what we're up against. That's not food! But there are few alternatives. Gardens are a way for people to get back to the earth and design their life and their realities. It all starts with food.



**All you need is seeds, soil, sun, and a dream:
Ron Finley at work in his curbside vegetable garden.**

What if their reality is that they really love McDonald's?

So be it. But for many people, if they haven't seen it, they can't dream it. I want to show them healthy choices.

How will you convince them to eat their vegetables?

If kids grow kale, kids eat kale. If they grow tomatoes, they eat tomatoes. Because now they've physically engaged in the creation of life, of something that will sustain their health. When you grow a plant, you realize, Wow, a seed gave me this.

What's your least favorite vegetable?

It used to be Brussels sprouts, until I knew how to cook them. Now I admire them. When I talk to people about their gardens, I say, "Plant what you like, plant what you eat, and then add to your palate."

Why do you call gardening a defiant act?


We're taking our health into our own hands. We're refusing to rely on big agriculture and fast food. That's defiance.

Share a moment when you thought, This is why my work matters.

A kid sent me pictures of his "front-yard grocery store." He plants vegetables on his lawn and median and gives

them to neighbors. I got a letter from a guy who passed by an empty lot and thought, When will somebody fix this eyesore? Then he watched me in a garden and realized he was that somebody. That's why I want my gardens to face the street—to show people they can do this. It's not magic. It should be like air. Who thinks about air? Nobody. I want growing our food to get the disrespect that air gets.

At Reader's Digest, we often finish interviews by asking people about their favorite word. What's yours?

Ecolutionary. When you plant a garden, you're not just feeding people. You're healing the planet, the soil, and yourself, all at the same time. Right now I think we need more ecolutionaries. We need more gangsta gardeners. We need more people feeding Mother Earth. 

FACES OF AMERICA

BY GLENN GLASSER

Kevin Deiter & Family

LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA

"If we can get all 13 of them to adulthood without any major issues, it would probably be beating the odds, but I think we're on the right track. Plus, it's pretty hard to get away with anything; there are too many people around to catch you!"





Points to Ponder

NOBODY IS INSPIRED by a god. A god is an enviable creature who is more than you could ever be. But a great human being—a human who has used every resource at his disposal to do something extraordinary—that is inspiring.

TELLER,
magician, in Daily Beast

I HAVE A THEORY THAT people who are addicted to reading are trying to re-create the joy of being read to as a child by a parent or a sibling. Being read to as a child is one of the great experiences in life.

BILLY COLLINS,
poet, in Paris Review

PARENTS STILL WANT their children to avoid ugliness, and many [will] lend a helping hand: Cosmetic dentistry, such as braces, is routine. People will say that braces are for health, not looks, but braces are our culture's version of foot-binding.

JONNY THAKKAR,
philosophy and humanities lecturer, in Aeon


SOMEDAY HISTORY WILL WRITE of our era, and the biggest scandal will be the thing we accepted in our leaders: chronic and endemic selfishness. History will be hard on us for that.

PEGGY NOONAN,
columnist, in the Wall Street Journal



I'm always very fearful when academics get ahold of comedy. Comedy is such a clear thing—people laugh or they don't laugh.

LORNE MICHAELS,
Saturday Night Live cocreator, in New York magazine

 Sign up for a daily Points to Ponder e-mail at rd.com/ptp.

The “digital highway” is a street teeming with people who are often hurting, men and women looking for salvation or hope.

POPE FRANCIS, in a speech



I AM INTRINSICALLY a terribly lazy person. If I didn't do anything all day long, I would be very happy. But I actually believe it's the lazy people who are the most driven. You work to stop being your true lazy self.

NIGELLA LAWSON,

chef, in the *Mail on Sunday Event Magazine*

FASHION, IN THE RIGHT HANDS, has a soul. It's a way to express ourselves and tell our stories.

GABRIELLE BERNSTEIN,

writer, in *Elle*

THE PROBLEM WITH FACTS is not that we need more of them but that we don't know what to do with the ones we have.

ALAIN DE BOTTON,

philosopher, from his book *The News*

SUFIS TELL OF TWO PATHS to transcendence: One is to look out at the universe and see yourself, the other is to look within yourself and see the universe. **R**

MOHSIN HAMID,

novelist, in the *New York Times Book Review*

The day has to come when it's not a surprise that a woman has a powerful position. We've actually had three women secretaries of state, and people still [feel the need to] say “female secretary of state.”

CONDOLLEEZZA RICE,

former secretary of state, in *Parade*



A woman with dark hair and a blue headband is smiling and holding a powdered doughnut. She is wearing a white polo shirt with the Progressive logo. She is surrounded by a vast sea of powdered doughnuts, which are stacked into many columns of varying heights, creating a textured, white background.

SAVINGS THAT STAND OUT

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ART *of* LIVING



These seven mind tricks tend to backfire

You're Doing It Wrong

BY SUNNY SEA GOLD

Making Direct Eye Contact

We've been told that looking someone in the eye conveys honesty, but if you're trying to persuade a friend to try, say, skydiving, avert your gaze. In a recent study, researchers used eye-tracking technology to discover that subjects were less influenced by speakers who maintained the most eye contact, which seemed to work only when the audience already agreed with the speaker. "Eye contact can signal very different kinds of messages, ranging from attraction and interest to aggression and a desire to intimidate someone," says lead study author Frances Chen, assistant professor of psychology at the University of British Columbia. To predict the reaction, consider your audience and the tenor of the conversation: In friendly situations, eye contact can connect people. In adversarial moments, it could be associated with dominance.

Instagramming Your Life

Snapping photos to preserve memories can actually get in the way of experiencing those moments fully and reduce your recall, new research from Fairfield University in Connecticut found. In the study, people in a museum were asked to take note of certain objects, either by photographing them or just observing. The next day, the photo takers were less able to recognize the art pieces they'd been assigned and

had less detailed memories of the works. "It's as if when we click the button to take the photo, we think, Done, next thing ..., and don't engage in the kind of processing that would enhance memory," says lead author Linda Henkel, Fairfield University professor of psychology.

Saying "I" a Lot

You might assume that people who say *I* have healthy self-esteem. But researchers at the University of Texas at Austin recently did five separate conversation and e-mail studies and found that frequent *I* users are less sure of themselves than those who use the word infrequently. The explanation: "Pronouns [*I, you, we ...*] reflect where we are really paying attention," says study author and University of Texas professor of psychology James Pennebaker. *I* users may be looking inward because they are self-conscious, insecure, or worried about pleasing people. Instead, more secure folks, who say *you* more often, direct most of their attention to the outside world and look for positive feedback.

Planning a Healthy Diet

A recent analysis of 50 studies found that thinking too hard about what to eat can undermine your goals. The more we consider our choices, the easier it gets to come up with reasons why we "deserve" to stray from our plan, says study author Jessie

de Witt Huberts, a doctoral student and psychology researcher at Utrecht University in the Netherlands.

“Regarding food and fitness, people’s good intentions for the future seem to have a detrimental effect on their eating behavior in the present,” she says. “People are more likely to eat unhealthy snacks now if they intend to go to the gym later that day.” What works best? Commit to a routine that easily suits your life (like eating the same healthy breakfast every day or walking home from work) and stick to it, with as little thought or variation as possible.

Living in the Present

Conventional wisdom says that you shouldn’t dwell in the past. But a study from the University of Southampton in the United Kingdom recently found that feeling nostalgic and reminiscing about long-ago events can increase optimism about the future. How are the past and future related in our minds? Nostalgic memories make us feel more connected to other people, explains lead study author Wing-Yee Cheung: “In our studies, we found that nostalgia first fostered social connectedness, which subsequently lifted self-esteem, which then

heightened optimism.” In other words, when you remember holding hands with the cool kid at that middle school roller rink party, you feel good about the past, better about yourself in the present, and then hopeful about the future.



*Seemingly
logical
behaviors can
sometimes
work against
you.*



Creating Mood Lighting

If you dim the lights to heighten romance—or boost your attractiveness—you could be in for a bland evening. Cranking up the lights increases the intensity of any situation and all kinds of emotions—both positive and negative—scientists at the University of

Toronto Scarborough and Northwestern University recently found. People participated in a series of different experiments, which included tasting chicken-wing sauces ranked from mild to hot, reacting to negative and positive words, and judging women’s attractiveness, while in either a brightly or a dimly lit room. Subjects in the brighter room chose spicier sauce, reacted more negatively or positively to the loaded words, and found the women considerably more attractive than did those in the dimmer rooms. Although the precise mechanism isn’t known, Alison Jing Xu, assistant

professor of management at the University of Toronto Scarborough, says bright light may affect our emotional system because we naturally perceive it as heat, which is known to heighten our emotions.

Making Lemonade out Of Lemons

One skill that many happy people have honed is “cognitive reappraisal”—the ability to reframe our thoughts about a situation to help ourselves feel better. This tends to work great in certain scenarios where you have little control over the outcome of the events at hand. However, a recent

study found that when it's applied to situations that can be changed, you can end up feeling more stress and depression. Why? Because it could prevent people from taking action to fix a problem, says Allison Troy, assistant professor of psychology at Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Imagine your relationship is on the rocks in part because of your irresponsible spending. If using cognitive reappraisal makes you feel like what you're doing isn't wrong, you may be less likely to learn to live within your budget. Take self-soothing too far and it could become destructive. **R**



THERE ARE TWO ...

... things you can count on in life: your fingers and an abacus.

SAM GRITTNER

... types of trains: the one you just missed and the one that never comes.

ABBI CRUTCHFIELD

... reasons for doing anything: a good reason and a real reason.

J. P. MORGAN

... types of public speakers: those that are nervous and those that are liars.

MARK TWAIN

... phases in life: the one where *racecar* is your favorite palindrome and the one where *Xanax* is.

PATRICK RYAN



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Extraordinary Uses for Ordinary Things

Kitchen Gadgets

BY PERRI O. BLUMBERG

■ **JUICE A LEMON WITH A MICROWAVE** Zap a lemon for ten seconds to break down cells and make the juice flow faster. This is good to remember when trying to squeeze out as much juice as possible for a vinaigrette.

LAURENT TOURONDEL, chef and partner
at Arlington Club in New York City

■ **ROLL DOUGH WITH A WINE BOTTLE** If you don't have a rolling pin, remove the label from an empty, clean wine or liquor bottle and fill the bottle with cold water. Try this with dough for biscuits, piecrusts, and tarts.

DAMIAN SANSONETTI,
chef and owner of Piccolo in Portland, Maine

■ **GREASE PANS WITH A SANDWICH BAG** Keep your hand clean by putting it inside a plastic sandwich bag and then scooping up butter. After greasing a pan, just invert the plastic bag and toss. **PAMELA GIUSTO-SORRELLS**, founder and CEO of Pamela's Products

■ **TENDERIZE MEAT WITH A SKILLET** Wrap meat in plastic wrap and pound it with a skillet. (Goodbye, stress!) **KENAN HILL**, chef with peachdish.com

■ **EMPLOY A BOX GRATER TO PUREE TOMATOES** Place a plate under a box grater. With the stem end of a tomato in your palm, grate against the widest holes, rotating the fruit in a circular motion. The puree falls on the plate, while the skin and tomato belly button stay in your hand.

ANDREW ZIMMERN, chef and host of
Travel Channel's Bizarre Foods America

■ **MAKE FLUFFY COUSCOUS IN A BAKING DISH** Add a thin layer of couscous to the bottom of a large baking dish, pour in boiling water, and leave the dish on the countertop, covered, for five minutes. The pasta won't get weighed down like it does in a pot, so it will come out perfectly soft.

NADIA GIOSIA, host of Cooking Channel's
Nadia G's Bitchin' Kitchen

■ **BEFRIEND KITCHEN TONGS AS BOTTLE OPENERS** Quickly twist open a bottle of beer by clamping tongs around a stubborn cap.

MATT LAMBERT, executive chef and owner of the Musket Room in New York City

■ **MINCE GARLIC WITH A CAN** If you don't have a garlic press, wrap peeled garlic cloves (and other spices, if desired) in tinfoil, and smash them with a can from the pantry.

CALVIN HARRIS, chef and curator of Self Healthy Kitchen

■ **BAKE OMELETS IN A MUFFIN TIN** Coat the tin with cooking spray. Fill each cup with one beaten egg, top with desired ingredients, and bake at 350°F for about 20 minutes. This is a great way to make personalized omelets for big groups or a batch of reheatable-to-go breakfasts.

ADRIANE AND CLAUDIA KISS (aka the Kisssters), contributors to celebrations.com

■ **DRAIN WITH A BAKING RACK** No strainer? Use a wire rack with a grid-like pattern. Empty pots and pans through the rack for perfectly strained veggies, potatoes, and pastas.

TOM COSTELLO, executive chef at Thyme Restaurant in Yorktown Heights, New York

■ **PIT CHERRIES WITH A BENT FORK** Use pliers to bend forward the two outer prongs of a four-prong fork and to slightly bend forward the center prongs. Pierce the cherry with the center prongs and press down to extract the pit.

DOMINIQUE ANSEL, chef at Dominique Ansel Bakery in New York City

■ **SHRED BUTTER FOR BETTER BAKING** A cheese grater makes quick work of piecrusts and biscuits. Instead of cutting the butter into the flour, simply grate a stick of frozen butter, and then toss the shreds with flour until a crumbly mixture forms.

BETH MONCEL, creator of budgetbytes.com

■ **USE FREEZER BAGS FOR MESS-FREE BREADING** Put flour in one bag, beaten eggs in a second, and bread crumbs in a third. Dip foods like shrimp and chicken into each bag—then toss into a fourth bag, close, and shake.

CHEF JOHNNY PREP, creator of johnnyprep.net

■ **GRILL WITH A PIE TIN** To create a makeshift smoker, place damp wood chips in a pie tin, and set it over hot coals. **R**

ELLIOT LOPEZ, executive chef of NYY Steak's stadium and New York City locations



The Little Boat That Sailed Through Time

BY ARNOLD BERWICK

❧ I SPENT THE tenth summer of my childhood, the most memorable months of my life, in western Norway at the mountain farm where my mother was born. What remains most vivid in my mind are the times I shared with my grandfather Jørgen.

The first thing I noticed about Grandfather was his thick, bushy mustache and broad shoulders. The second thing was how he could work. All summer I watched him. He mowed grass with wide sweeps of the scythe, raked it up, and hung it on racks to dry. Later he gathered the hay in bundles tied with a rope and carried them on his back, one after another, to the barn.

He sharpened the scythes on a grindstone, slaughtered a pig, caught and salted fish, ground barley in a water-driven gristmill,

and grew and stored potatoes. He had to produce enough in the short summer to carry the family and the animals through the long, snowbound winter. He stopped only long enough to eat and to sleep a few winks.

And yet he found time for just the two of us. One day after a trip to a faraway town, he handed me a knife and sheath, saying, "These are for you. Now watch."

He slipped his own knife from its sheath, cut a thin, succulent branch from a tree, and sat down beside me. With callused hands, he showed me how to make a flute. Even today, 63 years later, whenever I hear the pure notes of a flute, I think of how he made music from nothing but a thin branch of a tree. Living on an isolated mountain farm, far from



neighbors and stores, he had to make do with what he had.

As an American, I always thought people simply bought whatever they needed. Whether Grandfather knew this, I don't know. But it seems he wanted to teach me something because one day, he said, "Come. I have something for you."

I followed him into the basement, where he led me to a workbench by a window. "You should have a toy boat. You can sail it at Storvassdal," he said, referring to a small lake a few miles from the house.

Swell, I thought, looking around for the boat. But there was none.

Grandfather picked up a block of wood, about 18 inches long. "The boat is in there," he said. "You can bring it out." Then he handed me a razor-sharp ax.

I wasn't sure what to do, so Grandfather showed me how to handle the tool. I started to chop away to shape the bow. Later, after he taught me the proper use of the hammer and chisel, I began to hollow out the hull.

Often Grandfather joined me in the basement, repairing wooden rakes or sharpening tools. He answered my questions and made suggestions, but he saw to it that I did all the work myself.

"It'll be a fine boat, and you'll be making it all with your own hands," he said. "No one can give you what you do for yourself." The words rang in my head as I worked.

Finally, I finished the hull and made a mast and sail. The boat wasn't much to look at, but I was proud of what I had built.

Then, with my creation, I headed for Storvassdal. Climbing the mountain slope, I entered the woods and followed a steep path. I crossed tiny streams, trod on spongy moss, and ascended slippery stone steps—higher, higher, until I was above the timberline. After four or five miles, I came at last to a small lake that had been carved out by a glacier. Its sloping sides were covered with stones of all shapes and sizes.

I launched my boat and daydreamed while a slight breeze carried the little craft to an opposite shore. The air was crisp and clean. There was no sound but the warble of a bird.

I would return to the lake many times to sail my boat. One day, dark clouds came in, burst open, and poured sheets of rain. I pressed myself against a large boulder and felt its captured warmth. I thought of "Rock of Ages" ("... let me hide myself in thee"). Through the rain, I saw

my little boat pushing its way over the ripples. I imagined a ship bravely fighting a turbulent sea. Then the sun came out, and all was well again.

A crisis developed when we were ready to return to America. "You cannot bring that boat home with you," my mother said. We already had too much baggage.

I pleaded, but to no avail.

With a saddened heart, I went to

Storvassdal for the last time, found that large boulder, placed my boat in a hollow space under its base, piled stones to hide it, and resolved to return one day to recover my treasure.

I said goodbye to my grandfather, not knowing I would never see him again. "Farewell,"

he said as he clasped my hand tightly.

In the summer of 1964, I went to Norway with my parents and my wife and children. One day, I left the family farmhouse and hiked up to Storvassdal, looking for the large boulder. There were plenty around. My search seemed hopeless.

I was about to give up when I saw a pile of small stones jammed under a boulder. I slowly removed them and reached into the hollow space beneath the boulder. My hand touched something that moved. I pulled the boat out and held it in my hands. For 34 years, it had been

“*No one can give you what you do for yourself.*”
The words rang in my head as I worked.”

resting there, waiting for my return. The rough, bare-wood hull and mast were hardly touched by age; only the cloth sail had disintegrated.

I shall never forget that moment. As I cradled the boat, I felt my grandfather's presence. He had died 22 years before, and yet he was there. We three were together again—Grandfather and I and the little boat, the tangible link that bound us together.

I brought the boat back to the farm for the others to see and carved 1930 and 1964 on its side. Someone suggested I take it home to America. "No," I said. "Its home is under that boulder at Storvassdal." I took it back to its resting place.

I returned to the lake in 1968, 1971, 1977, and 1988. Each time as I held the little boat and carved the year on its side, my grandfather seemed near.

My last trip to Storvassdal was in 1991. This time, I brought two of my granddaughters from America: Catherine, 13, and Claire, 12. As we climbed the mountain, I thought of my grandfather and compared his life with that of my granddaughters. Catherine and Claire are made of the same stuff as their ancestors.

They are determined and independent—I see it in the way they carry themselves at work and play. And yet my grandfather seemed to have

so little to work with, while my granddaughters have so much.

Usually the things we dream of, then work and struggle for, are what we value most. Have my granddaughters, blessed with abundance, been denied life's real pleasures?

Working tirelessly on that isolated farm, my grandfather taught me that we should accept and be grateful for what we have—whether it be much or little. We must bear the burdens and relish the joys. There is so much we cannot control, but we must try to make things better when we are able. We must depend on ourselves to make our own way as best we can.

Growing up in a comfortable suburban home, my granddaughters have been presented with a different situation. But I hope—I believe—they will in their own way be able to cope

as well as my grandfather coped and learn the lesson my grandfather taught me all those years ago. On the day I took them to Storvassdal, I hoped they would somehow understand the importance of the little boat and its simple message of self-reliance.

High in the mountain, I hesitated to speak lest I disturb our tranquillity. Then Claire broke my reverie as she said softly, "Grandpa, someday I'll come back." She paused. "And I'll bring my children." **R**

AN RD CLASSIC



Reader's Digest first published this article in May 1993. Arnold Berwick passed away in December 2013, at the age of 93.

Confession: I Love Being A Cheesy Tourist

BY MATTHEW KEPNES FROM THE HUFFINGTON POST

HERE'S A SECRET: As much as I love getting off the beaten path and learning about local cultures, sometimes I adore the artificial world that the mainstream travel industry has created. Many people think every moment on the road has to have profound impact and meaning. But sometimes you just need to take attractions and experiences for what they are: crowded, overrated, commercialized, mind-numbing, and enjoyable escapes.

Cruises

Last year, I went on a cruise simply to relax and decompress. There was nothing authentic about Royal Caribbean's "private beach" in Haiti or the dance parties on the boat, but gosh, was it fun. Because sometimes life is about just sitting by the pool with a piña colada

while you listen to the band cover Bob Marley for the umpteenth time.

Walt Disney World

I love the rides, drinking my way around the world in Epcot Center, the haunted house, Space Mountain,



and just feeling like a kid again—which I guess is the whole point at Disney. There's nothing wrong with simply enjoying yourself in a make-believe fantasyland for a bit.

The Louvre

This is one of the most famous, crowded, and popular museums in the entire world. Sure, walking through it is like walking through a packed subway station during rush hour, but heck, it's the Louvre. Why miss out? Even if the *Mona Lisa* is the most overrated painting on the entire planet, you have to see it.

Venice, Italy

This beautiful city feels like a caricature of itself. That said, getting lost in that endless maze of tiny streets is fun, the city provides a beautiful backdrop for romance, and even though a gondola ride is 100 euros, you only live once, right?

The Great Barrier Reef

Yes, I'm daring to call this overrated. The snorkeling or diving you'll do on day trips suffers from large crowds and tons of overfishing. There are far better dive spots in Australia. Regardless, get ready to grab your goggles. You may be sharing your view of Nemo with 50 other people, but who cares? It's the Great Barrier Reef! You can see this thing from space!

Times Square

I live in New York City, and yet it's not often that I visit this iconic tourist spot. Times Square is jammed with visitors and completely commercialized. However, it's home to Broadway, you can watch all kinds of interesting street performers, the massive M&M's store is seriously a piece of heaven on earth, and sitting on top of the red stairs in Father Duffy Square is the perfect way to watch it all happen. **R**

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REAL HEAD-SCRATCHING HEADLINES

- When British politician Michael Foot was put in charge of a nuclear-disarmament committee, the *Times* wrote:
“Foot Heads Arms Body”
- When tightrope walkers in Seoul traversed the river Han, the *Washington Post* wrote: “Skywalkers in Korea Cross Han Solo”
- When former astronauts voiced support for interplanetary treks, NBC News wrote: “Boosters Flare in Space Debate”

What's Your Suitcase Personality?

BY MELISSE HINKLE
FROM CHEAPFLIGHTS.COM



■ THE HOLY ROLLER

Backed by the rolling method's super-serious following and tried-and-true reputation, practitioners religiously roll until all those clothing coils are tucked in tight. Proponents might not be trendsetters, but they keep rolling, because if it ain't broke, why fix it?

■ THE OVER-PACKER

This packer's mind is full of what-ifs: What if I go horseback riding? What if we go out to fancy dinners eight nights in a row? Over-packers want options. Even when they think they've weeded out every last unnecessary item, they still have to sit on their bag to zip it up.

■ THE CARRY-ON CONNOISSEUR

Checked bags (and their fees) are for the birds—that's the connoisseur's mantra. For this breed, it's all about planning ahead. Organized, always

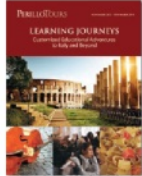
practical, and very minimalist, they make the most of a small amount of mix-and-match, versatile clothing.

■ THE HACKER PACKER

This savvy traveler seeks out and employs every trick in the book: plastic wrap over bottles so they won't leak, socks and underwear stuffed inside shoes, necklaces strung through straws to avoid tangles. They love being in the know, and packing hacks are their specialty.

■ THE 11TH-HOUR PACKER

No organized piles or itemized lists here. This packer is a whirlwind, running around at, well, the 11th hour, throwing almost anything and everything into a suitcase. The end result could be wonderful or utterly disastrous, but this power packer is just daring enough to find out. **R**



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Is losing yourself in a good book the ultimate getaway for you? Then here are our ...

Addictive Vacation Reads

NOVEL *All the Light We Cannot See* by **Anthony Doerr** The latest from the Story Prize-winning author weaves an emotional tale around two young characters: Marie-Laure, a blind French girl, and Werner, a German boy. Their paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive during World War II.

MEMOIR *I Forgot to Remember* by **Su Meck** In 1988, Meck, a married mother of two, suffered a traumatic brain injury that erased her memory. This tale reveals what it's like to relearn how to live and love and to attempt to reclaim a lost identity.

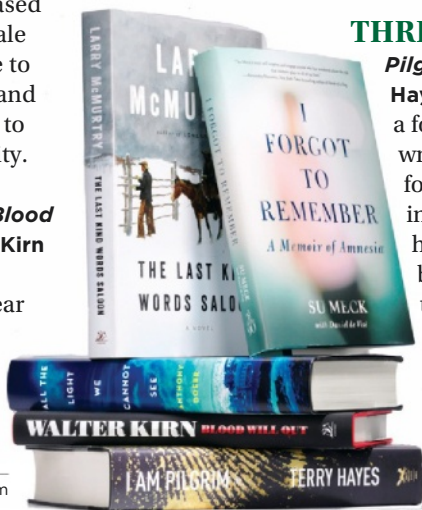
TRUE CRIME *Blood Will Out* by **Walter Kirn** The famed writer chronicles his 15-year friendship with Clark Rockefeller, an outlandish, eccentric son of

privilege who is ultimately unmasked as a serial impostor, child kidnapper, and brutal murderer.

HISTORICAL FICTION *The Last Kind Words Saloon* by **Larry McMurtry** The Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Lonesome Dove* returns with a gunslingin' tribute to the Old West. This fictional account follows Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday on their travels, ending with their famed gunfight at the O.K. Corral.

THRILLER *I Am Pilgrim* by **Terry Hayes** Before retiring, a former U.S. spy writes a book on forensic criminal investigation. He has no idea that his book will link him to a crime. **R**

For more summer book recommendations, visit rd.com/june.

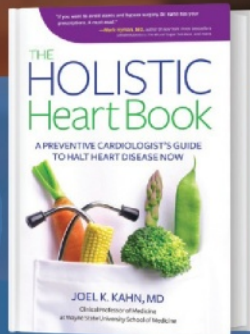


“Each of us has the power to add years to our lives – it’s never too late.”

-Joel K. Kahn, MD
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Clinical Professor of Medicine,
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How to Bounce Back From a Fatty Meal

BY JOEL K. KAHN, MD



JOEL K. KAHN, MD, is a clinical professor of medicine at Wayne State University and the director of cardiac wellness at Michigan Healthcare Professionals.

☛ SUMMER BARBECUE SEASON makes us cardiologists a little nervous. High-fat meals can constrict arteries for hours, reducing blood flow. While I believe everyone would fare better if they ate more vegetables and less meat, I know most folks won't give up grill time. The advice below can make a splurge meal less toxic to your arteries.

■ MARINATE YOUR MEAT

Cooking meat at high temperatures creates compounds called advanced glycation end products (AGES), which increase inflammation and the risk of diabetes. To minimize AGE exposure, marinate meat in lemon juice or vinegar, grill it moist at lower temperatures, and pick off charred corners.

■ SIP RED WINE

Chilean researchers found that adding about eight ounces of red wine a day to a high-fat diet reduced the meals' negative effects on participants' arteries. Another study showed similar benefits from grape juice.

■ PAD PATTIES WITH HEALTHY GRAINS

In a Yale University study, when people ate bowls of oats or wheat cereal with a high-fat meal, their arteries didn't



constrict as much. These grains may reduce fat absorption into the body. Add oats to hamburger patties, or serve meat on whole wheat buns.

■ ADD SLICED AVOCADO

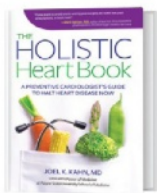
After people ate hamburgers, UCLA researchers documented a harmful reaction in their arteries within two hours. When the people topped the burgers with a slice of avocado, the

harm nearly disappeared. Nutrient-packed produce (even an avocado, with high fat content) seems to neutralize the inflammatory effects of meat.

■ TAKE A QUICK WALK

Thirty minutes or more of brisk walking after a meal can reduce the rise of fat concentration in your blood by 10 to 25 percent. **R**

The Holistic Heart Book (Reader's Digest, \$24.96) shares Dr. Kahn's 75 integrative prescriptions for a healthy heart; available at holisticheart.com.



* * *

FILE UNDER "MAKE YOUR OWN"

I'm a great believer in luck, and I find the harder
I work, the more I have of it.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

The Medication Most Men Don't Need

BY JOHN LA PUMA, MD FROM THE *NEW YORK TIMES*

A FUNNY THING has happened in the United States over the past few decades. Men's average testosterone levels have been dropping by at least 1 percent a year, according to a 2006 study in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*. Testosterone appears to decline naturally with aging, but internal belly fat depresses the hormone further. Drugs like cortisone and opiates also lower it, and chemicals like bisphenol A (BPA, found in plastic containers) and diseases like type 2 diabetes may play a role too.

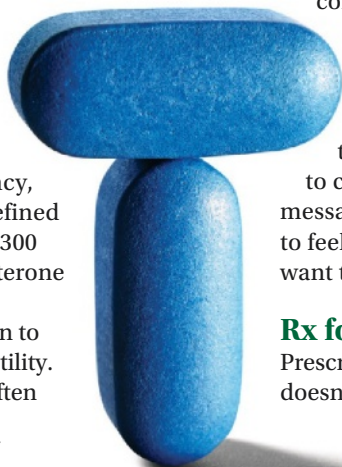
Many men feel the loss. Clinical testosterone deficiency, which is variously defined as lower than 220 to 300 nanograms of testosterone per deciliter of blood serum, can cause men to lose sex drive and fertility. Their bone density often

declines, and they may feel tired and have difficulty concentrating.

But "low T," as the condition has been labeled, is not nearly as accepted an illness as ads for prescription testosterone would have you believe. Low T is most often a symptom of another condition—be it aging, obesity, or drug interactions, for example—not the problem itself. Pharmaceutical companies, however, have seized on the decline in testosterone levels as pathological, convincing men that common effects of aging, like slowing down a bit and feeling less sexual, actually constitute a new disease—and that they need a prescription to cure it. This is a seductive message to men who just want to feel better than they do and want to give it a shot, literally.

Rx for Concern

Prescription testosterone doesn't merely give your T level



a boost: It may also increase your risk of heart attack, add too many red blood cells to your bloodstream, and shrink your testes. A recent large study published in the journal *PLoS ONE* found that within three months, taking the hormone doubled rates of heart attacks in men 65 and older, as well as in younger men who had heart disease. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has begun an investigation.

The issue bears a stark resemblance to the hormone trial in the 1990s and early 2000s in which middle-age women took synthetic prescription estrogen and progesterone to treat menopause, among other reasons. But by 2002, we knew that those hormones raised the risk of stroke, heart disease, and invasive breast cancer in healthy women.

The number of testosterone prescriptions given to American men has tripled since 2001. Used clinically since 1937 and approved by the FDA since 1953, testosterone is now administered in at least five forms, including patches, gels, and injections. Three million prescriptions were written in 2012 for market leader AndroGel alone. Sales of all testosterone-boosting drugs are estimated to have been \$2 billion in 2012.

Too many doctors are writing prescriptions without even measuring patients' hormone levels, much less retesting and adjusting the dose after

prescription. Up to a quarter of these prescriptions are dispensed without a blood test. From a psychological perspective, this isn't helping men. From a medical perspective, it must be addressed. In addition to cardiac risks, prescription T can shut off men's own natural, albeit diminished, testosterone production.

Natural Ways to Boost T

Instead of heading to the pharmacy to get their fix, men should address the leading cause of the problem. Losing weight is a tried-and-true way to naturally boost testosterone levels. According to findings presented at the annual meeting of the Endocrine Society in 2012, obese men who lost an average of 17 pounds saw their testosterone levels increase by 15 percent. In general, a man's waist should be half his height.

Some diet changes may be useful for reasons other than just weight loss. Cut back on booze—alcohol lowers testosterone levels. Eating more whole foods and fewer junk foods improves mood and energy, which may be the only fix many men need. What they don't need: a prescription for a risky drug to treat a questionable disease. **R**

John La Puma, MD, is an internist and the author of *Refuel: A 24-Day Eating Plan to Shed Fat, Boost Testosterone, and Pump Up Strength and Stamina*.

Your Health Is Written All Over Your Face

BY THE PHYSICIANS OF *THE DOCTORS*

WHEN WE CHAT with patients eye to eye, it's not just about creating rapport. Certain facial traits may reveal vital clues to underlying health conditions. We asked doctors around the country to share what they look for while examining patients. The most important tip we took away: You should worry most about a change in appearance. If symptoms are new, tell your physician.

Dry, Flaky Skin or Lips

This is a common warning sign of dehydration. It may also indicate a more serious problem that affects sweat gland function, such as hypothyroidism (marked by insufficient levels of thyroid hormone) or diabetes, says Roshini Raj, MD,

Cohost Rachel Ross, MD

assistant professor of medicine at the NYU School of Medicine and author of *What the Yuck?!* Other signs of hypothyroidism include feeling cold, weight gain, and fatigue. Diabetes symptoms include extreme thirst, frequent urination, and blurry vision.

Excess Facial Hair

Unwanted hair, particularly along the jawline, chin, and upper lip, could be a symptom of polycystic ovary syndrome, a hormone imbalance in which male hormone levels are elevated. (The condition may affect five million U.S. women of childbearing age.)

Soft, Yellow Spots on Eyelids

Patients with these cholesterol-filled lesions, called xanthelasmata, may have a higher risk of heart disease. A 2011 Danish study of nearly





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13,000 patients found that about 4 percent had the spots and that those patients were nearly 70 percent more likely to develop hardening of the arteries and almost 50 percent more likely to have a heart attack over the next few decades than patients without them.

Eye Bags and Puffiness

Tired-looking eyes could be a red flag for chronic allergies, which dilate blood vessels and cause them to leak. In the sensitive skin under your eyes, this creates puffiness and a dark purple-blue hue, says Dr. Raj.

Facial Asymmetry

This can be one of the first signs of stroke, says Leana Wen, MD, an emergency physician at George Washington University and coauthor of *When Doctors Don't Listen: How to Avoid Misdiagnoses and Unnecessary Tests*. "Patients will often describe it like this: 'I looked in the mirror, and my face looked different.'" You might also notice that one side of your face is numb or feel as if you can't fully smile. Or you might have trouble speaking. If you suspect that you or a relative may have had a stroke, call 911 right away.


Discolored Complexion

Even slight changes may indicate that something may be wrong. Pale-ness could be a sign of anemia. A yellow tone could indicate liver disease. A bluish tint in lips or nail beds could indicate heart or lung disease, says Mallika Marshall, MD, an internist and pediatrician at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Rashes and Blotches

Certain digestive problems may show up on skin, says Dr. Raj. Itchy clusters of red bumps could indicate celiac disease, an autoimmune disorder in which the body reacts to gluten. A butterfly-shaped rash across the cheekbones and over the bridge of the nose can be a sign of lupus, an autoimmune disease. Allergies, eczema and rosacea, and certain infections can also trigger facial rashes.

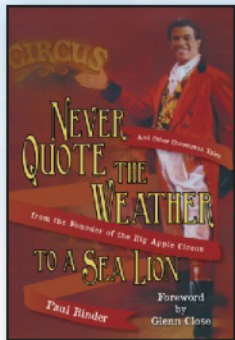
Receding Chin

Along with traits like a thick neck and a small jaw, this could be a sign of sleep apnea, a disorder in which your breathing repeatedly stops for ten seconds or more while you sleep, says Dr. Raj. If you snore loudly, get headaches first thing in the morning, or feel excessive fatigue during the day, ask about getting tested. 

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.

THE DOCTORS

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She Flies Through The Air

Circus Life

Lee Stath (Marilees)

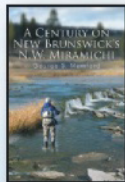
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Acrophobia is definitely not an asset to flying over circus rings or swinging from one trapeze to the other. Rather constant practice and determination led trapeze performer now author Lee Stath, also known in the circus world as part of The Flying Marilees, to share how his mentor made one of the best catchers in the circus world out of a reluctant school teacher. Through *She Flies Through The Air*, Stath divulges the gritty inside and the lusty life on a circus train or inside a sweaty tin truck and the sawdust strewn life of a "First Of May".



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The Logic of the Apocalypse

Stephen Beebe

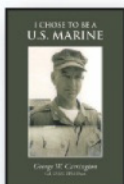
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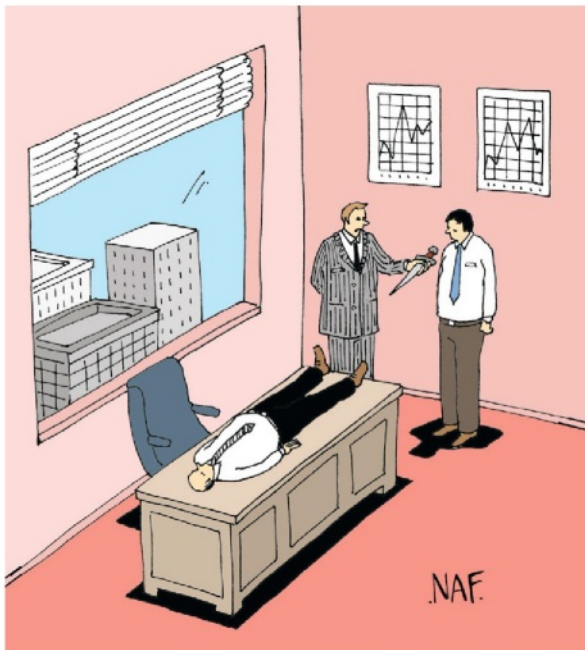
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ALL IN

A Day's Work



“What’s the problem? We told you when you started you’d have to make some sacrifices.”

MY CLIENT BUYS many rental properties, not always with the enthusiastic support of his wife. Recently, I was showing him a home when his wife called. I could hear her ask what he was doing.

“The real estate agent and I are having an affair,” he answered.

“Oh, thank God,” she said. “I thought she was selling you another house.” **PATTI SIMKINS**, *Columbus, Georgia*

A MOTHER complained to my wife, a schoolteacher, that other students were stealing her daughter’s pencils. “It’s not the money—it’s the

principle,” she insisted. “My husband took those pencils from work.”

ROGER PRENGEL, *Lacey, Washington*

THERE IS NO such thing as a dumb question, except for these:

■ I work in IT. A customer asked me if a string of numbers I’d read off was upper- or lowercase.

■ Someone once asked, “Is this the museum?” I work at a pool.

■ A few of the things customers have asked for at our art-supply store include disco balls, trees, and crucifixion wood.

■ I’m a butcher. A woman asked if she could sleep in our freezer to test out a heavy-duty sleeping bag before a trip to the Himalayas.

Source: reddit.com

TESTIMONY TAKEN down by me, a court reporter:

Question: Now, to the best of your knowledge, did your internal bleeding stop?

Answer: I hope so.

DIANE MCELWEE, *Norfolk, Massachusetts*

BUSINESS SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

■ Spotted on a restaurant’s website: “Glutton-free menu available.”

EMILY PAYNE, *Greenville, South Carolina*

■ Seen on a New York City subway poster: “Se habla Español/Russian.”

AARON FERNANDO, *Richmond Hill, New York*

■ Read off a pharmacy marquee: “We sell beer & wine! We can flavor your child’s liquid Rx!”

Source: *Consumer Reports*

TIRED OF REFERRING to your bosses with the same old, sorry expletives? Try some from abroad: **Chinese:** “Your mother is a big turtle.” **Yiddish:** “May you lie in the ground and bake bagels.” **Bulgarian:** “You are as ugly as salad.” **Finnish:** “Your mother married a reindeer!”

Source: globalpost.com

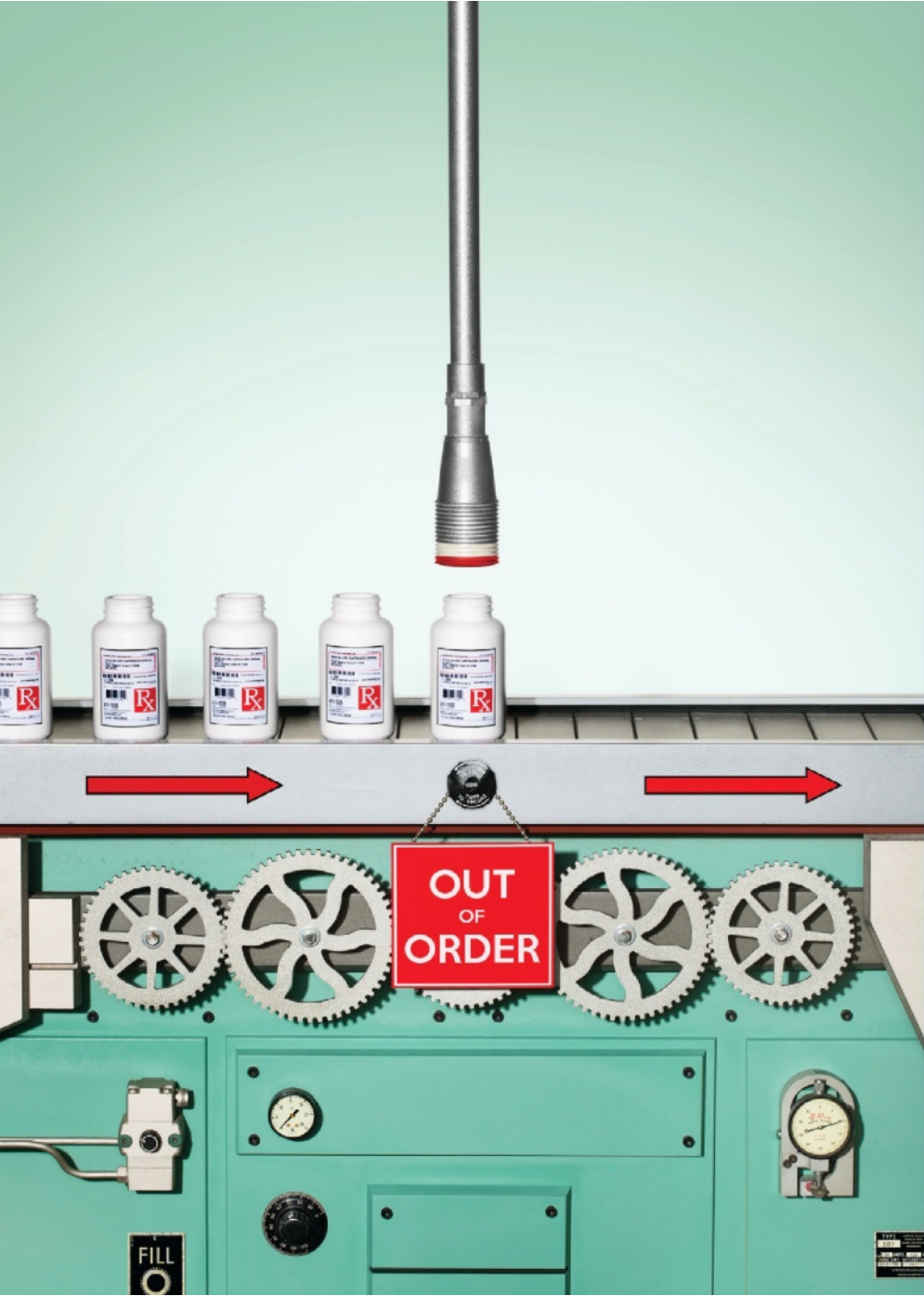
HELP WANTED

Looking for a job? You can’t pass up these real listings:



Sources: top5.com, kulfoto.com, uselesshumor.com

Wanted: Funny work-related stories. You could make big bucks. Go to page 7 or rd.com/submit for details.



OUT
OF
ORDER

FILL

TYPE
MESH
2000-1000
MESH
MESH

Imagine surgeons running out of anesthetic drugs, cancer patients who can't get lifesaving chemotherapy, and doctors scrambling for the most basic antibiotics. We're already there.

A World — Without — Meds

BY KATHERINE EBAN

JENNIFER LACOGNATA, 40, A BOOKING AGENT for United Airlines from Safety Harbor, Florida, first suffered an attack of night blindness in early 2011. It took months to properly diagnose her. She was vitamin A deficient, due to a shortened bowel that made her body unable to absorb fat. The good news: The problem was totally fixable with injections of a basic medicine called Aquasol A,

made by Hospira, an American generic drug company.

But bad news quickly followed. LaCognata learned that manufacturing challenges had forced Hospira to stop selling the drug, effectively plunging the entire world into a shortage. Without Aquasol A, LaCognata is going blind. United Airlines placed her on unpaid medical leave because she could no longer look at a computer screen. She is forced to wear an eye patch and can see only kaleidoscopic fragments out of one eye. "My kids call me Pirate now," she says, "instead of Mom."

LaCognata and her husband canvassed the world for Aquasol A. They contacted the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the State Department, and every major eye hospital in America. (They found two vials, but they were expired, so hospitals wouldn't release them.) The couple wrote and called hospitals and organizations in Israel, China, Canada, and Brazil. LaCognata contacted charities, including the Red Cross and the Helen Keller Foundation, that serve foreign populations prone to vitamin A deficiency, without luck.

A Hospira spokesperson said that the company recognized the "critical need" for Aquasol A and had contracted with a separate manufacturing company to "accelerate the product's return to market." But years later, the company has yet to resume its production.

It is listed on Hospira's website as "out of stock."

"I can't believe this could happen in America," LaCognata says.

A SHOCKING EPIDEMIC

It seems unfathomable in our high-tech medical system, but in 2007, 154 drugs were in shortage, a number that almost tripled to 456 in 2012, according to the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

Threatening medical-care options and patients' lives, drug shortages have occurred in almost every pharmaceutical category. Antibiotics, cancer drugs, anesthesia, pain control, reproductive and gynecological drugs, cardiac medicine, psychiatric drugs, and intravenous-feeding solutions have all been in varying degrees of short supply or not available at all. Recently, nitroglycerin, an emergency room staple used to treat heart attack patients, has been in such severe scarcity that its sole U.S. manufacturer has restricted hospitals to 40 percent of their usual orders. A study published this March in the *Mayo Clinic Proceedings* attributed more than 15 documented deaths since 2010 to either lack of treatment or the switch to an inferior drug as a result of medication shortages.

Though the FDA has scrambled to alleviate the crisis and physicians have become deft at juggling or substituting treatments, there is no comprehensive solution to this drug-

supply breakdown, which has persisted for a complex array of reasons.

The first is all about money. As generic drug prices have dropped, so have manufacturers' profits. As a result, some manufacturers have failed to invest in infrastructure and quality control. To ensure safety, the FDA has taken regulatory actions that have halted supplies, with sterile injectable drugs, such as pain meds and chemotherapy, dominating the shortage list. (These are the most complex and costly generics to make.) The business model of just-in-time manufacturing—in which companies make drugs as patients need them but do not stockpile extra—leaves no margin for unexpected events.

Noting that there are no shortages of big profit-generators, like Viagra, many practitioners and patients suspect less-than-honorable motives by drug-makers. Some experts suggest that manufacturers may have financial incentive to temporarily stop production of a drug. Medicare reform imposed certain price controls on generic drugs, but, due to a loophole, these controls are lifted if a manufacturer stops making the drug for six months.

Limited manufacturing capacity is an important factor too. Over half the drugs on the FDA shortage list had only one or two manufacturers, according to a report by the IMS Institute for Healthcare Informatics. Some blame hospital buying groups, middlemen that purchase drugs and supplies for many of the nation's hospitals, which have awarded contracts to some manufacturers and not others, thereby suppressing competition and innovation. The result is that for any given drug, there may be only one or two generic manufacturers left to produce it, which can lead to shortages.

Predatory middlemen are making the situation even worse. A congressional investigation led by Rep. Elijah Cummings, a Baltimore

Democrat, has found that shady secondary wholesalers buy up drugs in shortage and resell them, often at exorbitant prices. This explains, in part, the haphazard ebb and flow of the shortages that makes them particularly hard to handle: One day the medicine is just gone, but there's plenty the next.

But as experts debate the cause of the shortages, there is no disagreement over their devastating impact. They've turned pharmacists into

“I work in the most expensive health-care system in the world, and I am being asked to do it in third world conditions.”

MICHELE CURTIS, MD,
an ob-gyn in Houston



professional beggars and have forced doctors to change treatment protocols on the fly—in some cases, turning routine care into a roll of the dice. They've stopped clinical trials and have led to the suspension of the death penalty in some states that use lethal injection.

Shortages are leading hospitals and patients to get drugs from less regulated and potentially less safe sources, such as drug compounders, specialty pharmacies that mix medications for individual patients. Some

compounding pharmacies, which are not subject to regulation as stringent as that for drug manufacturers, have taken advantage of this and started churning out large volumes of drugs. But this can lead to safety issues. Such dangers became vividly clear in 2012, after contaminated steroids from the New England Compounding Center led to an outbreak of meningitis that killed 64 patients. A 2013 report by the Health and Human Services inspector general found that drug shortages have led 68 percent of U.S. hospitals

to turn to compounders to make versions of medicine in short supply.

Patients today have to cope not only with being sick or choosing between treatment options but also with the possibility that the drug they need may be available solely from a risky source—or not at all.

A SCARY REALITY FOR CANCER PATIENTS

Those with life-threatening diseases have been hit hardest by shortages, in part because many of their medications have no substitute and their exacting treatment regimens cannot be delayed.

Justine Zirbes, 33, a TV producer in Minneapolis, was seven months pregnant with twins in October 2010 when she learned that her three-year-old, Axel, had leukemia. The distressing news sent her into early labor, and she was confined to bed.

As her son embarked on grueling chemotherapy for a disease that can often be cured if treated—but is almost certainly fatal if not—Zirbes learned that a national shortage of the chemotherapy drug cytarabine would affect his regimen. Doctors offered a drug called clofarabine, which was not standard treatment. Though still pregnant and on bed rest, Zirbes flatly refused. “How is this possible, in this country in 2011, that these lifesaving drugs are not widely available?” Zirbes recalls. “I was beside myself with disbelief.”

Zirbes was justified in her concern. According to a 2012 study in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, drug substitutions due to shortages led to higher relapse rates among children with an otherwise curable form of lymphoma.

Like Jennifer LaCognata, Zirbes embarked on a quest to find the right medicine. She contacted her senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), who took up the cause with proposed legislation. Zirbes produced two news segments on children affected by drug shortages. She worked every connection she had and looked as far away as Europe to find her son's drug. Ultimately, the day before Axel was due for treatment, the hospital got enough cytarabine to treat him and another child.

Axel was reasonably lucky. Other patients, like Carey Fitzmaurice of Bethesda, Maryland, almost certainly suffered recurrence of their cancer because of drug shortages.

In 2006, Fitzmaurice, 37, was happily married with two young children and a job she loved as a policy analyst at the Environmental Protection Agency, when she learned that she had ovarian cancer and a BRCA1 genetic mutation that had likely caused it.

Over five years, she bravely underwent debilitating treatment, a recurrence of her ovarian cancer, an additional diagnosis of breast cancer, and a radical mastectomy. In the middle of 2011, things finally seemed to

be breaking her way. Her breast cancer was in remission, and a chemotherapy drug called Doxil, made by a contractor for the Johnson & Johnson subsidiary Janssen, Inc., appeared to be vanquishing a recurrence of the ovarian cancer. But in August 2011, she learned there was not enough Doxil to complete her treatment.

Fitzmaurice assumed that she would be able to find some on her own. “I work for the federal government,” she says. “A lot of what I do is help people cut through red tape and find solutions. That’s how I tackled cancer to begin with: find out who the right doctor is, where to get surgery.”

But the shortage of Doxil thwarted her every effort. After four months without the medication, her ovarian cancer returned.

In a recent study from the University of Pennsylvania presented at the 2013 annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, 83 percent of oncologists and hematologists said they’ve faced cancer drug shortages, and of those, nearly all said their patients’ treatment had been affected by drug shortages.

At the Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center in Columbus, Ohio, Ryan Forrey, associate director for pharmacy and infusion

services, says that in 2012, of the 60,000 doses of chemotherapy administered intravenously at his facility, almost 35 percent were affected by shortages. Treatment was interrupted or canceled, patients were switched to alternative drugs, or an alternative supply for the needed drug had to be found. His

overwhelmed staff “was forced to beg, borrow, plead to get drugs for patients,” he says.

Now, whenever a patient begins chemotherapy, Forrey’s hospital sequesters the entire treatment regimen, which can be months of medication, to ensure that it is available. But Forrey is not optimistic that the drug

shortages will ease.

“Every time I think it can’t get worse, it does get worse,” he says.

“**The shortages will surely cause her death.**”

SUSAN AGRAWAL,
*a mom in Chicago,
about her daughter*

ARE DRUG SHORTAGES A NEW NORMAL?

Shortages are not limited to drugs for cancer or uncommon diseases. Experts fear that scarcity of the heart attack drug nitroglycerin is endangering patients’ lives. Last spring, the most basic of antibiotics, doxycycline, used for everything from acne to Lyme disease, disappeared from pharmacies. Even intravenous saline solution, a hospital staple, has been in short supply, leading some hospi-

tals to ration their use. In fact, almost every U.S. hospital has faced a lack of basic medicine, found an American Hospital Association survey. Many have even hired a full-time staff person specifically to navigate shortages.

Hospitals have developed complex formulas to help ration existing drug supplies—essentially, to determine which patients get medication and which don't.

"No doctor wants to prioritize," says Richard Schilsky, MD, chief medical officer of the American Society of Clinical Oncology. "But if you have five patients and only three vials, that's a very real problem."

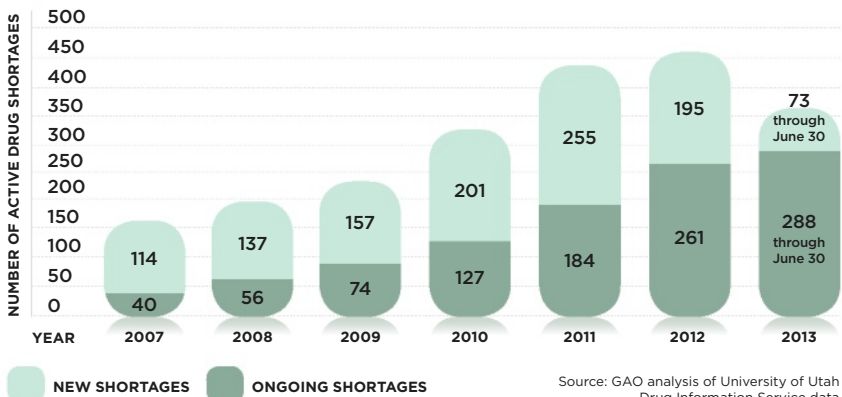
A significant shortage creep is affecting mainstays of reproductive and sexual-health medicine, from anes-

thetics used in gynecologic surgery to anti-nausea drugs for pregnancy to antibiotics for sexually transmitted diseases, says Michele Curtis, MD, an ob-gyn in Houston. "I work in the most expensive health-care system in the world, and I am being asked to do it in third world conditions," she says.

Thirty-seven of the 38 different components used in intravenous nutrition bags have been in fluctuating shortage since spring 2009, which is a serious threat to our country's youngest and most fragile children. Insufficient zinc, for example, has led to raw blistering sores on the tiny hands of premature infants.

"We have been compromising what we feel is optimal care for close to three years now, and we don't really see any

NUMBER OF ACTIVE DRUG SHORTAGES BY YEAR



Source: GAO analysis of University of Utah Drug Information Service data

end in sight,” says Jay M. Mirtallo, immediate past president of the American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition.

ROLLING THE DICE

Doctors, patients, and regulators have jury-rigged fixes with their own hazards, using drugs that may have worse side effects or less favorable outcomes or come from unsavory wholesalers or less regulated drugmakers.

The shortages have forced Susan Agrawal, in Chicago, to make difficult decisions as she struggles to keep her nine-year-old daughter, Karuna, alive. Karuna was born with cerebral palsy due to a ruptured umbilical cord. She has since developed an autoimmune disease that causes her organs to fail. She survives by getting her nutrients intravenously and needs bags of liquid nutrition with 14 components, which Agrawal gets from a specialized sterile infusion facility.

Agrawal has had to canvass local pharmacies and drug compounders to find the ingredients that the facility can't get. In fact, she's even purchased drug components from a compounding pharmacy that has had repeated run-ins with state regulators for unsanitary conditions. Then she must reconstitute the components, from powder to liquid, at her dining room table, with no guarantee of sterility, and add them to her daughter's IV bags. "It's like, 'Cross your fingers,'" she says.

Although Karuna is very sick, the

fact that her IV nutrition—which shouldn't be this complicated—is so fraught may be compromising the quality of life she has left. Agrawal fears that given her daughter's fragile health and immune system, the shortages "will surely cause her death."

In a survey of 1,800 health-care practitioners, about 25 percent reported errors due to shortages. Among the 1,000 incidents: a patient who died from an infection that could have been treated had the antibiotic amikacin been available, accidental overdoses of alternative drugs, and prolonged hospitalizations due to side effects from alternative drugs.

A medicine substitution sickened Sharon Brown, who was being treated for stage 2 breast cancer at Ohio State University. She was suffering relatively few side effects from her chemotherapy drug, Taxol, but then in June 2011, her doctors were unable to procure her next dose and switched her to a similar drug, Taxotere.

Two days after her first dose, she suffered a devastating reaction, an uncommon but known side effect: She grew dizzy, broke into a cold sweat, and could not lift her arms over her head. She was so dehydrated that hospital staff could not even draw blood from her veins. For the next two weeks, she needed IV fluids every other day just to treat her dehydration. She was too sick to resume chemotherapy for another month.

Even the FDA has been boxed into a

corner. After the cancer drug Doxil became unavailable in late 2011, the FDA made an emergency provision to allow an Indian generic-drug company, Sun Pharma Global, to temporarily export a similar generic drug, Lipodox, which is not approved in the United States. Although patients and doctors applauded the move, Sun Pharma has faced repeated past FDA sanctions for poor quality. (In 2009, U.S. marshals raided its U.S. manufacturing plant and shut down production.)

Patients say that drug-makers have forced them into unacceptable treatment. Sufferers of Fabry disease, a rare life-threatening enzyme disorder that dangerously slows blood supply, have only the drug Fabrazyme, made by the company Genzyme, to treat their disease. But in 2009, Genzyme was forced to shut down its manufacturing plant in Allston, Massachusetts, after a viral contamination was discovered.

As Genzyme entered into a consent decree with the FDA and struggled to open a new plant, it established a rationing program. Patients would be required to take a reduced dose instead of their whole dose. If they refused, they would be given no medicine and placed at the bottom of the waiting list. A spokesperson for

Genzyme says the company imposed this condition after it consulted with a working group that included doctors and patient advocates. However, patients say that the FDA did not study the impact of the diminished dose, and—more shocking—the European Medicines Agency, Europe's main drug regulator, found that a reduced dose accelerated disease in some patients. (Genzyme spokeswoman Lori Gorski says that during the shortage, the FDA did permit patients to take an alternative drug, Replagal, made by Shire.)

In February 2012, a Pittsburgh patent lawyer, Allen Black, PhD, who had worked as a drug developer, filed a lawsuit against the FDA on behalf of patients affected by drug shortages. Those included

patients with Fabry disease as well as Jennifer LaCognata, who needs Aquasol A. The lawsuit alleged that by allowing drug companies to stop making a drug, the FDA effectively allows them to make life-or-death decisions for patients. As Black says, "There's no appeals process. You get denied a drug? Tough." The FDA's response offered little comfort to patients expecting help. In a motion to dismiss the lawsuit, the FDA stated that while it "works with manufacturers to help

“The FDA, with all its leverage, “could probably solve 90 percent of the problem.”

prevent and mitigate these shortages, the FDA's authority to address potential and actual drug shortages is limited." Last November, the court dismissed the case.

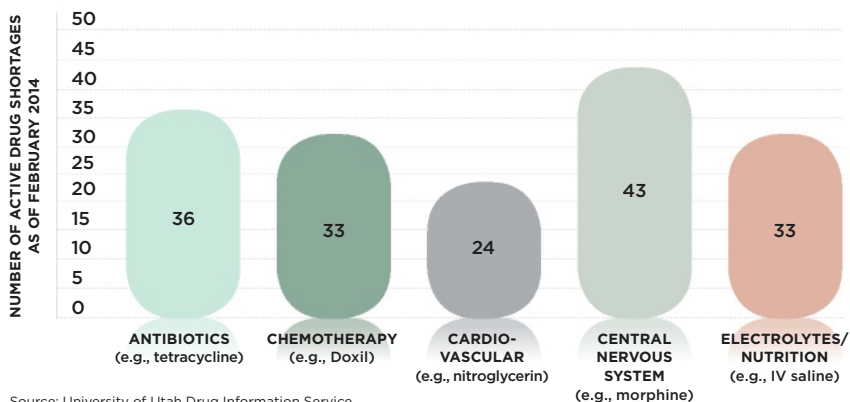
FOR REAL SOLUTIONS, WE NEED BIG REFORM

In July 2012, Congress passed the Food and Drug Administration Safety and Innovation Act, which included provisions originally spearheaded by Justine Zirbes's senator Amy Klobuchar. The law requires that drugmakers give the FDA early notification of any manufacturing issues or business decisions that may lead to shortages. It requires the FDA to expedite inspections and reviews of manufacturing sites that could help resolve shortages.

There is some evidence that the FDA has been successful in holding back the tide. In 2013, the number of new drugs added to the shortage list was far less than the number added in 2012. But in the first quarter of 2014, active shortages remained close to the highest level ever. The situation, which was the subject of a congressional hearing in February, remains "very critical," says Erin Fox, director of the University of Utah's drug information service.

Critics say the FDA's response is mere window dressing that has done little to change underlying problems. "It's fine to say that the FDA should have six months' advance notice," says Dr. Schilsky. But he views the new legislation as "doing nothing to address the root causes" of the problem.

ACTIVE SHORTAGES OF TOP FIVE DRUG CLASSES



Source: University of Utah Drug Information Service

Meanwhile, doctors and patients have little information about when they can expect shortages to be resolved. Despite planning and promises from drugmakers, “many resolution dates are unknown or unmet,” says Ryan Roux, chief pharmacy officer at the Harris County Hospital District in Texas.

Companies aren’t penalized for drug shortages or incentivized to avoid them, experts say. The only real solution, say a number of health-care professionals, is to require drug manufacturers to stockpile medicine and to ensure that more than one drug-maker produces it. “There needs to be a way to obligate multiple manufacturers to make these lifesaving medications,” says Ohio State’s Forrey.

The FDA would have to require that manufacturers change their just-in-time manufacturing model and set aside reserves of lifesaving drugs, which the FDA has claimed is impossible. But one executive at a pharmacy benefit-management company, who asked to remain anonymous, says the FDA could easily mandate this: “Don’t give me this stuff: ‘We can’t tell the drug companies what to do,’” he says. “Yes, you can; you do it all the time.” The FDA, with all its leverage, “could probably solve 90 percent of the problem.”

Some vital industries, such as technology and defense, encourage what is called second sourcing, in which manufacturers may sub-

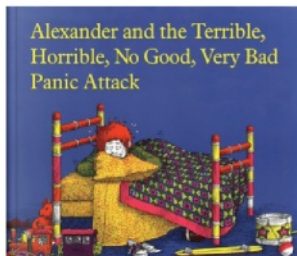
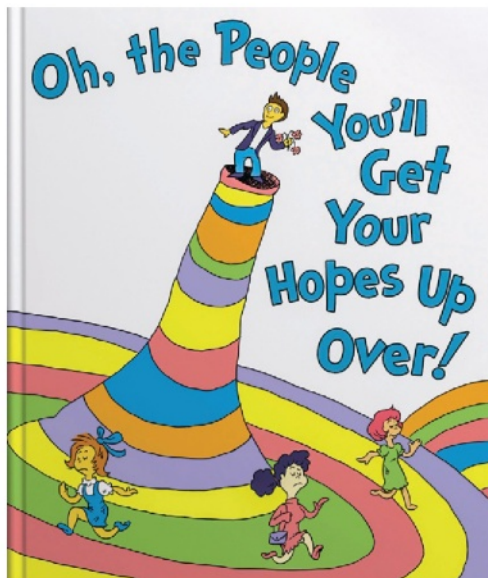
lease at least one fifth of production to backup companies to avoid supply-chain disruptions in the event of natural or other disasters. Justine Zirbes, who faced the prospect that her son Axel could have died from leukemia without cytarabine, says that manufacturers who “stop making a lifesaving drug” should be subject to criminal prosecution.

In a separate proceeding, Jennifer LaCognata sued Hospira on the grounds that the company failed to plan for contingencies in its shortage of Aquasol A. Last June, Florida’s 11th Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed the suit. Her lawyer, Allen Black, then petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court, which declined to take the case. LaCognata, whose vision continues to deteriorate and who lost her house in a foreclosure proceeding, says she has to remain strong for her kids. “I have to have a very upbeat attitude,” she says, “or it would just consume [me].”

Just recently, her lawyer was staggered to learn from a friend who works for Doctors Without Borders that a version of the vitamin A drug that LaCognata needs is being manufactured in France, sold under the name Nepal Vitamin A. But with her financial resources depleted, her doctor reluctant to prescribe it, and her need to get a compassionate-use exemption from the FDA (so the drug can get through customs), LaCognata just has to figure out how to obtain it. **R**

Laughter

THE BEST MEDICINE



FAKE GIFTS FOR GRADS

From collegehumor.com

I NEVER FEEL more alone than when I'm trying to put sunscreen on my back. @JIMMYKIMMEL

THREE PRISONERS broke out of their cells and incited a riot. After they were caught, the warden

asked why they had revolted.

"Warden," said one of the men, "we rebelled because the food is awful."

"I see," said the warden. "But what did you use to break the bars?"

"The French toast."

HEAR ABOUT the statistician who drowned crossing a river? It was three feet deep on average.

A JUDGE TELLS the defendant, "You're charged with attacking your boss with a hammer."

"You jerk!" yells a voice from the back of the courtroom.

"You're also charged with attacking a bartender with a hammer," says the judge.

"Jerrrrkkkk!" bellows the same man.

"Sir," says the judge, "one more outburst, and I'll charge you with contempt."

"I'm sorry, Your Honor," says the man. "But I've been this jerk's neighbor for ten years, and every time I asked to borrow a hammer, he said he didn't have one."

WHERE DO GEEKS go for a good time? A wonky-tonk.

JACK EASTHAM, *Cypress, Texas*

PROFESSORS DEFINE A KISS:

■ In math: Two divided by nothing.

■ In physics: The contraction of the mouth due to the expansion of the heart.

■ In accounting: It's a credit, because it is profitable when returned.

■ In economics: A thing for which the demand is higher than the supply.

■ In dentistry: It's infectious and antisepic.

From gcf.net

LESS MASCARA, MAYBE?



OUR FAVORITE HASHTAGS (AND TWEETS) ON DATING:

#GeekPickupLines: My name's Microsoft ... can I crash at your place tonight? @TILLINGHAST (Mark Dryzcimski)

#RobotPickupLines: "You had me at 100100010000101100110010011001001111." @POUND_HASHTAG

#ThatAwkwardMoment: When someone says "Hello!" and you say "Good, thanks!" @MENSUMOR

#MySexLifeinMovieTitles: Home Alone @IOWAHAWKBLOG (David Burge)

IF YOU'RE THE sole survivor of the Apocalypse, go to your gym. There'll be somebody at the locker right next to yours. @BAZECRAZE (Alex Baze)

Did you hear about the guy who got \$100 for sending us a funny gag? Go to page 7 or rd.com/submit for details.

A roomful of people I didn't know taught me about patriotism, gratitude, and love

The Folks at Moe's Diner

BY RU FREEMAN



RU FREEMAN's most recent novel, *On Sal Mal Lane*, has just been released in paperback. She calls both Sri Lanka and the United States home.

IN THE LATE SPRING of my freshman year in college, I, a nondrinking but hard-dancing international student from Sri Lanka, was high on two things: enjoying the freedom of being nearly 10,000 miles away from home, and my very handsome American boyfriend.

Mark, a true-blue Connecticut Yankee, introduced me to all things American. He took me to the top of the press box in the college football bleachers and to the crown of the Statue of Liberty. He got me hooked on movies at the college library and eggs over easy with sausage on the side at Denny's on Main Street. He took me for walks around the campus and drives to the state parks of Maine, where we slept in the back of his Ford pickup truck and I tasted my first vaguely smoky hot dogs and s'mores. Like I said, American life.

It stood to reason, then, that I would want to share something that he didn't know about. I had been teaching dance for a month during what was called short-term, a time for students to take just one more intensive class instead of leaving college for an early start on summer. Over the course of the class's

ILLUSTRATION BY JOE MCKENDRY (FREEMAN)



travels to public elementary and middle schools, I had taken in the areas surrounding our campus, the land rolling away into farms and mill towns. So one night when Mark suggested that we drive to an open area where we could see the stars, I announced that I knew just the place.

I did know. Sort of. I had seen a path leading to a clearing off the main road earlier that afternoon from the bus. Where, exactly, that clearing was I didn't know. I have always just felt places. I travel by intuition and implicit trust that "something in my bones" will help me navigate roads, people, places, and life itself.

Late at night, though, in semi-rural Maine, with no streetlights and few houses, we were easily lost. Not simply lost, we were stuck in a mud bog. There I sat, ladylike in my very light cream sweater, while Mark attempted to get the front wheels of the pickup out of the swamp. I helped, eventually, but only when repeated suggestions that we "just ask the nice people who probably live in the house up the hill to help us" fell on deaf, obdurate ears. The farmer did help us in the end, when he strolled out in the first pink-gray light of the morning. It was a small but sweet victory to hear him inquire why we hadn't asked

for help in the first place, all night long as he had lain in his bed wondering about the engine revving across the street. "There's an abandoned railway line at the far end of my farm," he said, pointing as we said our goodbyes, after he had invited us in to wash up. "You can come and

park there anytime." He smiled as he said this, and Mark had the good sense to blush.

It was in that mood that we set off for home, which was back to our dorms, a little contrite on his part, a little jazzed up on mine, never mind that it was I who had gotten us into the mess in the first place.

By the time we stopped at Uncle Moe's Diner, a place we now visit whenever we are back in Lewiston, but which we had never heard of until that morning, Mark was a little tired of my crowing, and I was just getting started.

The diner was crowded that Sunday morning, old-timers filling up the tables, the waitresses busy. We got a table off to the side of the main room. For no good reason that I can recall, I started humming a song my mother had taught me when I was about seven years old: "The Star-Spangled Banner."

"Why don't you just sing the words?" Mark taunted.

I did.

“
*I have never
 sung any song
 with more heart
 than when
 I finished that
 anthem.*”

"Why don't you sing it even louder?" he challenged me.

I did.

"I dare you to stand up by this table and sing it," he said.

"I will," I said, and made to stand.

He said, "I bet you wouldn't go to the front of this diner and sing it there."

The waitress came by to take our order. When she left, I followed her to the counter, which sat just to the left of the front door, open to the room and its diners. I spoke to the older woman standing there, told her I'd like to sing the national anthem. You've got to love Mainers, unfazed by just about anything. She asked me to wait a minute; she'd need to ask Moe.

"You want to sing the national anthem?" Uncle Moe asked me, a little furrow in his brow. "Why?"


I don't know how this fragment of information came to me, but it sprang to my lips with ease: "Because the troops are coming home."

Uncle Moe walked around that counter and stood beside me. "Excuse me, everybody," he said to his customers. "This young lady would like to sing the national anthem in honor of the troops coming home today." He turned to me and said, "Go ahead."

I began, glancing over with triumph at Mark, who sat with his fingers interlaced, utterly shocked. It was not the triumphant song my mother had taught me that rose to my lips but a song-on-a-dare, the kind of song that could be any song. But when my

eyes moved away from Mark and returned to the people in front of me, I saw that several of them had stood up and had their palms over their hearts. I would earn my American citizenship more than a decade later, but I believe that I learned my love for this country in that moment. I could see so clearly what this anthem meant to each person there, the stooped veterans, the women and men on their way to church, the ones for whom the stop at this diner was a Sunday ritual. I saw people for whom the words meant just as much as the words of my home country's anthem meant to me. I don't believe I have ever sung any song with more heart than when I finished that "Star-Spangled Banner."


It isn't the applause that has stayed with me or the "thank you for singing the anthem" that I heard from a few people or the fact that Uncle Moe and his wife remembered me—when Mark and I, now married, went back years later—and said, "Aren't you the young woman who sang the anthem here?" What has stayed with me is the grace I learned in understanding that my song was a much smaller gift to those people than their gratitude was to me. For in that gratitude I saw a bridge, the one I walk on toward people I don't know, the one I lay down for them to walk toward me. It has no political stripe, no class, no gender, no agendas. It is itself: a bridge built of that grace and recognition of each other's essential, deep, vulnerable humanity. **R**



DRAMA IN REAL LIFE

Man Over

*Lobster boat Anna
Mary, docked in
Montauk, New York*

A photograph of a fishing boat deck at night. The scene is dimly lit, with a strong light source from the right creating a bright glow. In the foreground, a fisherman wearing a grey hoodie and blue gloves is bent over, handling a net. Another person is visible in the background, also working. The deck is cluttered with various equipment, including crates and a large metal cage. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and somber.

A fisherman mysteriously vanishes in the middle of the night. No one can figure out when or where he dropped into the ocean. All he has is his rubber boots and a will to live.

board!

BY PAUL TOUGH
FROM THE *NEW YORK TIMES*

LOOKING BACK, John Aldridge knew it was a stupid move. When you're alone on the deck of a lobster boat in the middle of the night, miles off the tip of Long Island, you don't take chances. But he had work to do: He needed to start pumping water into the *Anna Mary's* holding tanks to chill so that when he and his fishing partner and best friend, Anthony Sosinski, reached their first string of traps a few miles farther south, the water would be cold enough to keep the lobsters alive for the return trip.



*John Aldridge
on deck*

In order to get to the tanks, he had to open a metal hatch on the deck. And the hatch was covered by two 35-gallon Coleman coolers—giant plastic insulated ice chests that he and Sosinski had filled before leaving the dock in Montauk harbor seven hours earlier. The coolers, full, weighed about 200 pounds, and the only way for Aldridge to move them alone was to snag a box hook onto the plastic handle of the bottom one, brace his legs, lean back, and pull with all his might.

And then the handle snapped.

Suddenly Aldridge was flying backward, tumbling across the deck toward the back of the boat, which was wide open, just a flat, slick ramp leading straight into the black ocean.

The water hit him like a slap. He went under, took in a mouthful of Atlantic Ocean, and then surfaced, sputtering. He yelled as loud as he could, hoping to wake Sosinski. But the diesel engine was too loud, and the *Anna Mary*, on autopilot, was already out of reach.

Aldridge, 45, had been a fisherman for almost two decades, and he knew that the first thing you do if you fall into the ocean is kick off your boots—they're dead weight. But as he treaded water, Aldridge realized that his boots were lifting him up, weirdly elevating his feet and tipping him backward.

Aldridge reached down and pulled off his left boot. Straining, he turned it upside down, raised it up until it cleared the waves, and then plunged it back into the water, trapping a boot-size bubble of air inside. He tucked the inverted boot under his left armpit. Then he did the same thing with the right boot. It worked; they were like twin pontoons, and treading water with his feet alone was now enough to keep him stable and afloat.

The boots gave Aldridge a chance to think. He tried to take stock: It was about 3:30 a.m. on July 24, 2013. The North Atlantic water was a chilly 72 degrees. Dawn was two hours away. Aldridge set a goal: Stay afloat till sunrise. Once the sun came

up, he knew, someone was bound to start searching for him.

It was a little after 6 a.m. when Anthony Sosinski awoke. Shipmate Mike Migliaccio first saw that Aldridge was missing and yelled for Sosinski. Sosinski tried to puzzle it out: Before he went to sleep at 9 p.m., he told Aldridge to wake him at 11:30 p.m. Now it was past dawn, and they were more than 15 miles past their traps. What could have happened?

The men looked everywhere on the 45-foot-long boat before Sosinski ran

“

The water hit him like a slap. He took in a mouthful of Atlantic Ocean then surfaced, sputtering.

to the VHF radio. He switched to channel 16, the distress channel, and at 6:22 a.m., he called for help, his voice shaking: “Coast Guard, this is the *Anna Mary*. We’ve got a man overboard.”

The Coast Guard’s headquarters for Long Island and coastal Connecticut is in New Haven. That morning, Petty Officer Sean Davis stood watch at the station’s communications unit. Davis radioed back, asking Sosinski for details. He then turned to Pete Winters, the operations unit watch stander, who was working the Coast Guard’s search-and-rescue computer program, known as Sarops.

By 6:28, the command center had notified search mission commander Jonathan Theel in New Haven and the search coordinator at the district headquarters in Boston, who would have to approve the use of any aircraft in the search. At 6:30, Davis issued a universal distress call on channel 16, asking mariners to keep a sharp lookout.

Davis contacted the Montauk Coast Guard station with instructions to launch all available boats and radioed Air Station Cape Cod to tell them to get airborne as soon as possible.

Winters, meanwhile, was manning the computer. Sarops can generate, in minutes, as many as 10,000 points to represent how far and in what

direction a “search object” might have drifted.

The challenge in Aldridge’s case was that the search team had no clear idea of when or where he’d fallen overboard. That created a potential search area larger than Rhode Island, an 1,800-square-mile sweep of ocean that would be almost impossible to cover.

The team in New Haven based its initial calculations on Sosinski’s report that Aldridge was supposed to wake

him up at 11:30 p.m.

That suggested to them that Aldridge had fallen overboard between 9:30 p.m. and 11:30 p.m., which would put him somewhere between five and 20 miles south of the Long Island coast. Winters input those assumptions, and Sarops came back with an “Alpha Drift” model

showing the highest-probability locations, clustered about 15 miles offshore.

The next step for Sarops was to develop search patterns for each boat and aircraft. A little before 8 a.m., New Haven started issuing patterns to a plane, a Jayhawk helicopter, and a 47-foot-long patrol boat from Montauk. The helicopter was piloted by Air Station Cape Cod lieutenants Mike Deal and Ray Jamros. They were joined by two crew members: a rescue swimmer named Bob Hovey and a flight mechanic named Ethan Hill.



The potential search area was larger than Rhode Island, a sweep of ocean nearly impossible to cover.

John Aldridge and Anthony Sosinski, near right, were childhood friends. Far right, the boots that kept Aldridge afloat for 12 hours.



The Coast Guard search was off to an excellent start. The only problem, of course, was that everyone involved was searching in entirely the wrong place: Aldridge did not fall into the water at 10:30 p.m.; he fell at 3:30 a.m. Almost 30 miles south of where the Jayhawk crew was carefully searching for him, Aldridge was clinging to his boots in the cold water.

Back on the *Anna Mary*, Sosinski had been having second thoughts about the search area. After his initial conversation with Davis, he inspected the boat more carefully. One of the hatches was open, and the pumps were on, sluicing cool ocean water through the lobster tanks. In the summer months, Aldridge and Sosinski would start filling the tanks when their boat reached the 40-fathom curve, the line on maritime charts that marks where the ocean's depth hits 40 fathoms, or 240 feet, which is the point at which the water temperature tends to drop. Then

Sosinski found the broken handle on the ice chest, and he realized exactly how Aldridge had fallen overboard.

Together Sosinski and Winters came up with a new theory: Aldridge had gone overboard somewhere between the 40-fathom curve, about 25 miles offshore, and the location of the *Anna Mary's* first trawl, about 40 miles offshore. At 8:30 a.m., Winters passed this new information to Jason Rodocker, a petty officer and an expert in Sarops. Rodocker punched in the new variables, and the program spit out a second set of search patterns.

The news about Aldridge was also spreading through Montauk's fishing community, and 21 commercial boats volunteered to help. Davis couldn't communicate with all 21 at once on top of the Coast Guard craft he was directing, so Winters hit on an idea: They would put Sosinski in charge of sending out the search patterns for the volunteer fishing fleet.

Sosinski focused his energy on the commercial boats, but none of it felt

like enough. Aldridge had left his driver's license on the *Anna Mary*, and every once in a while, Sosinski would pick it up. He'd stare at it and say out loud, "Where are you, John?"

Aldridge and Sosinski first fished together as boys, riding their bikes to a spot they'd found under Sunrise Highway in Oakdale, New York. Once Aldridge joined Sosinski in Montauk, they fished for years on separate boats. When a beat-up lobster boat called the *Anna Mary* came up for sale, they decided to pool their money and buy it together.

When the sun rose on July 24, Aldridge gave himself a new assignment: Find a buoy. That way he would be more visible to the searchers, and it would be easier to stay afloat.

For a couple of hours, he drifted and looked. Finally, Aldridge spotted a buoy about 200 feet away and began swimming. His strokes were short and slow with the boots under his arms and the current against him. Each time he looked up, the buoy was farther away.

Aldridge stopped swimming, realizing that he was becoming dangerously exhausted. He was able to see that the buoy he had been swimming toward had a flag on top of it, which lobster fishermen attach to the west end of

their strings. Lobster traps are always laid out along an east-west line, so Aldridge figured that a mile or so east, he would find the other end of that string of traps, and with it, another buoy. He started swimming east.

Even with the current, swimming was painful work. His legs were cramping. He couldn't feel his fingers. The sun, rising higher in front of him, was blinding. After more than an hour, he spotted a buoy, and using the current, he was able to angle himself directly into it. He grabbed the rope and held on.

By noon, Aldridge had been in the water for almost nine hours. He was starting to shiver uncontrollably. Sea shrimp were fastening themselves to his T-shirt and shorts. Storm petrels swarmed around

occasionally, squawking and diving.

Aldridge could see the rescue aircraft overhead. Even if they'd figured out more or less where he fell in, they hadn't taken into account the possibility that he'd stopped drifting and snagged a buoy. He had to get himself farther east. He pulled his knife out of his pocket and cut the rope that held the buoy in place. He tied it around his wrist and began swimming.

He willed himself to keep kicking until he reached another buoy. He untied the rope from his wrist and

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**By noon,
 Aldridge had
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 hours. He was
 starting to shiver
 uncontrollably.**

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It's like a
WHOLE OTHER COUNTRY

tied it to the anchor rope underneath the new buoy. Now he had two buoys connected by a few feet of rope. He straddled the rope, repositioned the boots under his arms, and waited. He knew he couldn't survive another swim. If he was still in the water at sundown, he decided, he would tie himself to the buoy. That way, his parents would have something to bury.

The crew in the Jayhawk helicopter had been staring at the water since about 7 a.m., and by early afternoon, they were growing discouraged. The crew finished another search pattern—their third of the day—and requested a new one. From the command center, Davis radioed coordinates, and at 2:46 p.m., the helicopter started moving again.

Twelve minutes later, Lieutenant Jamros called out, “Mark! Mark! Mark!”—protocol when an object has been spotted. There was John Aldridge, sitting on the rope between his two buoys, clutching his boots and waving frantically. After Aldridge was safely in

the helicopter, huddled under blankets, Lieutenant Deal flipped the radio to channel 21 and called Sosinski, who was staring out at the water, still looking for Aldridge. “*Anna Mary*,” Deal said, “we have your man. He’s alive.”

In the weeks after Aldridge’s rescue, I talked to several local fishermen about the search, and most of them teared up as they recounted the story. The inescapable risk of their jobs goes mostly unspoken in their lives, and the improbable fact that Aldridge hadn’t drowned somehow underscored that risk even more.

The person who seems least shaken by the experience is John Aldridge. He has no nightmares, no flashbacks, no fear when he goes out on the water to work. The Coast Guard pilots and the men in New Haven express pride when they talk about their work that day, and when Aldridge talks about it, he sounds the same way: “I always felt like I was conditioning myself for that situation. Thank God they saved me. But I felt I did my part.” **R**

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UPDATED SAYINGS FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

- You can't make an omelet without posting a few pics.
- Photoshop makes perfect.
- Out of news feed, out of mind.

VIA THE DOGHOUSE DIARIES.COM

That's Outrageous!

QUIZ: GUESS WHOM THEY SUED

A ROMANIAN MAN was one of six thieves arrested for stealing \$24 million worth of artwork from a Dutch museum. But he insisted that another party was even more guilty. Whom do you think he's considering suing?
A) His incompetent partners; **B)** the museum, for making it too easy to pilfer the art; or **C)** Picasso, Monet, and Gauguin for being so enticing.

ANSWER: B. Last we heard, he was mulling it over.

Source: theatlanticwire.com

AFTER HER DIVORCE was final, a British woman filed a claim against **A)** her husband, for driving her to divorce; **B)** the judge, for gaveling too loudly; **C)** her lawyers, who neglected to tell her that divorce would result in her marriage ending.

ANSWER: C. The case was dismissed.

Source: independent.co.uk

RATHER THAN TYPING *facebook* into his Apple computer's browser, a Tennessee lawyer inadvertently typed *f***book*. Shockingly, it turned out that the site contained



pornography, which appealed to the lawyer's "biological sensibilities." Since the snafu resulted in his becoming addicted to erotica, he's siccing a lawyer on **A)** Apple, for not warning computer users against the evils of smut; **B)** *f***book*,

for having a name similar to Facebook; **C)** Facebook, for having a name too similar to *f***book*.


ANSWER: A. A lawsuit is pending.

Source: pcmag.com

TWO MEN PULLED GUNS in a Pittsburgh-area bar and went all Wild West-y. When the smoke cleared, both gunslingers were in the hospital, and one had a \$20,000 lawsuit in his sights against **A)** the other guy, for laughing at his Shirley Temple order; **B)** the gun manufacturer, for enabling each man to shoot the other; **C)** the booze makers, for making the men stupid drunk.

ANSWER: Actually, D. The bar, for neglecting to check that they weren't armed. The charges were shot down.

Source: pittsburghlive.com



HUMAN INTEREST

Gil and Eleanor Kraus were a well-to-do American couple who risked everything to rescue 50 children from the Nazis

BY STEVEN PRESSMAN ADAPTED FROM *50 CHILDREN*





*A safety drill aboard the
SS President Harding, with Gil
and Eleanor in the middle*

The Ones They *aved*

O **N A CHILLY EVENING** in early January 1939, Eleanor Kraus looked around her dining room and carefully inspected the gleaming china dishes, polished silverware, and sparkling crystal wineglasses that had been neatly laid out on the table. Her husband, Gil, had not yet come home from his law office in downtown Philadelphia, but Eleanor was already dressed for the evening. Their niece was bringing her fiancé to dinner, and Eleanor, as always, wanted everything to shine.

A few minutes later, Gil walked through the front door of the couple's spacious home, removing his overcoat and setting down his worn leather briefcase. "There is something I need to discuss with you," he said. Eleanor followed him upstairs and sat down beside him as he shaved and dressed for dinner.

She listened quietly as Gil began describing what sounded like a far-fetched idea. The newspapers had been filled with articles about the increasingly brutal conditions for Jews living under Adolf Hitler's regime. Less than two months earlier, in the horrific rampage known as *Kristallnacht*—the Night of Broken Glass—hundreds of synagogues in Germany and Austria had been desecrated and burned to the ground. Jewish-owned businesses had been looted and destroyed. Thousands of Jewish men had been summarily arrested and sent off to concentration camps.

Gil was determined to do something to help, even if it meant disrupting his

comfortable life and putting himself in danger.

Earlier that afternoon, he and his friend Louis Levine had begun hatching a plan: to rescue Jewish children trapped inside Nazi Germany. Both men were leaders of Brith Sholom, a national Jewish fraternal organization that had recently built a summer camp outside Philadelphia, including a large stone house with 25 bedrooms. Wouldn't it be wonderful, Gil said, if they could fill it with children—two to a room—who would otherwise face a terrifying future in Hitler's Germany.

As he finished dressing, Gil turned to his wife and told her he intended to go to Germany to carry out the mission. He asked her if she would accompany him. "No one in his right mind would go into Nazi Germany," Eleanor protested. "I'd be too scared to set foot in that country, assuming the storm troopers would even let us in." Her thoughts turned to her children, 13-year-old Steven and nine-year-old



During WWII, Gil Kraus closed his law practice and worked at the Philadelphia Record. Eleanor volunteered with the U.S. Army, helping to monitor for enemy air raids.

Ellen. She and Gil had never been away from them at the same time.

But Eleanor knew how stubborn her husband could be, so she was not surprised when Gil told her he had already made plans to go to Washington, DC, to propose the rescue to U.S. government officials, in particular George Messersmith, a former U.S. minister to Austria who was now serving as assistant secretary of state. Messersmith had worked at the American embassy in Berlin and was acutely aware of the mounting Nazi threat.

In the following days, Gil immersed himself in the United States'

rigid immigration policy. Despite the desperate situation facing Jews in Europe—and the fact that, at that point, Hitler was allowing them to leave—the United States imposed strict quotas on refugees. To make matters worse, throughout the 1930s, a number of State Department officials had done little to conceal their anti-Jewish attitudes. For instance, James Wilkinson, who worked in the visa division, once warned that easing the nation's immigration laws would create “a grave risk that Jews would flood the United States.”

But Gil remained fixed on the plan

to rescue children. While reviewing immigration records, he discovered that approved visas sometimes went unclaimed. Would it be possible, he wondered, to set aside unused visas for Jewish children whose parents were already on waiting lists to come here?

Messersmith, always the diplomat, said it was an “intriguing” idea. Within days, Gil sent a letter to Messersmith, detailing his proposed mission and stating that there were “ample private funds to provide transportation of the children from Germany to Philadelphia and for their support, maintenance, and education.” Finally, Gil said that he and Eleanor were prepared to go to Germany themselves to select the children and escort them back to the United States.

By now, Eleanor shared her husband’s commitment. She threw herself into the job of obtaining affidavits from friends and others willing to guarantee support of the children, despite the awkwardness of asking them to reveal their bank balances. By early spring, she had completed 54 documents—four extra, just in case.

Right before the couple were to sail, however, a State Department aide warned Eleanor not to accompany her husband: War was imminent in Europe. Despondent over going on his own, Gil persuaded Dr. Robert Schless, a family friend who was their children’s pediatrician, to join him. “I shed a few tears very quietly,” Eleanor said later. “I prayed for their safe return.”

Several days after arriving in Europe, the men made their way to Vienna. A year earlier, in March 1938, Hitler had swallowed Austria into the Third Reich and immediately began a campaign to rid the country of its roughly 200,000 Jews. Jewish leaders in Vienna had been working feverishly to help families leave, and Gil had been advised by American embassy officials to select children for the rescue mission from that city, where conditions were deteriorating at an alarming pace.

Once he got to Vienna, Gil placed an urgent telephone call to Eleanor. In spite of the State Department warnings, he asked her to join him as soon as she could. “There is so much work to do here and very little time,” he told her. “I need you to come.”

Eleanor booked passage on the next ship to Europe.

When she arrived, Gil warned her that the secret police would monitor their every move. Their rooms would be searched daily. Signs proclaiming *Juden verboten*—“Jews forbidden”—greeted them wherever they went. Buildings were covered with swastikas, and images of Hitler hung in every shop window.

Hundreds of Austrian Jews were desperate enough to want to send their children away—without knowing if they would ever see them again. As word spread about the transport mission, families lined up outside a Jewish community center for a chance to meet with the Krauses. One child recalled



The children play at Brith Sholom's camp in the summer of '39. Hopes of bringing another 50 were dashed when war broke out that September.

years later, "I'll never forget standing there in that line with my mother. There were all these other people there who threw stones and tomatoes at us and called us all kinds of names." The children's parents had already applied for visas to America, but the waiting list was daunting. More than 25,000 Jews from Vienna had applied in the last ten days of March alone.

Gil, who spoke a little German, interviewed parents who pleaded with him to take their children. Eleanor found it almost unbearable to imagine what was going through their minds. "To take a child from his mother seemed to be the lowest thing a human being could do," she wrote later. "Yet it was

as if we had drawn up in a lifeboat in a most turbulent sea. Each parent seemed to say, 'Here, yes, freely, gladly, take my child to a safer shore.'"

With each passing day, Eleanor's heart grew heavier as she realized that most of the children would be left behind. She and Gil knew that any who were sick would likely be turned away by immigration officials. The children also had to be able to withstand the separation from their parents, so Dr. Schless, who was helping with screenings, advised against taking anyone under age five. Ultimately, the 50 painstakingly chosen children—the oldest of whom was 14—included seven sets of siblings.

One girl pleaded unsuccessfully for her baby sister, who was too young.

As Gil and Eleanor finalized their list, terrifying new problems arose. An officer at the American consulate in Vienna challenged Eleanor's affidavits; another told Gil that the visas might not come through for months.

With the fate of their mission hanging in the balance, Gil and Eleanor rushed to Berlin to speak with Raymond Geist, the senior American official at the embassy. He assured Eleanor that her affidavits were in perfect shape, but he couldn't guarantee any visas. That decision would have to wait until the children showed up at the embassy.

The couple returned to Vienna to gather the children, each of whom was allowed just one small suitcase. Before they could take their chances at the embassy, each child would need a passport from the Nazis. This led to a tense meeting with a Gestapo officer, who demanded to know why the Krauses had come to Vienna in the first place. "We have come to take 50 Jewish children to America," Gil replied forthrightly. Finally, after more intense questioning, the officer relented.

On the evening of May 21, 1939, the children and their parents waited quietly for hours on a dark platform at the Vienna train station. Storm troopers and attack dogs were everywhere. Eleanor was shocked to learn that the parents could not even wave goodbye to their children. Jews were not permitted to give the Nazi salute, and



Heinrich Steinberger was taken off the list of 50 children when he became ill before the group left Vienna. He died three years later at the Sobibor death camp.

any parents who so much as raised an arm could be arrested. "Their eyes were fixed on the faces of their children," Eleanor remembered later. "Their mouths were smiling. But their eyes were red and strained. No one waved. It was the most heartbreaking show of dignity and bravery I had ever witnessed."

The group arrived in Berlin the next morning, still without any assurance of visas. Eleanor could not imagine having to return any of the children to Vienna. Exhausted and homesick,

they entered the American embassy and waited to be interviewed. Finally, Gil sat down next to Eleanor with a look of immense relief. “There are 50 visas waiting for us,” he whispered. “Our worries are over.”

A day later, the Krauses, Dr. Schless, and all 50 children boarded the SS *President Harding* in Hamburg and sailed beyond Hitler’s grasp. During the ten-day voyage, Gil and Dr. Schless gave daily English lessons.

After the ship arrived in New York City on June 3, the children spent the summer at the Brith Sholom camp. There they continued to learn English, wrote letters home, and concentrated on their new lives in America. Extra counselors, nurses, and staff took care of them. Gil spent countless hours writing to the families in Vienna and working on the children’s future living arrangements. By Labor Day, all 50 had been sent to live with relatives or foster families, including two—Robert and Johanna Braun—who lived with the Krauses for two years.

Within a year of the rescue mission,

with help from Brith Sholom, almost a third of the Austrian parents got visas and were reunited with their children. Several more succeeded in coming to America during and after the war, but others perished in the Holocaust.

Gil Kraus died in 1975, and Eleanor in 1989. Roughly half of the children they rescued are still alive. Now in their 80s, most have lived full and productive lives as doctors, lawyers, writers, teachers, and business executives. Along the way, they also became husbands and wives, parents and grandparents—and, in some cases, great-grandparents.

In Europe, the Holocaust claimed the lives of 1.5 million children. Only about 1,000 “unaccompanied” children—those traveling without their parents—were allowed into the United States. The 50 saved by Gil and Eleanor comprised the largest single group. **R**

Steven Pressman’s book *50 Children: One Ordinary American Couple’s Extraordinary Rescue Mission into the Heart of Nazi Germany* (HarperCollins, 2014) is based on an HBO documentary that Pressman wrote, produced, and directed.

COMING SOON

BEST OF AMERICA

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Real-life stories of people trapped in ice caves and under the sea

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PASTIME

When you read while
you wander, your destination
may be a surprise

All I Need for a **Walk** Is a Good Book

BY MICHAEL P. BRANCH
FROM HIGH COUNTRY NEWS

ILLUSTRATION BY
CATHIE BLECK

IN THE DESERT WEST, behavior that might elsewhere be considered inexplicable, idiosyncratic, and even indefensible is tolerated—sometimes even encouraged. But as my ten-year-old daughter, Hannah, becomes more concerned about what is normal and more worried about whether our family qualifies for that distinction, she barrages me with unanswerable questions.

Why do I correct baseball radio announcers who can't hear me and tell chicken-crossing-the-road jokes to our hens? Why do I use fishing poles to fly kites? Why have I nicknamed my chain saw (Landshark) and my Weedwacker (Cujo)? And why, of course, do I so often wear no pants? Sometimes I wish my kid would ask about something simple, like mortality, God, or where babies come from.

Recently, Hannah asked, "Dad, why do you read while you walk?"

Every year, I hike about 1,300 miles around these desert wilds outside Reno, and I probably read my way through 800 of them. I became a bibliopedestrian so long ago that I've forgotten why I do it. But in search of an honest answer for Hannah, I've been excavating those reasons.

For starters, walking and reading are similar in many ways. Both are forms of exercise, one working out the body; the other, the mind. Both are excellent when pursued in solitude. Each gets us from one place to another, and yet the main purpose is always the journey rather than the destination. They enlarge our sense of the world, expanding the territory and

helping us to place ourselves within it. A good book, like a good hike, takes us away from home and into a series of surprises that ultimately gives the concept of home its meaning.

Reading and walking have another thing in common: Although most of us know how to do both of them, we seldom seem to do either. As Mark Twain put it, "The man who does not read has no advantage over the man who cannot read." Might we say the same about a person who has healthy legs but refuses to walk?

While Karl Marx made some perceptive pronouncements about the value of books, it was the wiser Marx, Groucho, who observed that "outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read." A book, like a dog, is good company, and I just don't cotton to heading out on a hike without taking both along with me. I also like the contrasts a carefully chosen book can create with the landscape through which I move. There's nothing like being on the river with Twain or at sea with Melville or by the pond with Thoreau while I'm shuffling through the sagebrush and alkali dust. When it gets hot, I love


Barry Lopez's *Arctic Dreams* or Rick Bass's *Winter*. When it gets cold and windy, I go to the Hawaiian Islands in the poetry of W. S. Merwin.

Even John Muir, who is surely among the most celebrated of walkers, packed books on the trail. Muir was also familiar with the "book of nature," a trope known to many cultures, both ancient and modern. *Liber naturae*, the book of nature, is the idea that the natural world is a form of sacred text and that the revelation of its meaning depends upon our willingness to read it carefully. Seen in this light, the world of the book and the book of the world are intimately related.

Of course, I'm no Muir, and I'm more Groucho than Karl. And this is a wide-open desert with a thousand hazards. It is true that I have on a number of occasions read myself into trouble while on the hoof—stepping onto harvester ant mounds or into ground squirrel tunnels or invading the space of Great Basin rattlers. But most of the surprises that come from simultaneous reading and hiking are good ones because looking from the world to the page and back again

becomes a game of peekaboo: Now you don't see it, now you do. One afternoon, I looked up from a book to see a pronghorn buck chiseled against a rocky ridgeline above me. That evening, as it became too dark to see the page, I lifted my head to witness the thinnest possible crescent moon, in close conjunction with Venus, floating above the summit ridge of my home mountain.

When we read a travel guidebook while walking in a city, or a natural history field guide in a forest, we are considered normal. It is understood that we need the book to recognize and name the things of this world and to prevent ourselves from becoming lost within it. As I explained to Hannah, good writing plays the same orienting role: It can help us discover where we are and reveal why our connections to each other and to the world we walk through every day are so precious in the first place.

Though Hannah insists that I'm "totally not like other dads," she seemed convinced by my reasoning. "Yeah, Dad, I can see that," she said. "Now, what about that no-pants thing?" 


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THE OTHER PIGSKIN

Once you put bacon in a salad, it's no longer a salad. It just becomes a game of Find the Bacon in the Lettuce.

JIM GAFFIGAN

A woman with shoulder-length reddish-brown hair is sitting on a light-colored wooden bench. She is wearing a red long-sleeved top and blue jeans. She is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The background is a dark, horizontally-slatted wooden wall. The lighting is soft, highlighting her face and the texture of the wood.

*Julie got a call
at work from her
husband: "I'm
dying," he said.*

Both her husband and father needed a kidney transplant. Julie Stitt had only one to give. Or did she?

“I Gave Kidneys”

BY MICHELE WOJCIECHOWSKI

ON A BEAUTIFUL MARCH DAY IN 2004, Chuck Stitt stood in the middle of the Little Patuxent River in Columbia, Maryland, a fishing rod in his hand and the cool water flowing around his boots. He cast his line, then waited for a trout to bite.

Instead, and without warning, Chuck’s world went black—he was completely blind.

CHUCK WAS ALONE in a secluded area, plunged into darkness and struggling to keep his balance in the middle of a river. He couldn't even call someone for help—he'd left his cell phone at home. Chuck dropped his rod and moved slowly through the water, stepping carefully until he felt the riverbank under his feet.

Now a rocky, 100-foot-high hill and a half mile of blacktop lay between him and his pickup truck. "I knew I had to make it back up that hill and to the trail, where there was a chance that joggers might find me," recalls Chuck, now 52. "Luckily, I was familiar with the place."

He proceeded slowly, with his arms extended to avoid walking into trees. Eventually reaching his truck, he climbed inside and sat in the driver's seat, unable to drive or contact anyone. After a few hours, the darkness turned to light as his sight gradually returned. When he could see well enough to drive, he made a beeline to his doctor's office.

It Gets Worse

Chuck's doctor ran blood work. Two days later, the stunned physician called Chuck and ordered him to go to the ER immediately. The tests showed that his level of creatinine, a natural waste by-product produced by muscle activity, was sky-high—an indication that he was in full kidney failure.

"When I heard that, I thought it was a death sentence," says Chuck.

He drove himself to the ER at Howard County General Hospital. After admitting Chuck to the intensive care unit, doctors inserted a catheter into his neck so he could receive dialysis treatment. Typically, dialysis lasts about four hours. But Chuck's condition was so severe, his treatment spanned a day and a half.

When the hospital told Chuck and his wife, Julie, that Chuck could qualify for a kidney transplant, Julie asked to be tested as a potential match. But Chuck wouldn't allow it. The youngest of their three children was in middle school, and he wanted Julie to focus on caring for them instead.

Without a new kidney immediately available, Chuck was put on a transplant list at the University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC). He continued dialysis treatments three times a week while waiting for a donor.

New Kidney, New Problems

Three and a half years later, Chuck finally received a kidney transplant. (It can take up to seven years to receive a kidney.) While the surgery was successful, the aftermath was not—the transplanted kidney never performed beyond 50 percent capacity. It began to fail a year later, and Chuck landed in the hospital when the antirejection drugs he was given built up in his system until they reached dangerous

levels. He was placed on dialysis again. Once more, Julie offered to undergo testing to determine whether she was a possible donor. Again, Chuck rejected the idea.

In 2011, a deceased-donor kidney was determined to be a match for Chuck. Deceased-donor kidneys come from a donor who very recently

died. A live-donor kidney—one from a living, healthy person—is preferable because it poses less of a risk of rejection, and it normally lasts longer. But Chuck was in no position to wait for one. The transplant surgery at UMMC was successful, but Chuck's body was soon riddled with infections. Other complications followed, including a hernia: One morning, he woke up to find his internal organs protruding through his surgical scar.

As time passed, the second transplant began to fail, forcing Chuck to reverse himself and ask his wife, "Could you please help me?"

Julie Registers

Julie was tested and learned her blood type was not a match. But another option soon presented itself. In April 2012, she discovered UMMC's Paired Kidney Exchange (PKE) program and signed up. The PKE works with organizations such as the National Kidney Registry to match donors with

“

When the second transplant failed, Chuck turned to Julie and finally asked, “Could you please help me?”

”

recipients. If a live donor wants to give a kidney to a friend or relative but is incompatible with the recipient, the program ensures that the donor gets listed as a potential donor to another recipient. In exchange, the donor's friend or relative is guaranteed a kidney from a matching donor on the list.

Julie registered with the program to donate one kidney to an anonymous person in need, thus securing a compatible kidney for Chuck. But because she was starting a new job as a second-grade teacher in the fall, she requested that her surgery take place the following summer, in 2013, so that it wouldn't interfere with her first year at school.

In December 2012, just before Chuck was scheduled to begin dialysis again, he received a phone call. PKE had found a match.

This time, Chuck received a new live-donor kidney, and there were no infections or rejections following the surgery, just a kidney functioning the way it was supposed to.

Another Heartbreak

While Chuck was undergoing the tortuous process leading up to his successful transplant, his father-in-law was having health problems of his own.



Richard (left) and Chuck were lucky. Last year, 99,000 people needed a kidney—only 14,000 got one.

Julie's father, Richard Kern, had been diagnosed with diabetes almost 50 years earlier, at the age of 25. During a nearly fatal heart bypass surgery in 2010, Richard's kidneys had failed. He began dialysis, and his kidneys rebounded. But in June 2012, his kidneys failed again. Due to an acute shortage of live donors, he was placed on the transplant list to wait for a deceased donor. In August, he again began dialysis treatments.

"I had my suspicions that eventually Dad would need a kidney transplant," says Julie. But by committing to donating a kidney to the PKE program to help her husband receive a kidney, she couldn't help her father. She and Richard pleaded with PKE to allow her donated kidney to be given to Richard. Her request was denied.

"I was really emphatic about that,

mainly because it's not fair to jump the system," explains David Leeser, MD, who runs the PKE program. "Mrs. Stitt's kidney was donated on behalf of her husband, and it needed to go to whoever was the next recipient on the list in the exchange program."

In June 2013, Richard received word from Laurie Thompson, coordinator of PKE, that a kidney was available, but it proved not viable after all.

A month later, Richard got another call from Thompson: A live, matching donor was available with a viable kidney. Richard was scheduled for surgery on July 16, 2013. The donor, of course, would remain anonymous.

"Recipients and donors must remain

anonymous throughout the surgery," says Thompson. "If, after the surgery, they choose to contact one another, that's done through the coordinators. They give us notes, and we pass them on."

Julie had also received a call to schedule her surgery on the very same day—at a different time and on a different floor, however, from her dad's.

On the morning of the surgery, Richard, surrounded by his wife, Donna, and Chuck, underwent a pre-surgical checkup. Considering the severity of any operation, not to mention the family's track record when it came to successful kidney transplants, it was understandable that the trio were anxious. But then they got news that brought a smile to their faces.

They overheard a hospital worker say that he was going to the donor's

room. He then gave the room number.

It was Julie's.

What Were the Odds?

Richard's surgery was a success, and his new kidney is working well. No one is happier about that than Julie. How often is it that a daughter can give life to her father?

"I didn't want to say anything," she says, admitting that she had a gut feeling her father would receive her kidney. "I didn't want to jinx it. It was miraculous that I was able to help both my husband and my father. It was a blessing."

What are the odds of one donor saving two lives? Says PKE's Thompson, they must be phenomenal: "We all said this family had a guardian angel sitting on their shoulders directing this whole affair." **R**



I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY ALMOST NAMED IT THAT ...

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Pansy

Private Fleming; His Various Battles

Zounds, He Dies

Tom-All-Along's Factory That Got into Chancery and Never Got Out

What's That Noshin' on My Laig?

(SUGGESTED BY THE AUTHOR'S FATHER)

FROM NOW ALL WE NEED IS A TITLE, BY ANDRE BERNARD

What do Chinese Americans, Nigerian Americans, and Cuban Americans have in common? Three surprising traits that have driven them to the top.

WHY SOME GROUPS SUCCEED

BY AMY CHUA AND JED RUBENFELD
FROM THE *NEW YORK TIMES*

A SEEMINGLY UN-AMERICAN fact about America today is that for some groups, much more than others, upward mobility and the American dream are alive and well. It may be taboo to say it, but certain ethnic, religious, and national-origin groups are doing strikingly better than Americans overall.



Indian Americans earn almost double the national figure (roughly \$90,000 per year in median household income versus \$50,000). Iranian, Lebanese, and Chinese Americans are also high earners. In the past 30 years, Mormons have become leaders of corporate America, holding top positions in many of America's most recognizable companies. These facts don't make some groups "better" than others, and material success cannot be equated with a well-lived life—but willful blindness to facts is never a good policy.

Jewish success is the most historically fraught and the most broad based. Although Jews make up only about 2 percent of the United States' adult population, they account for a third of the current Supreme Court, over two thirds of Tony Award-winning lyricists and composers, and about a third of American Nobel laureates.

Groups Don't Stay at the Top for Long

The most comforting explanation of these facts is that they are mere artifacts of class—rich parents passing on advantages to their children—or of immigrants arriving in this country with high skill and education levels. Important as these factors are, they explain only a small part of the picture.

Today's wealthy Mormon businesspeople often started from humble origins. Although India and China send the most immigrants to the United

States through employment-based channels, almost half of all Indian immigrants and over half of Chinese immigrants do not enter the country under those criteria. Many are poor and poorly educated. Comprehensive data published by the Russell Sage Foundation in 2013 showed that the children of Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese immigrants experienced exceptional upward mobility regardless of their parents' socioeconomic or educational backgrounds.

Merely stating the fact that certain groups do better than others—as measured by income, test scores, and so on—is enough to provoke a firestorm in America today and even charges of racism. The irony is that the facts actually debunk racial stereotypes.

There are some black and Hispanic groups in America who far outperform some white and Asian groups. Immigrants from many West Indian and African countries, such as Jamaica, Ghana, and Haiti, are climbing America's higher-education ladder, but perhaps the most prominent are Nigerians. Nigerians make up less than 1 percent of the black population in the United States, yet in 2013 nearly one quarter of the black students at Harvard Business School were of Nigerian ancestry; over a fourth of Nigerian Americans have a graduate or professional degree, compared with only about 11 percent of whites.

Cuban Americans in Miami rose in one generation from widespread

penury to relative affluence. By 1990, U.S.-born Cuban children—whose parents had arrived as exiles, many with practically nothing—were twice as likely as non-Hispanic whites to earn more than \$50,000 a year. All three Hispanic U.S. senators are Cuban Americans.

Meanwhile, some Asian American groups—Cambodian and Hmong Americans, for example—are among the poorest in the country, as are some predominantly white

communities in central Appalachia.

Most fundamentally, groups rise and fall over time. The fortunes of WASP elites have been declining for decades. In 1960, second-generation Greek Americans reportedly had the second-highest income of any census-tracked group; by 2010, they had dropped to number 29. Group success in America often tends to dissipate after two generations. Thus, while Asian American kids overall had SAT scores 143 points above average

EXAMPLES OF EXCELLENCE

(Clockwise from top left) Author **Amy Tan** was born in Oakland, California, to Chinese immigrants. Her debut novel, *The Joy Luck Club*, was translated into 25 languages and became a 1993 film.

Emmy Award-winning **Dr. Sanjay Gupta**, an Indian American, is a practicing neurosurgeon as well as CNN's chief medical correspondent.

DJ **Casey Kasem**, born in Michigan to a Lebanese father and Lebanese American mother, pioneered the American Top 40 radio countdown.

Gloria Estefan, whose family emigrated from Cuba in 1959, was the first pop star to perform for a pope. She's the winner of seven Grammy Awards.

Elie Tahari grew up in an Israeli orphanage and in 1971 moved to New York City, where he transitioned from electrician to world-renowned fashion designer. Three years later, he was one of the first designers to open a Madison Avenue boutique.

Retired basketball player **Hakeem Olajuwon**, a 12-time NBA All-Star and one of the league's all-time greats, was born in Nigeria. He moved to the United States to play basketball at the University of Houston.



in 2012—including a 63-point edge over whites—an earlier study of over 20,000 adolescents found that third-generation Asian American students performed no better academically than white students.

A Belief That They're the Best *and* the Worst

The fact that groups rise and fall this way punctures the whole idea of “model minorities” or that groups succeed because of innate, biological differences. Rather, there are cultural forces at work. It turns out that for all their diversity, the strikingly successful groups in America today share three traits that, together, propel success. The first is a superiority complex—a deep-seated belief in your exceptionality. The second appears to be the opposite—insecurity, a feeling that you or what you’ve done is not good enough. The third is impulse control.

Any individual, from any background, can have what we call this Triple Package of traits. But research shows that some groups are instilling it more frequently than others and that they are enjoying greater success.

It’s odd to think of people feeling simultaneously superior and insecure. Yet it’s precisely this unstable combination that generates drive: a chip on the shoulder, a goading need to prove oneself. Add impulse control—the ability to resist temptation—and the result is people who systematically

sacrifice present gratification in pursuit of future attainment.

Ironically, each element of the Triple Package violates a core tenet of contemporary American thinking. We know that group superiority claims are specious and dangerous, yet every one of America’s most successful groups tells itself that it’s exceptional in a deep sense. Mormons believe they are “gods in embryo” placed on earth to lead the world to salvation.



**A CHIP ON THE
SHOULDER, A NEED
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THIS UNSTABLE MIX
GENERATES DRIVE.**

Middle East experts and many Iranians explicitly refer to a Persian “superiority complex.” At their first Passover Seders, most Jewish children hear that Jews are the “chosen” people; later they may be taught that Jews are a moral people, a people of law and intellect, a people of survivors.

Feelings of inadequacy are cause for concern or even therapy; parents deliberately instilling insecurity in their children is almost unthinkable. Yet insecurity runs deep in every one of America’s rising groups; and consciously or unconsciously, they tend to pass it on to their children.

A central finding in a study of more than 5,000 immigrants' children led by the sociologist Rubén G. Rumbaut was how frequently the kids felt "motivated to achieve" because of an acute sense of obligation to redeem their parents' sacrifices. Numerous studies, including in-depth fieldwork conducted by the Harvard sociologist Vivian S. Louie, reveal Chinese immigrant parents frequently impose exorbitant academic expectations on their children ("Why only a 99 on your test?"), making them feel that "family honor" depends on their success.

By contrast, white American parents have been found to be more focused on building children's social skills and self-esteem. There's an ocean of difference between "You're amazing. Mommy and Daddy never want you to worry about a thing" and "If you don't do well at school, you'll let down the family and end up a bum on the streets." In a study of thousands of high school students, Asian American students reported the lowest self-esteem of any racial group, even as they racked up the highest grades.

Moreover, being an outsider in a society—and America's most successful groups are all outsiders in one way or another—is a source of insecurity in itself. Immigrants worry about whether they can survive in a strange land, often communicating a sense of life's precariousness to their children. Hence the common credo: They can take away your home or business but

never your education, so study harder.

Newcomers and religious minorities may face derision or hostility. Cubans fleeing to Miami after Fidel Castro's takeover reported seeing signs reading "No dogs, no Cubans" on apartment buildings. During the 2012 election cycle, Mormons heard Mitt Romney's clean-cut sons described as "creepy" in the media. In combination with a superiority complex, the feeling of being scorned can be a powerful motivator.

Finally, impulse control runs against the grain of contemporary culture as well. Countless books and feel-good movies extol the virtue of living in the here and now, and people who control their impulses don't live in the moment. By contrast, every one of America's most successful groups takes a very different view of childhood, inculcating habits of discipline from a very early age—or at least they did so when they were on the rise.

Needless to say, high-achieving groups don't instill these qualities in all their members. They don't have to. A culture producing, say, four high achievers out of ten would attain wildly disproportionate success if the surrounding average was one out of 20.

A Dark Side to the Triple Package

But this success comes at a price. Each of the three traits has its own pathologies. Impulse control can undercut the ability to experience

beauty, tranquillity, and spontaneous joy. Insecure people feel like they're never good enough. "I grew up thinking that I would never, ever please my parents," recalls the novelist Amy Tan. "It's a horrible feeling." Recent studies suggest that Asian American youths have greater rates of stress (but, despite media reports to the contrary, lower rates of suicide).

A superiority complex can be even more invidious. Group supremacy



**AMERICA HAS BEEN
AT ITS BEST WHEN
IT'S HAD TO OVERCOME
ADVERSITY.
IT HAS THAT CHANCE
AGAIN TODAY.**

claims have been a source of oppression, war, and genocide throughout history. To be sure, a group superiority complex somehow feels less ugly when it's used by an outsider minority as an army against majority prejudices and hostility, but ethnic pride or religious zeal can turn all too easily into intolerance of its own.

Even when it functions relatively benignly as an engine of success, the combination of these three traits can still be imprisoning—precisely because of the kind of success it tends to promote. Individuals striving for material success can easily become too

focused on prestige and money, too concerned with external measures of their own worth.

It's not easy for minority groups in America to maintain a superiority complex. For most of its history, America did pretty much everything a country could do to impose a narrative of inferiority on its nonwhite minorities and especially its black population. Over and over, African Americans have fought back against this narrative, but its legacy persists. The same factors that cause poverty—discrimination, prejudice, shrinking opportunity—can sap from a group the cultural forces that propel success. Once that happens, poverty becomes more entrenched. In these circumstances, it takes much more grit, more drive, and perhaps a more exceptional individual to break out.

One reason groups with the cultural package we've described have such an advantage in America today lies in the very same factors that are shrinking opportunity for so many of the country's poor. Disappearing blue-collar jobs and greater returns to increasingly competitive higher education give a tremendous edge to groups who disproportionately produce individuals driven, especially at a young age, to excel and to sacrifice present satisfactions for long-term gains.

The good news is that it's not a magic gene generating these groups' success. Nor is it some 5,000-year-old "education culture" that only they

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have access to. Instead their success is significantly propelled by three simple qualities open to anyone.

Developing this package of qualities—not that it’s easy or that everyone would want to—requires turning the ability to work hard, to persevere, and to overcome adversity into a source of personal superiority. This superiority complex isn’t ethnically or religiously exclusive. It’s the pride a person takes in his or her own strength of will.

Research shows that perseverance and motivation can be taught, especially to children. This supports those who, like Nobel Prize-winning economist James J. Heckman, argue that education dollars for the underprivileged are best spent on early intervention, beginning at preschool age.

The United States itself was born a Triple Package nation, with an outsize belief in its own exceptionality, a fierce desire to prove itself to aristocratic Europe (President Thomas Jefferson sent a giant moose carcass to Paris to prove that America’s animals

were bigger than Europe’s), and a Puritan inheritance of impulse control.

But prosperity and power had their predictable effect, turning insecurity inside out and eroding the self-restraint that led to these gains. By 2000, all that remained was our superiority complex, which by itself is mere swagger, fueling a culture of entitlement and instant gratification. So the trials of recent years—the wars, the financial collapse, the rise of China—have, perversely, had a beneficial effect: the return of insecurity.

Those who talk of America’s “decline” miss this crucial point. America has always been at its best when it has had to overcome adversity and prove its mettle on the world stage. For better and worse, it has that opportunity again today. **IK**

Wife and husband Amy Chua and Jed Rubenfeld are professors at Yale Law School and the parents of two daughters. They are the authors of the book *The Triple Package: How Three Unlikely Traits Explain the Rise and Fall of Cultural Groups in America*.

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HANDS-OFF PARENTING

Envy the kangaroo. That pouch setup is extraordinary: The baby crawls out of the womb when it is about two inches long, gets into the pouch, and proceeds to mature. I’d have a baby if it would develop in my handbag.

RITA RUDNER

Laugh Lines

FROM HERE TO PATERNITY

I got all my looks from my father. Mostly just the look of disappointment.

@MRBIGFISTS

I gave my father \$100 and said, "Buy yourself something that will make your life easier." So he went out and bought a present for my mother.

RITA RUDNER

Father's Day is important because, besides being the day on which we honor Dad, it's the one day of the year that Brookstone does any business.

JIMMY FALLON

When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant, I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years.

MARK TWAIN

Fatherhood is great because you can ruin someone from scratch.

JON STEWART

"Dad?" —Zebra looking at a piano

SAM GRITNER



PHOTO

OF LASTING
INTEREST



Photograph by Daniel Bryant

Chosen by Joel N. Myers, *founder and president of AccuWeather*

A mile-high dust storm made history on July 5, 2011, as it swept through Phoenix, bringing with it near-zero visibility, a trail of debris, and power outages for 10,000 customers. “This dramatic picture shows the awesome power of nature,” says Myers. “Flashier events such as tornadoes, hurricanes, and hail get more notoriety, but episodes like this can have a significant impact on people. High winds on very dry soil will whip up these kinds of storms. There’s nothing in nature that humans can control—we only have the ability to prepare people, to warn them so it’s not a surprise.”





More than 7,000 people entered our contest and gave us the *Reader's Digest* version of their lives. We chose the top ten tales of love, family, insight, and inspiration.

100-Word True Stories

Grand-Prize Winner

TIMELESS

BY MICHELLE BRUEGER BENNETTSVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA



I've always been a daddy's girl. On road trips, we competed over who spotted the most hawks first. Our favorite competition was, upon seeing each other, who could say the words "I love you best" first. If I got him first, Dad would reply, "I'll get you—just wait."

My dad died the night before my 50th birthday. The next day, Mom brought me a gift, saying, "This is from your dad. He bought it for you five years ago." Inside was a beautiful gold pocket watch. Engraved on the inside were the words *I love you best—Gotcha.*

Runners-Up (TIED)

A BEAUTIFUL MISTAKE

BY JEFF HAMILTON
LAKE HAVASU CITY,
ARIZONA



My son was in Kuwait in 1991, fiercely battling the Gulf War. One awful day that year, a Navy car pulled slowly into the parking lot of my record shop. I froze behind the counter, unable to breathe. Two uniformed sailors quietly entered my store and began flipping through albums. Suddenly, one of them asked, "Do you have any Elton John records?" With a quiet sigh and a slight tear in my eye, I told them why I thought they were there. Both men apologized. It's not every day you think you lost your son and get him back.

WHAT A GREAT RIDE

BY BARBARA ROCCHI
NEPTUNE BEACH,
FLORIDA



It was an archaeological dig. In cleaning out our family's 12-year-old minivan to sell, I found LEGOs, ticket stubs, sports balls of every kind, church bulletins, a prom corsage, a lone shin guard ... The heart of our married life, from the kids in their car seats to each kid in the driver's seat flashing a learner's permit. Our toddler's protests as his milkshake, too cold for little hands, flew forward—whoosh—and hit the windshield—splat! Vacations in the mountains and at the beach. Doctor appointments for my sweet, aging parents. My mom-years leave with you, old van.

The Rest of the Best

GIVING KIDS WINGS

BY SUSAN KELLER

LARGO, FLORIDA

“It’s hatching!” The stage whisper floated across the classroom like a spring breeze. Noiselessly, the class of fifth graders was magnetically attracted to the screen-enclosed monarch chrysalis in the corner of the classroom. The whisperer stood silently, slack-jawed with wonder, as her classmates crowded around her. All eyes focused on the transparent chrysalis vibrating from the roof of the enclosure. The film cracked open, hair-fine legs unfolded, wet wings unfurled, a fat body stretched itself. As if on cue, 26 a cappella voices began softly singing “Happy Birthday.” I stood awestruck at my students’ wonder. This is why I teach.

THE LEAVE-TAKING

BY PAULA BUCHANAN

WINDHAM, NEW HAMPSHIRE

We heard it before we saw it, coming closer with the squeaky brakes. My son was excited and happy with his new backpack, sneakers, and camouflage sweatshirt. As he headed off for his first day of school, I waved goodbye and tried to control my tears.

Standing in the terminal, I remembered that day so vividly. I hugged him tightly, not wanting to ever let

him go. Then he walked away, very determined and proud in his camouflage. Once again, I tried to stop the tears streaming down my face.

I raised an American soldier.

WHY I WEAR BLACK PEARLS

BY T’MARA GOODSSELL

ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI

When I married, I wore white pearls. And when I divorced, I purchased a strand of black ones.

They don’t stand at picket fence perfect attention or march virtuously across my skin. No pearls of innocence, these. They are smoky, exotic. They are sultry, sunset-lustered and night-nacred. They are city lights in the rain. They are oil slicks after a race. They are the anti-June Cleavers.

They represent my vow that I will take me for better or for worse and honor me all the days of my life. That I will stay true to myself, always.

SING TO ME

BY ALFRED GEESON

MILLEDGEVILLE, GEORGIA

My grandfather had just been buried, and the grave was being filled in when, surprisingly, my dad began to sing “Danny Boy.” Later, he explained that it was family tradition

to sing this song at our deceased parents' gravesides to sing them to sleep, and that when he and Mother passed, I would be expected to do the same.

Circumstances prevented my singing at Mother's grave, but I did sing at my dad's. I now live in America and have no living children; I often wonder who will sing "Danny Boy" at my funeral. Who will sing me to sleep?

THE GIFT

BY MARY ELIZABETH PASCHALL
AURORA, COLORADO

In the late '50s, I rode the bus ten miles to work. I carried very little cash and only enough bus tokens to last each week. One night as I walked to the bus stop, I met a beggar who had no legs. I stopped, opened my billfold, and discovered that I had no money and no bus tokens. I apologized profusely but, frankly, was shaken because I had no way to get home. The beggar reached into his pouch and pulled out a handful of coins. Embarrassed, I took enough for the bus, and he said, "God bless you."

THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE

BY REBEKAH AMAN
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

Music is universal. I learned this while cradling a seagull unfortunate enough to swallow a hook. After calling the wildlife rescue

center and learning that all its vehicles were out on other business, I carefully swaddled the wild bird in a towel and carried him to my friend's car. The only way to keep him calm was by singing. For 30 minutes, I sang softly to the small creature until finally delivering him to those who could help. I'm not certain what happened afterward, but for that brief period, we connected—two vastly different species bridging the gap through song.

MEANT TO BE FAMILY

BY MARY PRAY
WISCASSET, MAINE

"I am smart. I can draw and sing. I would be so kind to a mama and baba ... Why does no one want me?" asked 12-year-old Levi in China. Levi has cerebral palsy.

My daughter saw that post. She and her husband were adopting four-year-old Jacob. Adopting two seemed crazy, but her heart felt Levi's pain. They listed pros and cons. The pros won!

Was this emotion or divine intervention? Two days later, a new photo was posted showing Levi with his foster brother. It was Jacob! We knew then both boys were meant to be part of our family. **R**

➡ Go to rd.com/june to read more of our favorite entries.

Attention Men Being Treated for Low Testosterone

A recent medical study finds that taking certain low testosterone treatments can double your risk of:

Stroke Heart Attack Death

Your Low T prescription may be for a gel, patch or injection. This counters the natural effects of aging, such as decreased sex drive, lower bone density and reduced muscle mass.

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WHO ? KNEW



BY MICHELLE CROUCH

1 Don't find a home inspector through your real estate agent. It's in the agent's best interest to have the deal go through quickly, so some pitch inspectors who find few problems.

2 If I don't spend at least two hours at the house, I'm what we call a drive-by inspector, and you're not getting your money's worth. A thorough inspector checks the crawl space, opens the breaker box, and walks the roof. Most houses take me every bit of three hours.

3 I won't tell you not to buy a house, because I'm not supposed to give real estate advice. But if I keep telling you that the house has "a lot of issues" or has "a major issue," read between the lines—or at least be prepared to spend big money to fix some problems. ➔➔

4 If you're a seller, you should clean and prepare your house the same way you would for a showing. Most people leave a mess, and when the buyers arrive with me, their jaws hit the floor.

5 Ask to see a sample report before you hire me—it will give you a good idea of what kind of inspector I am. Do I include digital pictures and estimate repair costs or not? It's a great way to compare two inspectors.

6 Even brand-new homes should be inspected. We find a ridiculous amount of stuff wrong in new construction: leaks, electrical issues, improperly installed washing machines, clogged pipes because the tile guy cleaned his tools in the sink.

7 Please, if you're going to pay for my services, read my full report—not just the summary. Many people don't. In one report, I specifically noted that the fireplace damper didn't work. The homeowner called me a few weeks later to complain about all the smoke in the house.

8 I've encountered every kind of hazard. Once, I was crawling underneath a bathroom, and I felt something strange beneath me. I looked down and discovered I was on a huge pile of double-edged razor blades. I took a picture of it because I thought no one would believe me.

9 If you want the sale of your home to go smoothly, have the house inspected before you put it on the market. Working with me can give you time to find a reasonably priced contractor or to make the repairs yourself.

10 If you have a lot of questions, don't ask them as I'm walking through the house—it will distract me, and I might miss something. Let's go through them at the end.

11 I can't see under the cement slab or inside the walls, so if a dishonest seller wants to go out of his way to hide defects, I might not be able to find them.

12 Some of the worst homes are those owned by do-it-yourselfers. I've seen toilets flushing with hot water, weird appliance hookups, and indoor electrical panels dangerously mounted outside in the elements. Hire a professional if you don't know what you're doing.

13 Roof and foundation issues can stop a sale fast. If you're selling and are not sure of their conditions, get a professional to evaluate them ahead of time—and make sure tree limbs are trimmed far away from the roof to prevent damage. **R**

Sources: Reuben Saltzman, owner of Structure Tech Home Inspections in Minneapolis; Kent Keith, owner of Green Tag Inspection Services in Fort Worth, Texas; Tom Walsh, owner of All Aspects Home Inspections, Inc., in Long Island, New York; and Ed Blazek, president of Blazek Building Inspection Services in Spotsylvania, Virginia.

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Ingenious Solutions To Persnickety Problems

BY BETH DREHER

A Parrot That Keeps The Peace

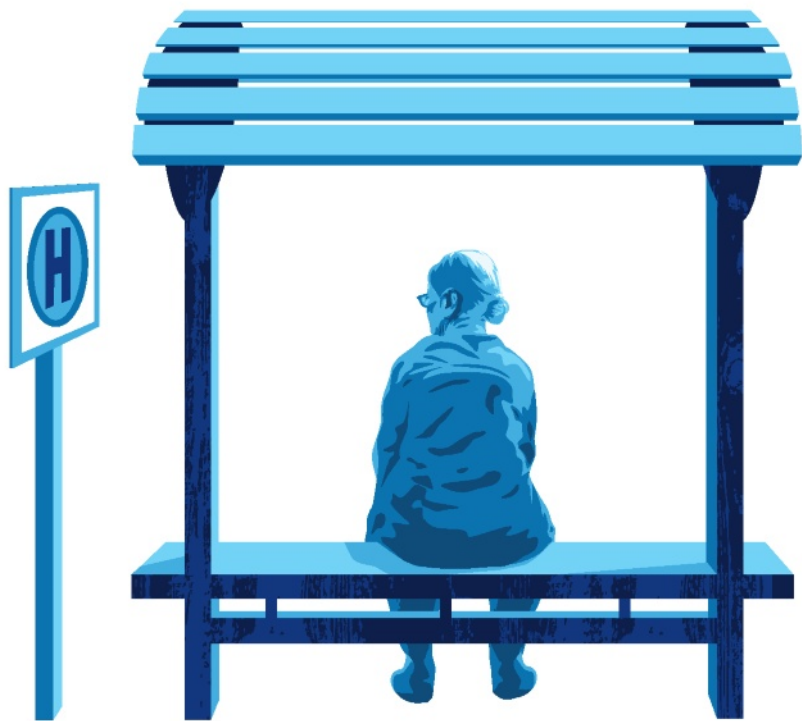
When Jim Eggers gets angry, his body shakes. His vision blurs. His hearing becomes muffled. “It’s like I’m the Incredible Hulk,” says Eggers, “turning from a man into a beast.”

Eggers, 47, suffers from bipolar disorder. In fits of rage, he has punched a dent in a car’s hood, poured hot coffee on a neighbor, and yelled at strangers. In 2005, he served a year of probation for threatening to kill the archbishop of St. Louis. Several weeks later, Eggers, an animal lover, bought an African gray parrot he named Sadie. Not surprisingly, the bird soon began imitating words she heard Eggers say,

such as *hello* and *good girl*. One day, Eggers came home angry. Trying to convince himself to relax, “I started saying to myself, ‘Calm down, Jim. You’ll be OK,’” he says. Sadie repeated the phrases. After a few months, the bird began



DILIP VISHWANAT/GETTY IMAGES (EGGERS)



anticipating when Eggers needed reassurance, saying the phrases when she sensed he was angry. Now Eggers carries Sadie with him wherever he goes—to church, to the gym, on the city bus—in a bright purple backpack with a built-in cage. Says Eggers, “I still go off on people sometimes, but she makes sure it never escalates into a big problem.”

A Bus Stop to Nowhere

People with Alzheimer’s disease have a dangerous tendency to wander—often, they’re looking for something or someone familiar, or they’re reliving an old routine. At the Benrath

Senior Center in Düsseldorf, Germany, the Alzheimer’s patients wandered away from the facility so often that manager Richard Neureither turned to the local police to retrieve the residents. One day in 2008, Franz-Josef Goebel, chairman of a local seniors’ association, approached Neureither with an unusual idea to keep the seniors safe. “He suggested we build a fake bus stop outside the center to ‘catch’ people who’d snuck out,” says Neureither. “At first, I thought it was ridiculous.” But it worked. Not long after Neureither had the bench and bus stop sign installed, an Alzheimer’s resident believed she needed to

get home to her parents. Instead of arguing with her, the Benrath staff suggested the woman sit at the bus stop. After a few minutes, a nurse went out to wait with her. Eventually, the woman forgot why she was there, and the nurse took her back into the center for a cup of tea. “After a while, their urgency disappears,” Neureither says. “Another thought comes along, and they forget where they wanted to go.”

The Photo Trick That Sells a Home

Who needs to pay a real estate agent when you own a photogenic 90-pound shelter dog? When John and Sara Kanive decided in March 2013 to rent out their two-bedroom Chicago apartment, the photos of their pad showed off more than its wood-burning fireplace and modern kitchen. In each image, their Great Dane–German shepherd mix, Otis, “photobombed” the room—peaking out from behind the kitchen counter or from around a corner in the living room, barely visible behind a bed or peering from behind the slats of a dining room chair. “For the first picture, of the living room, he was just lying on the floor,” John told abcnews.com.



“Then I got the idea to put him in all the pictures.” The trick worked: The Kanives rented their place in less than 24 hours. “Everybody who replied to the ad had something to say about Otis,” John told abcnews.com. “Mostly ‘P.S., I love your dog.’”

Cardboard Cops to Reduce Real Crime

Thanks to a creative approach to crime deterrence, rates of theft, speeding, and other traffic violations have fallen in cities from Boston to Prague. Short on funds for full-time officers, police departments in those cities and others strategically placed cardboard

cutouts of cops in high-crime areas. Bicycle theft at a Cambridge, Massachusetts, subway station fell 67 percent in the months after police attached a cutout to a fence near the bike rack. And cardboard cops have reduced speeding in Sibiu, Romania, so successfully that the police department added cardboard police cars in other high-traffic areas. "Drivers immediately slow down when they see the cutouts," says police spokesman Radu Ionsecu. Cardboard cutouts have helped calm traffic in Bangalore, India, too. Says police commissioner M. A. Saleem, "Cutout cops can be on the job seven days a week."

A Safety Net for the Drought-Stricken

In the foggy, desolate hillsides outside Lima, Peru, water for drinking and irrigation is a luxury. The area's 1.5 centimeters of annual rainfall barely helps, and buying water isn't

an option for residents of this poverty-stricken region. Surprisingly, a piece of mesh hung vertically between two poles is an idea that holds water, literally. Invented by the Meteorological Service of Canada, the so-called fog fences capture water droplets in fog, and they trickle into a collection trough and drain into buckets or tanks. During the nine foggiest months of the year, the community of Bellavista (pop. 200) can harvest 75 gallons of water every night using five large fog fences. "These fog nets have improved our quality of life," says resident Noe Neira Tocto. "We can grow vegetables for our families." Fog fences are also helping irrigate arid regions in other parts of South America and in Africa. Recently, researchers from the Netherlands and China developed an absorbent fabric that may help fog fences collect even more water. **R**



PILLOW TALK

The amount of sleep required by the average person is five minutes more.

ANONYMOUS

I feel sorry for people who don't drink. When they wake up in the morning, that's as good as they're going to feel all day.

FRANK SINATRA

Laugh, and the world laughs with you; snore, and you sleep alone.

ANTHONY BURGESS





SEE

THE WORLD ...

—
Turn the page ➔➔





PREVIOUS SPREAD: AND THIS SPREAD: BOBBY YIP/REUTERS

... DIFFERENTLY

Got soy sauce? On January 9, a Hong Kong restaurant chain created the world's largest sushi mosaic, breaking the Guinness world record. The edible artwork, built on top of ice, measured about 404 square feet. It included 20,647 tasty pieces, which were quickly packed up that day and distributed free to spectators and the homeless.




Just Another Name Fad

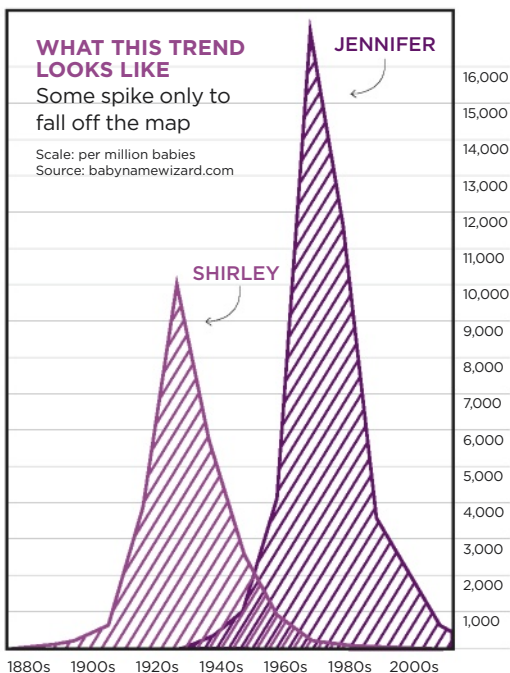
BY TIM URBAN FROM WAITBUTWHY.COM

BETWEEN 1968 AND 1988, a lot of moms and dads named their daughter Jennifer, and now almost no one does. Jennifer was officially a Name Fad. Which means that while Jennifers have enjoyed spending most of their lives with a cute, hip, young-girl name, they are on their way to having Your Mom's Friend's Name (one that many thirty- and fortysomethings have).

A few decades after middle age, Jennifers can look forward to having an Old Lady Name—a name that belongs to lots of women over 75.

This means that Jennifer is irreparably branded with her generation forever. Luckily, she has company:

In 30 years, the names Natalie, Isabella, Samantha, and Ashley will sound how Nancy, Cheryl, Shirley, and Linda do today. And in 60 years, the names Ethan, Jayden, and Brandon will be Earl, Bernard, and Melvin. Why? Because no one is safe from Name Fad. 



PROP STYLIST: ROBIN FINLAY. CHART BY HEATHER JONES

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Presidents come and go, but one thing remains constant in the West Wing

The Pen Made for the White House

BY DAN LEWIS FROM *NOW I KNOW*

☛ THE PENS READ “Skilcraft U.S. Government.” And if you have worked for an American government institution, chances are you’ve used one. About \$5 million worth of these pens are sold every year (with 60 percent going to the military), and they have quite the story behind them.

To start, they’re assembled by the blind. In 1938, in the midst of the Great Depression, the government stepped in to help blind workers, who were already at a competitive disadvantage. Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed into law the Wagner-O’Day Act, which required that the federal government purchase specific goods manufactured by blind Americans. The law soon included pens.

The Skilcraft brand came to be a decade or so later, in 1952. Today, the company employs over 5,500 blind workers in 37 states, producing an arsenal of office supplies, with the pens made in factories in Wisconsin and North Carolina. The pens must be built to the specifications outlined in a 16-page document that was first promulgated more than 50 years ago. Among the requirements? The pens must be able to write continuously for no less than 5,000 feet and in temperatures up to 160 degrees and down to 40 degrees below zero. You know, just in case. **R**



PROP STYLIST: ROBIN FINLAY

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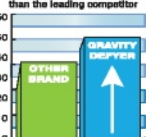
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SHOCK ABSORPTION STUDY HPW Biomechanics, 2012

Shock absorption: Measurement of maximum pressure (KPa).
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CGI effects have humanized Hollywood's epic blockbusters. Here is ...

How to Cast an Ape

BY DAMON BERES

🌀 **KARIN KONOVAL** is a 52-year-old actress, a former dancer, and a 260-pound orangutan (but only in the movies). Playing the role of Maurice, a tough lieutenant in this summer's *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*, Konoval brings her ape alter ego to life when she dons a bodysuit dotted with 40 small "markers" to track her movements, which are picked up by dozens of cameras. A series of up to 50 tracers on her face map out every smile and grimace. She moves



Konoval (top) before advanced special effects transform her into Maurice (bottom)

around the set on special hand stilts that, thanks to over 450 special effects technicians, will later transform into fur-covered arms. Why all the effort? Because in an attempt to

feature animals on-screen, we risk hurting them in the process.

For example: The 1978 film *Every Which Way but Loose* starred Clint Eastwood and an orangutan named Clyde, who was trained to stand upright and walk—unnaturally—on his legs. If he didn't behave properly, the orangutan was purportedly beaten.

While conditions have improved in today's productions, many animals still die from the abuse and neglect that occurs off camera. Director Rupert Wyatt—who won a PETA award for his CGI innovations in *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*—would argue that

an actor's performance is just as good as an animal's. Why? Because actors like Konoval do their research. Before diving into her role in *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*, Konoval spent weeks observing an orangutan named Towan at the Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle. She developed a strong relationship with him; the two would even paint side by side for hours at a time. "One day, he came up to the glass and pressed his face to mine—we stayed like that for about 20 minutes. I was breathless as his eyes traced up and down my face," Konoval says. "It was that 20 minutes that gave me Maurice." **R**

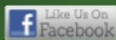
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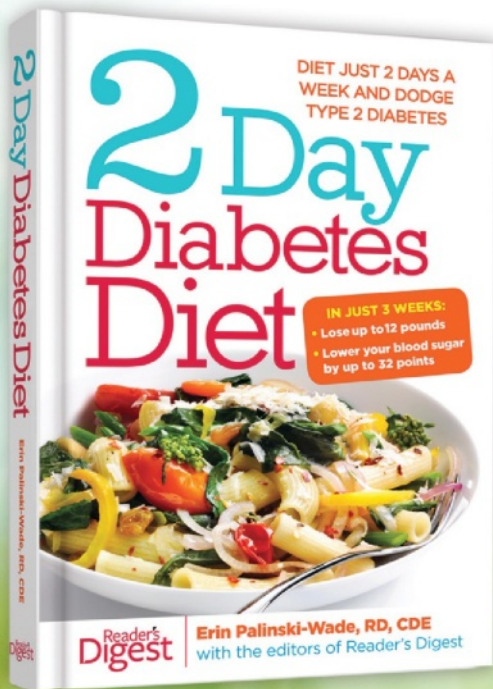
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IT PAYS TO INCREASE YOUR

Word Power

Before you start cramming your suitcase for that dream getaway, make sure you've got the travel lingo down. Take a tour of these terms, then jet to the next page for answers.

BY EMILY COX & HENRY RATHVON

- 1. docent** ('doh-sent) *n.*—A: tour guide. B: side trip. C: frequent flier.
- 2. sojourn** ('soh-jern) *v.*—A: travel nonstop. B: take a guided tour. C: stay temporarily.
- 3. cosmopolitan** (kahz-meh-'pah-leh-tin) *adj.*—A: between stops. B: worldly-wise. C: of space travel.
- 4. prix fixe** ('pree feeks *or* fiks) *n.*—A: confirmed reservation. B: meal with a set price. C: race car.
- 5. couchette** (koo-'shet) *n.*—A: round-trip ticket. B: French pastry. C: train's sleeping compartment.
- 6. funicular** (fyu-'nih-kye-ler) *n.*—A: pleasure cruise. B: cable railway. C: stretch limousine.
- 7. jitney** ('jit-nee) *n.*—A: day trip. B: duty-free shop. C: small bus.
- 8. valise** (vuh-'lees) *n.*—A: car parker. B: small suitcase. C: country cottage.
- 9. sabbatical** (seh-'ba-ti-kul) *n.*—A: break from work. B: lodging overseas. C: seating upgrade.
- 10. ramada** (ruh-'mah-duh) *n.*—A: shelter with open sides. B: dude ranch. C: in-house maid service.
- 11. incidental** (in-seh-'den-tul) *adj.*—A: waiting in a long line. B: minor. C: causing a scandal.
- 12. transient** ('tran-shee- *or* zee-ent) *adj.*—A: going by rail. B: passing through. C: on foot.
- 13. manifest** ('ma-neh-fest) *n.*—A: red-eye flight. B: reservation. C: passenger list.
- 14. rack rate** ('rak rayt) *n.*—A: overhead-luggage charge. B: takeoff speed. C: full price for lodging.
- 15. peripatetic** (per-uh-puh-'teh-tik) *adj.*—A: speaking many languages. B: traveling from place to place. C: crossing a border illegally.

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

Answers

1. docent—[A] tour guide. I followed a *docent* through the museum, pretending to be with a school group.

2. sojourn—[C] stay temporarily. “Will you *sojourn* with us long?” asked the receptionist as I reclined on a bench.

3. cosmopolitan—[B] worldly-wise. Apparently, Sara wasn’t *cosmopolitan* enough for the maître d’ to seat her at any of the best tables.

4. prix fixe—[B] meal with a set price. Alison knew it was a *prix fixe*, but naturally she tried to haggle with the waiter anyway.

5. couchette—[C] train’s sleeping compartment. My *couchette* mates snored peacefully in their bunks.

6. funicular—[B] cable railway. The *funicular* disappeared into the mist halfway up the mountain.

7. jitney—[C] small bus. We chartered a *jitney* for our trip to the cape.

8. valise—[B] small suitcase. Eric grew suspicious after finding someone else’s credentials in his *valise*.

9. sabbatical—[A] break from work. “I’m here on a six-month *sabbatical*,” I tried to explain to the customs agent.

10. ramada—[A] shelter with open sides. My ideal vacation: sipping some colorful cocktail seaside under a *ramada*.

11. incidental—[B] minor. “*Incidental* items can add weight quickly, so pack wisely,” my wife advised.

12. transient—[B] passing through. Thankfully, the brute was a *transient* customer, not a permanent guest.

13. manifest—[C] passenger list. I came from such a big family, we had to keep an official *manifest* for every trip.

14. rack rate—[C] full price for lodging. Savvy travelers never settle for a hotel’s *rack rate*.

15. peripatetic—[B] traveling from place to place. After two *peripatetic* years in Asia, Jason settled down.

DOWNTIME, REDEFINED

These days, vacations come in myriad forms. A **staycation** is when you don’t go anywhere and just enjoy free time at or near home. A **paycation** is when you moonlight as you travel. A **daycation** is a 24-hour getaway. We’ve also heard of a **praycation** (a religious trip) and even a **bakeation** (a foodie’s holiday dedicated to sampling pastries).

VOCABULARY RATINGS

9 & below: Economy
10–12: Business class
13–15: First class

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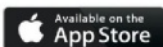
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*Jacobson Jacobson et al. *Am J Gastroenterol.* 2003; 98 (1):51-58

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IN CASE YOU MISSED IT ON

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DECORATING

Cute Crafts to Make in an Afternoon

Add color to your home with ten adorable ideas—including paint-dipped pots—curated from the best of the blogs.

HEALTHY EATING

Drink the Right Tea

A report from consumerlab.com found that certain bottled teas contained almost no ECGC, the potent antioxidant linked to cancer prevention and weight loss. For the most health benefits, make your own.



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WHO KNEW?

Brainteasers and Riddles

"I have a head but no body, a heart but no blood. Just leaves and no branches, I grow without wood. What am I?"

(Answer: Lettuce.)

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QUOTES

Wise Words from Life's Winners

"No matter where you're from, your dreams are valid."

LUPITA NYONG'O,
Oscar-winning actress

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EVERYDAY WELLNESS

Want to Be Happier?

Before starting a new task, ask yourself, What do I most want to see happen? and How would I like to be perceived at the end of it? suggests Sharon Salzberg in *Real Happiness at Work*. Focus on your answers, and you'll reduce stress and be more open to opportunity.



FROM TOP: COURTESY HEATHER FREEMAN/THE LOVELY CUPBOARD; PHOTOGRAPH BY YASU+JUNKO; PROP STYLIST: SARA FOLDENAUER FOR KATE RYAN; JASON LAVERIS/GETTY IMAGES

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Humor in Uniform

WE WERE MARCHING to the chow hall when we spotted a pathetic-looking recruit standing at attention by a mailbox, a whole book of stamps plastered to his forehead. When our drill instructor demanded an explanation, the man bellowed, “This recruit has proved himself worthless and weak and is being mailed home to his mother!” **MARK JONES**, *Glendale, Arizona*

THE MILITARY MAY HAVE invented the Internet, but not all government

schemes have worked as well. In the '60s, the CIA hatched a plan to implant a battery and a microphone in a cat so the furry feline could spy on unsuspecting targets. The program was halted when, after years of research and millions of dollars spent, the spy cat was run over by a cab.

Source: cracked.com

Atten-hut! Send us your funniest military anecdote—it might be worth \$\$\$! Details on page 7 and rd.com/submit.

AIR FARCE

Air Force pilots have a reputation within other branches of the military of leading a rather soft life. According to realpolice.net, their slang might sound like this:



**Navy/
Marines**

Head

Thrown in
the brig

Mud

SEAL

Rack

Army

Latrine

Put in
confinement

Cup of
joe

Special
Forces

Bunk

**Air
Force**

Powder
room

Grounded

Vanilla
latte

Librarian

Single
with ruffle
and duvet

(Don't worry, Air Force, we'll make sure the other branches get theirs!)



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Quotable Quotes



EVERY BOOK IS A SELF-HELP BOOK.

MARC MARON, *comedian*

Enthusiasm is everything. It must be taut and vibrating like a guitar string. **PÉLE**



Not being funny doesn't make you a bad person. Not having a sense of humor does.

DAVID RAKOFF, *author*

TO BE INTERESTED IN THE CHANGING SEASONS ... IS A HAPPIER STATE OF MIND THAN TO BE HOPELESSLY IN LOVE WITH SPRING.

GEORGE SANTAYANA, *philosopher*

You should take your job seriously but not yourself. That is the best combination.

DAME JUDI DENCH

I ALWAYS THOUGHT THE SADDEST FEELING IN LIFE IS WHEN YOU'RE DANCING IN A REALLY JOYFUL WAY, AND THEN YOU HIT YOUR HEAD ON SOMETHING. LENA DUNHAM



Failure seldom stops you. What stops you is the fear of failure.

JACK LEMMON

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