

Reader's digest

NOVEMBER 2014

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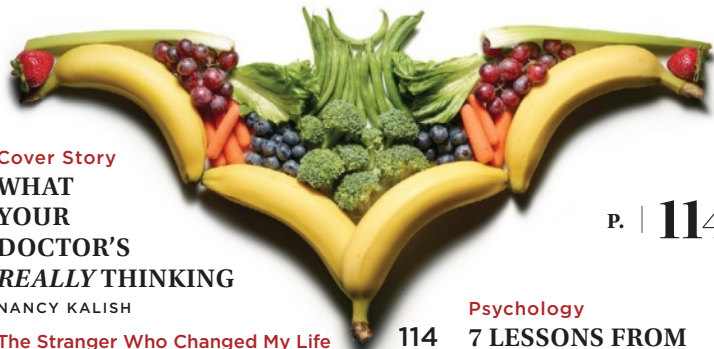


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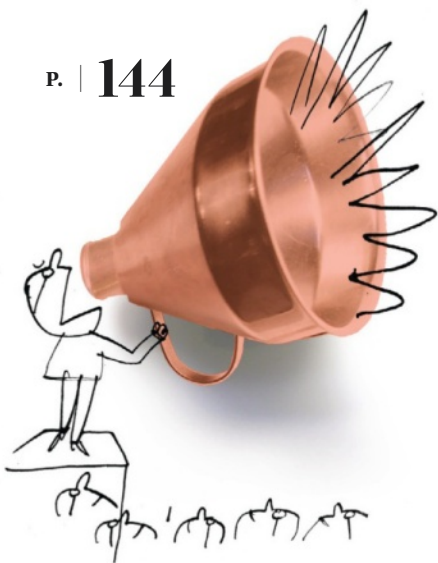
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FROM BUSINESS INSIDER



PHOTOGRAPH BY DAN SAELINGER;
PROP STYLIST: BEKKA MELINO;
HAIR & MAKEUP: AMY GILLESPIE



Editor's Note

The Sound We Live For



THE BEST LAUGHS are the big ones. I'm not talking about the polite chuckling of people in staff meetings when the boss makes a joke.

(In my case, they'd laugh even if I didn't pay them ... Right?)

I'm talking about the squeals of delight that come out of crinkle-nosed children. I'm talking about the deep, unrestrained belly laughs of grown-ups. I'm talking about laughing so hard that there's no sound at all.

For this month's Finish This Sentence (page 26), we asked readers on our Facebook page to complete the thought "The most beautiful sound in the world is ..." Of the 1,188 responders, a whopping 280 of you wrote about someone you love laughing (your baby, your brother, your wife). Isn't it funny how the soul-stirring laughs come from the people who mean the most to us?

My daughters: two toddlers just tucked in. Giggles tumble out of the room they share. My heart does a flip. I stop my own evening routine and rest my head on their doorjamb. "Hear that?" I say to myself.

"That's the most important thing happening right now."

My dad and sister: a Saturday. Sara and I are both home on college break. I'm woken up by the riot downstairs. I hear a cartoon! (In our house, the television was never on before 8 p.m.) Road Runner's on, and there they sit, two adults, out of their minds. Wile E. Coyote runs off a cliff, locks eyes with the camera, plummets to the ground in a wisp of black. Dad, laughing till he can't breathe. Sara, howling and grabbing her gut. Dad, tears streaming down his face.

It's their moment, but it's my memory some 30 years later. Big laughter. The kind you never forget. **R**



I invite you to e-mail me at liz@rd.com and follow me at [facebook.com/lizvaccariello](https://www.facebook.com/lizvaccariello) and @LizVacc on Twitter.



PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE VACCARIELLO;
WARDROBE STYLIST: ELYSHA LENKIN



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Letters

COMMENTS ON THE SEPTEMBER MAGAZINE



The Genius Issue

At the risk of sounding redundant, the Genius Issue is brilliant. I wholeheartedly agree that genius is as varied as the people who possess it—true genius always manifests itself in some kind of art, beauty, goodness, or wisdom. **C. P., via e-mail**

This issue had too many informational articles. I like to relax and unwind with my *RD*, not figure out why things are the way they are.

R. T., via e-mail

3 Myths About the World's Poor

Bill and Melinda Gates know firsthand what they are talking about. Thank you for publishing this, and a big thank-you to the Gateses. The work they are doing is phenomenal.

JUSTINE GILLIGAN, Glendora, California

A Teen's Inspired Invention

I really liked Joseph Anand's comment about his parents teaching him to help others. As a former high school teacher, I have found that many parents expect their children

to learn values in school. It's nice to be reminded that there are parents who still teach their children the important things in life—and that there are young people who actually listen.

SHEILA HENDRY, Waynesboro, Mississippi

The Revolution Will Not Be Supervised

I completely agree with the author. How blessed my siblings and I were to be raised in the '40s and '50s, before the madness of "protection" became the norm.

JOAN SMITH, Cross Junction, Virginia

I was very unsettled by Hanna Rosin's assertions. This article left me feeling like I was doing my children a disservice by taking care of them.

BETH HEADLEY, *Canton, Illinois*

33 Ways to Get a Deal on Anything

As a Starbucks barista, I loved that you suggested bringing in your own cup for a discount—but telling readers to save on iced lattes “by ordering a double shot of espresso over ice and filling the cup with milk from the bar” is, as we see it, stealing!

MARGIE DUBOIS, *Melbourne, Florida*

17 Secrets of Happy Families

I wonder where Bruce Feiler sits when he talks to his family. One secret says to “sit beside your partner when making decisions,” while another says that “patients interacted more socially when they sat facing one another instead of side by side.”

JUDY BONDI, *Sugar Grove, North Carolina*

Judging Jack

What a beautiful piece. The care and attention David McCullough Jr. showed this boy is what all children deserve from the adults in their lives.

CHRISTINA SARGENT, *Gurnee, Illinois*

Someone Should Invent ...

I was pleased and astounded to read that someone else thinks we need a national water pipeline. I once wrote to my congressman with that idea, and he replied that it wasn't “feasible.” Is it feasible to allow floodwaters to destroy lives and property?

JOAN SISSON, *Woodland, California*

A reader said that someone should invent “a phone line to heaven.” Well, duh—it's called prayer, and it's permissible to leave a message!

BEVERLY FERRIS, *Hastings, Nebraska*

PROTECT YOUR DIGITAL LIFE!

Are you concerned about being hacked, having your identity or financial information stolen, or having your children stalked or bullied online? **E-mail your questions** to onlinesafety@rd.com, and a cybersecurity expert from MetLife Defender will tell you how to protect yourself in our December/January issue.

If you've successfully safeguarded your family from these crimes, please **share your story or tip** with us! E-mail us at onlinesafety@rd.com for a chance to appear in our February issue.

Send letters to letters@rd.com or Letters, Reader's Digest, PO Box 6100, Harlan, Iowa 51593-1600. Include your full name, address, e-mail, and daytime phone number. We may edit letters and use them in all print and electronic media. **Contribute** Send us your 100-word true stories, jokes, and funny quotes, and if we publish one in a print edition of *Reader's Digest*, we'll pay you \$100. To submit your 100-word stories, visit rd.com/stories. To submit humor items, visit rd.com/submit, or write to us at Jokes, Box 6226, Harlan, Iowa 51593-1726. Please include your full name and address in your entry. We regret that we cannot acknowledge or return unsolicited work. **Do Business** Subscriptions, renewals, gifts, address changes, payments, account information, and inquiries: Visit rd.com/help, call 877-732-4438, or write to us at Reader's Digest, PO Box 6095, Harlan, Iowa 51593-1595.

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EVERYDAY HEROES




A caretaker put her own fears aside
to rescue a terrified toddler

The Girl Who Fell Down a Hole

BY MEERA JAGANNATHAN

ON A SUNNY SATURDAY in June, Alyson Machigua, three, squealed with laughter as she and her mother, Marlen, played tag in the front yard of their Hackettstown, New Jersey, home. With Marlen close behind, tiny Alyson darted into the backyard of an elderly neighbor. About halfway across the yard, Alyson suddenly disappeared, seemingly swallowed whole by a barely visible opening in the ground. Marlen screamed.

The neighbor's caretaker, Luz Jimenez, 26, was preparing dinner in the neighbor's kitchen and assumed the shrieks were the sounds of children playing. But she ran outside anyway and found Marlen sobbing and Alyson's sister Damary, 25, kneeling on the grass, dialing 911.

"Alyson fell in the hole!" Damary cried to Luz. Luz peered down the hole in disbelief and saw only 



Luz saw water covering the floor of the cavern. Alyson was submerged up to her neck.



“I was taught to always offer help when someone needs it,” says Luz Jimenez, with little Alyson.

darkness. Then she heard Alyson's wails from deep underground.

Luz ran inside the house and down to the basement for a ladder. She settled for a gray extension cord to use as a rope with which to rappel into the hole. Back in the yard, she and Damary used their hands to dig at the hole, widening the opening from seven inches in diameter to about 20 inches. Marlen sat on the grass, too distraught to help. When Hackettstown Police detective Aaron Perkins arrived a few minutes later, Luz was in the hole up to her waist.

"Get out of there," the officer told Luz, hoisting her up by the arms. "It's dangerous for you."

"It's more dangerous for the baby," she countered. "She's going to die."

The detective implored Luz to wait for help, but she was determined. "I've got to do this," she told him.

While Detective Perkins braced one end of the extension cord, Luz lowered herself, arm over arm, about halfway down the 15-foot-deep, rock-lined hole. Her foot located a metal tube that jutted out from the wall of the hole, and she perched on it for a moment. Below, she saw water covering the floor of a four-foot-wide cavern; Alyson was submerged up to her neck. Luz dropped the remaining few feet into the water beside the toddler, then scooped her up.

"Everything is going to be fine," she told the soaked and shivering little girl. "Don't worry."

As they waited for help in two feet of dark water, Luz prayed that there were no snakes swimming at her feet. Since her childhood in Ecuador, she feared nothing more than snakes. Aboveground, Detective Perkins talked to Luz, keeping her calm until help arrived.

Just minutes later, the Hackettstown Fire Department and Hackettstown Rescue Squad arrived and lowered a ladder into the hole. Luz climbed up with Alyson in her arms, then handed her over. Emergency workers rushed the stunned toddler to an ambulance, tearing off her clothes to survey the damage. Alyson was scared and covered in dirt but, amazingly, uninjured. "How can she come up without one scratch?" Alyson's other sister, Rosaura, 18, marveled.

The Machiguas later learned that the cement covering an old septic tank had been pushed down by tree roots, leaving the ground above it vulnerable. A few weeks after the incident, the family had the hole filled with dirt and rocks. Recently, when Rosaura took Alyson for a walk on the newly solid ground, the little girl hesitated at first but slowly grew more confident.

"[Luz] didn't care about the risk of going into the hole," Damary says. "She just jumped."

Says Luz matter-of-factly about the toddler in peril, "I was trying to save her life." **R**



Chris Ihle received a Carnegie Medal for his act.

He Pushed Their Car to Safety

BY NICK HEIL

CHRIS IHLE, 39, had just parked his motorcycle in front of his office in Ames, Iowa, last July when he noticed a Pontiac Bonneville sedan with disabled-person tags stalled on railroad tracks. Then he heard a train whistle from the next intersection.

The former mortgage consultant threw down his sunglasses and keys near his bike and ran toward the car. An elderly man in a neck brace, Jean Papich, 84, sat in the driver's seat, turning the key and hitting the gas. Jean's wife, Marion, 78, was peering nervously at him from the passenger's seat.

Chris ducked under the crossing gates, got behind the car, and pushed, but his boots slipped on the warm asphalt. He could see the train approaching fast.

It might be easier to push the car

backward, Chris thought. He ran around to the front of the vehicle and shouted at Jean to put the car in neutral. Chris could feel the ground rumbling beneath his feet as the locomotive was bearing down on them, brakes squealing and horn blaring. He wedged his boots into the track grooves and shoved. Finally, the car rolled off the tracks.

When Chris looked up, the Union Pacific train's towering grill was just a few feet away. He flattened himself against the side of the sedan as the train roared past.

Stunned and speechless, Chris staggered back to work and poured himself a cup of coffee as a crowd gathered at the scene.

Weeks later, Marion called to thank Chris. He responded, "There's a time to talk and a time to act." **R**

VOICES & VIEWS



Department of Wit

English (According To the World)

FROM REDDIT.COM

ON THE SOCIAL NETWORKING site reddit.com, one user wrote that his Russian wife had had trouble thinking of the phrase “tape measure.” So instead, she asked him, “Do you have a roll of inches?” Her brilliant translation got the redditors going, and they flooded the network with hilarious interpretations they’d heard. Here are some of the best.

My husband is Russian. He once told me, “That train has sailed.” He also frequently gets the “jeeby-creepies.”

HOBBITFEET

A recent conversation with my French husband:

Husband: I almost dropped a plate, but I caught it with my arm-knee!

Me: Your what?

Husband: My arm-knee.

Me: You mean your elbow?

Husband: Yeah. **TARANTUSAURUSREX**

I’m Arab American. In Arabic, “download” and “put down” share the same word. A while back, my cousin came to stay with me. Every time he wanted me to drop him off somewhere, he would say, “Download me here.” I never corrected him. It was awesome. **JACKSRDRT**

It reminds me of when an ESL friend of mine referred to an air horn as “spray scream.” **CLOWN_PRINCE_OF_WEB**

I work with a few Russians, and I always laugh when they say stuff like: “Vere ess Voice Helmet?” “You mean a headset?” “YES! YES! VOICE HELMET!”

REFINEDDESIGN

My Icelandic friend called dimples “smile holes.” **FIVEFOURTWO**

I had a German friend who tried to tell me that I left my gloves in the car: “VikingDan, you left your hand shoes in the car.” I have never referred to them as gloves since. **VIKINGDAN**

My favorite comment: “My Dutch neighbor called the merry-go-round a horse tornado.” **V1000**

- HORSEICANE **THE2BELO**
 - A SYFY ORIGINAL MOVIE!!!!!!
- LAZERMOON**
- THE END IS NEIGH **THE2BELO**

My foreign friend calls a washing machine a “washine.” I want that to be a real word. **HAPPIEST_TREE_FRIEND**

My German friend gets mad when he hears the phrase “back and forth.” He says, “Why would you go back first! It’s forth and back!” **KLATHMON**

I had a German high school teacher who was trying to rewind a tape in

class and blurted out, “WHERE IS THE FAST BACKWARDS BUTTON?!”

MYCARTEL

My Italian tour guide forgot the word for “veal” while translating a menu. Instead, she offered us “son of beef.”

ROALD_HEAD_DAHLE

Sometimes, people who don’t speak English fluently have a poetic way of describing things. When I was in Vietnam, this guy asked if he could practice his English. After a while, I told him I had cancer when I was younger. He said, “When I hear the words you speak, I feel sadness in my heart.”

GRANPASMEDICINE

• That makes me wish people spoke like this more. Instead of saying “I’m sorry” when something bad happens, it would be “I feel sorrow for you.” On a lighter note, at work, when I call Spanish-speaking people to pick up a computer I’m repairing, I string together what little Spanish I know, but I probably sound like that guy in Vietnam. If they have a bad hard drive, for example, what I say translates to “Your computer’s thoughts are finished. Computer isn’t remembering now.”

SOFELLORDPERTH

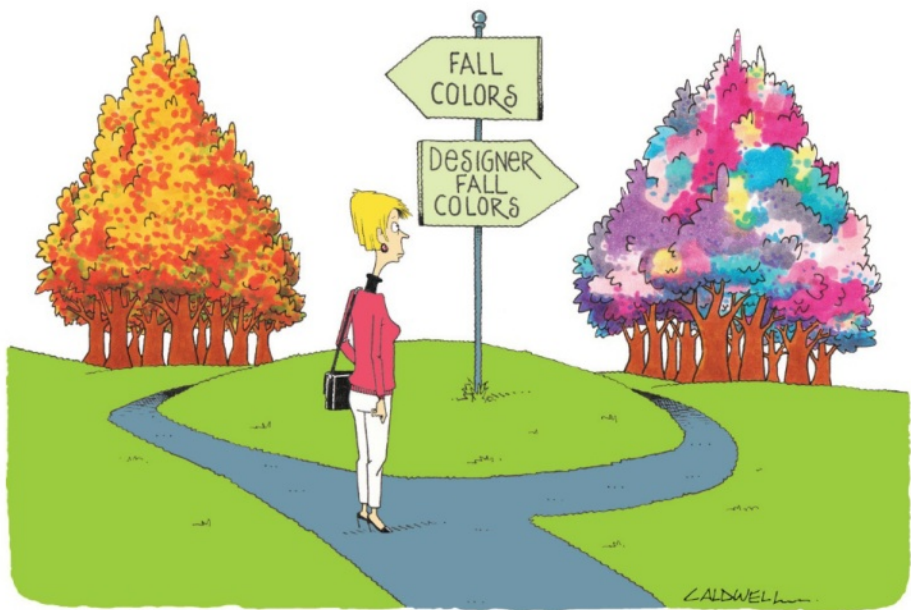
I do not understand why things like this fascinate me when all I can speak is English, but they do.

ONROCKETFALLS **R**



Life

IN THESE UNITED STATES



DAD RARELY dresses up, so when he left the bedroom decked out in a suit and tie, he wanted to commemorate the moment. Handing me a camera, he asked, “Mind taking a selfie of me?”

RACHEL HESTER, *Clover, South Carolina*

THE DMV was as crowded and noisy as ever. When I finally got to the

window, I asked the clerk, “Does the never-ending line of loud people ever drive you crazy?”

She shook her head. “We call it job security.”

ALAN CLIBURN, *Van Nuys, California*

WE WERE STOCKING UP on green beans at the farmers’ market when we asked the young girl

helping us for 15 pounds' worth.

"I can only sell you ten pounds of beans," she said.

"Why?" I asked.

"Because my scale only goes up to ten pounds." **KERRI INGLE**, *Shelby, Ohio*

MY THREE-YEAR-OLD sat in the bathroom with me, watching as I removed my dentures and brushed them. After a few minutes, he asked, "Can you take your ears off too?"

S. W., *via mail*

MALAPROPISMS SOUND just as funny when tweeted:

■ "Time heals all wombs."

■ "The seizure salad ... is so good."

■ "I have no clue why people don't like hammy downs ... Who doesn't like free clothes?"

Source: twitter.com

I'M NOW IN HIGH SCHOOL, so when I ran into my third-grade teacher, I doubted she would remember me.

"Hi, Miss Butcher," I said.

"Hi, Eddie," she replied.

"So you do remember me?" I asked.

"Sure. You don't always leave a good impression, but it is a lasting one."

EDWARD MCMURRAY, *Wayne, Michigan*

THE FIRST TIME my mother flew, she was a nervous wreck. During takeoff, the roar from the engines proved reassuring—it meant they were working, she reasoned. But when the plane leveled off, so did the engines.

Grabbing the armrests, she asked aloud, "Did we stop?"

SAMANTHA EARLS, *Wister, Oklahoma*

SEEN ON AN ONLINE FORUM:

"I hate audio correct."

AARON FERNANDO,

Richmond Hill, New York

IT'S CLASSIFIED

Just because the items in these classified ads are free doesn't mean they're worth it:

FREE: Piano with matching bench seat, very good condition, all keys work probably

Source: Gettysburg Area Merchandiser

FREE: 5 kitchen drawers, all matching naughty pine fronts

Source: Topeka Capital-Journal

FREE VAIN SCREENING

Source: Boston Globe

FREE RENT in exchange for elderly woman

Source: 11points.com

Submitted by James Hutchinson, Carroll Valley, Pennsylvania; Faith Adams, Topeka, Kansas; Annetta Boisselle, Melrose, Massachusetts

Free: \$100, if your funny story about friends or family gets published. For details, see page 7 or rd.com/submit.

Richard Osborne considers the return of basketball superstar LeBron James to Cleveland—and why Ohio kids never really let go

You're Never Too Big To Come Home



RICHARD OSBORNE is the president of Villa Angela-St. Joseph High School in Cleveland and the former managing editor of Cleveland Magazine.

☛ I SEE GHOSTS. They're friendly ghosts, and they are my teachers.

More than four decades after graduating, I returned to Villa Angela-St. Joseph High School in Cleveland. This time, I have an office. It is my old American history classroom, where Mr. Radican held court my junior year and told me that my attitude left a lot to be desired.

Now in my fourth year as a school administrator, I am a senior again. I looked up my permanent record—it really does exist, I discovered—and my rather unspectacular grades reflect my attitude issue. I'm confident I'll do better this time.

Call it a second chance. Whatever this is, I am back home, and the feeling is amazing.

That's why, when LeBron James announced he would leave the Miami Heat and return to his roots to play again for the Cleveland Cavaliers, I understood. What he said about his decision made perfect sense:

"Before anyone ever cared where I would play basketball, I was a kid from Northeast Ohio. It's where I walked. It's where I ran. It's where I cried. It's where I bled. It holds a special place in my heart."



He compared his four-year adventure away with leaving home for college. Those of us he left behind get it. We wonder why no one else does.

For all the millions of words expressed about LeBron's homecoming, here in Northeast Ohio, the most surprising thing about Decision 2.0 has been the spectacle of sputtering around the country.

The online comments are full of it (literally and figuratively).

"Cleveland? Cleveland? Really, now ... CLEVELAND?" But the title of LeBron's *Sports Illustrated* essay announcing his return says it all: "I'm Coming Home."

Yeah, home. The best place in the world. We're not just talking about Cleveland's assets either: the museums, the symphony, the casinos, rock 'n' roll, world-class health care.

Those are important, but the real point is how a town like Cleveland

gets under your skin, how the sense of community, the convenience, the comfort and, yes, the beauty here far outstrip life in more fashionable cities. It cuts right to your heart.

In a way, Cleveland is our little secret. Out-of-town visitors—well versed in “Mistake on the Lake” horror stories—can’t believe how well we live here. And we know why LeBron feels like a member of the family. He *is* a member of the family.

He is devoted to his high school alma mater, St. Vincent-St. Mary, in nearby Akron. He met his wife, Savannah, there. Word is they’d like their children to go there too. They are generous to the school because it is where they came of age and developed their dreams.

I can identify. I met my wife at a dance in the gym where my school and LeBron’s still play each other in basketball. Sometimes those games end with his school ahead, some-

times with mine. Either way, the teams and the fans on both sides always walk away with their pride intact.

That’s the story of life here in Northeast Ohio. It explains why, after a 40-year career in journalism, I gladly—no, gratefully—answered the call to return to my

alma mater, where I work under the watchful gaze of ghosts.

I see Mr. Radican in front of my office desk. He is standing at what once was a blackboard, shaking his head. I believe I detect a small but satisfied smile. **R**

“
The beauty of Cleveland far outstrips life in more fashionable cities. It cuts right to your heart.”



OVERLY HONEST OUT-OF-OFFICE REPLIES

- I’m away from my computer but still available to chat if it’s not about work.
- I’ll be checking e-mail sporadically in between cycling through all these tabs I have open to compare shoe prices.
- If you’d like to contact me, please post your e-mail directly to my Facebook page, where I will be spending the remainder of the day.

Source: someecards.com

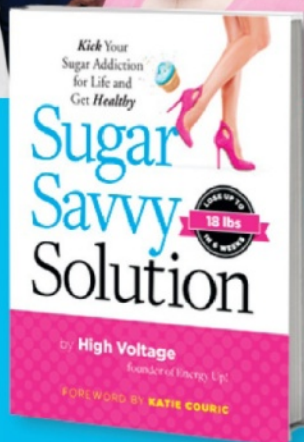
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Your True Stories

IN 100 WORDS

LICENSE TO WED

One summer day in 1957, we headed to the courthouse for a marriage license. My husband-to-be, Steve, asked the clerk for a fishing license. She advised him a fishing license cost \$1.50 and a marriage license cost \$2.50. With some thought and a smile, he chose the marriage license, and so our life together, later filled with two children, began. Whenever we had a disagreement, I would remind my husband that he could have saved money had he chosen a fishing license, and it would have expired in a year. The extra dollar cost him 53 years of wedded bliss.

DONNA KELSEY,

Lake Nebagamon, Wisconsin

MEET THE PARENTS

When I was 39, my longtime foster mom and her new husband were planning their retirement future and decided the time was right to officially add me to their newly blended family. They asked if they could adopt me. I was quite touched. Just before leaving for family court



that morning, I was getting my kids ready for school. My son (age 11 at the time) looked at me quite seriously and said, "Mom, I think it's nice that Nana and Papa want to adopt you, but ... we sure are going to miss you around here."

KAREN CHIPMAN,

Lynn, Massachusetts

PARDON ME, NEIGHBOR

A friend told me that as a kid, his father—a poor farmer and binge drinker—became abusive when drunk, forcing the family to escape into their cornfield, with him frequently shooting after them with his .22 rifle. Their neighbor, an elderly Amish farmer, came by one day explaining that rats had been in his corncrib and asked if anyone could sell him a .22. After a bargain was struck, my friend followed the neighbor and observed him crossing the river bridge, stopping midstream, and dropping the rifle and ammunition.

JAMES DIDLOW, *San Antonio, Texas*

To read more 100-word stories and to submit your own, go to rd.com/stories. If your story is selected for publication in the magazine, we'll pay you \$100.



Officials never told a criminal when to report to jail. Does he have to do time 13 years later?

The Case Of the Forgotten Felon

BY VICKI GLEBOCKI

CORNEALIOUS MICHAEL ANDERSON III was living a good, responsible life. The construction company he had started was doing well. His marriage was strong. His four young children were comfortable, living in a house he'd built himself in a quiet area of St. Louis. Then, early on July 25, 2013, the 36-year-old heard pounding on his front door. When he opened it, he found himself face-to-face with a team of U.S. marshals. They took him to jail.

He knew exactly why.

Almost 14 years earlier, Anderson and his stepbrother had robbed a Burger King employee at gunpoint

as the man made a late-night deposit at a St. Louis bank. On May 19, 2000, Anderson was sentenced to 13 years in prison for armed robbery. He filed an appeal—he claimed that he didn't have a gun and didn't know his stepbrother had planned a robbery—and was released on bond. The appeals court affirmed his conviction, and, in May 2002, after a subsequent appeal to the higher court, the Missouri Supreme Court affirmed it as well. A warrant for Anderson's arrest would be issued immediately.

Except it wasn't.

As time passed, and the police didn't show up, Anderson went on with his life. He had a daughter in ➤➤

2002 and a son in 2006, got divorced in 2007, remarried that same year, and became a stepfather. He incorporated his company in 2009 and had another daughter in 2011. He filed taxes, owned real estate and cars, and kept his driver's license current, all of which required him to file paperwork with various government agencies within the court's jurisdiction. He never used a false name or address.

Only when officials at the Missouri Department of Corrections began to process his release from Southeast Correctional Center did they realize that, due to a "clerical error," he'd never been incarcerated in the first

place. The Missouri Supreme Court finally issued the warrant.

"He was a ghost in the system," says his attorney, Patrick Michael Megaro. On December 30, 2013, Megaro filed a petition in the Circuit Court of Mississippi County for Anderson to appear before a judge, arguing that he was being jailed illegally.

The Missouri attorney general, Chris Koster, claimed that "Anderson took advantage of the situation in the apparent hope that no one would bring [it] to the court's attention."

Should Cornealious Anderson be required to serve his prison sentence? You be the judge.



THE VERDICT

In February 2014, Chicago Public Media's *This American Life* produced a segment on the case that helped rally the public to support Anderson's petition for release. Unexpectedly, Koster, the attorney general, suggested that Megaro file an action against the director of the Department of Corrections, which would force the court to consider if Anderson deserved credit for "time served." Koster explained that the court of appeals had said that "when the department erroneously releases an inmate, without any contributing fault by the inmate, the sentence continues to run while he is at liberty."

Megaro immediately refiled the case. At a hearing on May 5, 2014, after serving ten months in prison, Anderson was freed. "He is a good, decent man who lived a good, decent life for those 13 years," says Megaro. **R**

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

Do you think you have a case? Send a synopsis with your name and location for a chance to be in an upcoming story. Go to rd.com/judge for details.

FACES OF AMERICA

BY GLENN GLASSER



John DeLorenzo

KETCHUM, IDAHO

“Fear. You just have to face it and move forward anyway. I’ve been charged by black bears, and you just have to keep your wits about you and deal with the situation—not let the fear overcome you.”

The most beautiful

Kalama, WA

...silence

in a war zone.

DAWN
JOHNSON-DEAL

...my husband
snoring
next to me.

CAROL VOLZKE KING

Layton, UT

...frogs
croaking
in the
marsh

after a long and
frigid Wisconsin
winter.

KRISTA JEAN
KLAAS-SINGH

...Vin Scully opening up the new season:

“It’s time for
Dodger baseball!”

He is the voice of my youth.

CLAUDINE MONTES

...the wonderful sound of

children
giggling.

CATHERINE BLOOM

Escondido, CA

Phoenix, AZ

...rain

in a drought-stricken place.
EDWINNA ANDERSON SKIPPER

...the silence

in a hot-air
balloon

500 feet over Lake Pleasant.

JIM KING

San Antonio, TX

sound in the world is...

...the snap of
an American flag

on a windy day.

ANGI MAGNANTI

...the remission
bell

in the oncology ward of
a children's hospital.

PHYLLIS BACA FLORES

...the Islamic
call to prayer.

SAHAR FARUKI

...a well-tuned
symphony.

Music is the gateway to the soul.

JARED WABEKE

...bacon
frying.

**KERRY CHAD
ALBRIGHT**

...a cat
sneeze.

JAYME LEVY DUVA

...the
**dismissal
bell**

on the last day
of school!

BRANDI AUSTIN KOTSALIS

...my mother's
voice—

I only get to hear it in my dreams now.

SUZANNE MOORE

👉 Go to [facebook.com/readersdigest](https://www.facebook.com/readersdigest)
for the chance to finish the next sentence.

They may be two-dimensional, but they're much deeper than you think

Life Advice from Cartoon Characters



BY BRANDON SPECKTOR

FOR THIS special edition of Great Minds, *Reader's Digest* has assembled a panel of comic strip all-stars to field questions on life, love, and the pursuit of lasagna, er, happiness. We plucked these words of wisdom directly from the speech bubbles of our favorite funny-page folks: Charlie Brown and some of the *Peanuts* gang—Snoopy, Linus, and Sally; Garfield, the flabby tabby; Dilbert, the Confucius of cubicles, Dogbert, his conniving canine, and Wally, his lazy coworker; and young adventurer Calvin and his stuffed tiger, Hobbes.

You folks are famous for showing up every morning, without fail, to make us laugh. How do you do it?

CHARLIE BROWN: I've developed a

new philosophy: I dread only one day at a time!

CALVIN: Things are never quite as scary when you've got a best friend.

LINUS: Most psychiatrists agree that sitting in a pumpkin patch is excellent therapy for a troubled mind.

SALLY: I'm taking the advice of Theodore Roosevelt: Speak softly, and carry a beagle.

WALLY: One day, I realized that *sadness* is just another word for *not enough coffee*.

Great. But I notice the animals haven't piped up yet.

DOGBERT: This is called a yawn. [Yawns] When you see one, stop talking about yourself.

GARFIELD: All I do is eat and sleep. Eat and sleep. Eat and sleep. There must be more to a cat's life than that. But I hope not.

SNOOPY: There's no sense in doing a lot of barking if you don't really have anything to say.

Excellent point, Snoopy. Hey, Dilbert gang: You're the office stiffs on the panel. What are your tips for succeeding at work?

DOGBERT: Work is for losers. A winner says, "That's on my list," and never commits to a deadline.

DILBERT: All great ideas look like bad ideas to people who are losers. It's always good to test a new idea with known losers to make sure they don't like it.

WALLY: Become indispensable to the company. Indispensable employees can get away with outrageously annoying behavior.

Speaking of annoying, how do you handle people who are incompetent or obnoxious?

CHARLIE BROWN: If you can't beat 'em, cooperate 'em to death!

DOGBERT: I believe in karma. That means I can do bad things to people all day long, and I assume they deserve it.

CALVIN: In my opinion, we don't devote nearly enough scientific research to finding a cure for jerks.

HOBBS: The problem with people is that they're only human.

How do you spend your free time?

DILBERT: I like to read obscure articles on the Internet and imagine having friends who are interested in the same things.

WALLY: Of all the pleasures of life, I think I like nitpicking the best!

CALVIN: My favorite ritual is eating three bowls of chocolate-frosted sugar bombs and watching TV cartoons all Saturday morning.

SNOOPY: Jogging is very beneficial. It's good for your heart and your legs and your feet. It's also very good for the ground—it makes it feel needed!

Next question: You are named president for a day. What statement do you make at your press conference?

DOGBERT: I'm calling on the dogs of the world to rise up and take their rightful places as rulers of the planet.

GARFIELD: I seek truth. But a cookie will do.

DILBERT: My plan is to act randomly and hope for the best.

CALVIN: I say it's a fallacy that kids need 12 years of school! Three months is plenty!

CHARLIE BROWN: As soon as a child is born, he or she should be issued a dog and a banjo.

Charlie, you're circulating a petition to get on the ballot for 2016. Do you really think you stand a chance?

CHARLIE BROWN: There must be millions of people all over the world who never get any love letters ... I could be their leader.

Can everyone else give us their best love advice?

GARFIELD: I love lasagna! I love to smear it on my body. Which ensures I don't have to share it with anyone.

Well, that's not quite what we had in mind, but thanks. Other answers?

CALVIN: If you can find even one person you really like, you're lucky. And if that person can also stand you, you're *really* lucky.

SALLY: When no one loves you, you have to pretend that everyone loves you.

WALLY: I don't have a wife, but I do have Wi-Fi. I find that it meets all of

my social and intellectual needs.

SNOOPY: You can't hurry love or pizza. Especially pizza.

Time to wrap up. Please share your personal mottoes.

SALLY: They say the best way is just to

live one day at a time. If you try to live seven days at a time, the week will be over before you know it.

LINUS: No one need ever be ashamed of fingernails made dirty by a hard day's work.

SNOOPY: A watched supper dish never fills.

CHARLIE BROWN: Life is like an ice-cream cone: You have to learn to lick it!

GARFIELD: Life is like a hot bath: It feels good while you're in it, but the longer you stay, the more wrinkled you get.

CALVIN: I say if your knees aren't green by the end of the day, you ought to

seriously reexamine your life.

WALLY: I take the Zen approach of having no friends and doing no work. Hence, perfect balance.

DILBERT: Ninety percent of happiness is picking the right ethicist.

DOGBERT: Dance like it hurts. Love like you need money. Work when people are watching.



“
Dance like it hurts. Love like you need money. Work when people are watching.



Sources: dilbert.com, garfield.com, peanuts.com, *Peanuts Guide to Life* (Hallmark), gocomics.com, and bookriot.com

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That's something even cats find amazing.

Points to Ponder

IF YOU HAVE SOMEONE that you think is the one ... take that person, and travel around the world ... When you come back and you land at JFK, if you're still in love with that person, get married at the airport.

BILL MURRAY,
actor, in a speech at a bachelor party

CITIES ESCAPE US, run away from us, woo us, and dump us. Cities have a mind of their own.

MICHELE FILGATE,
writer, in the *Brooklyn Quarterly*

EVERYTHING, PARTICULARLY something as intimate as a meal, is a reflection of both a place's history and its present political and military circumstances. In fact, the meal is where you can least escape the realities of a nation's situation.

ANTHONY BOURDAIN,
host of CNN's Parts Unknown, on blogsofwar.com

IF YOU DON'T LISTEN eagerly to the little stuff when [your children] are little, they won't tell you the big stuff when they are big, because to them, all of it has always been big stuff.

CATHERINE M. WALLACE,
author, in *U.S. Catholic*

A UNIVERSITY'S OBLIGATION is not to teach students what to think but to teach students how to think ... If students graduate with ears and minds closed, the university has failed both the student and society.

MICHAEL BLOOMBERG,
former mayor of New York City,
in a commencement speech

A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO came up the same time we did ... you see them fade, and you can see why. They're attached to a decade and have to milk that to live.

TOM PETTY,
musician, in *Rolling Stone*

There is no more wasteful entity in medicine than a rushed doctor.

SANDEEP JAUHAR,
cardiologist, in the *New York Times*



Prayer is when you talk to God. Meditation is when you're listening. Playing the piano allows you to do both at the same time.

KELSEY GRAMMER,
actor, in Esquire



NAMES WORK HARD: They can affect who gets into elite schools and who gets hired, and they can even influence what cities we live in and what products we buy, since we're attracted to things and places that share similarities to our names.

CODY C. DELISTRATY,
writer and historian, in the Atlantic

WHEN, IN THE HISTORY of this country, have we ever given rights to a group of people and—once we've had time to adjust to the change—regretted the decision later? Never. Not once.

TODD GLASS,
comedian, in his book The Todd Glass Situation

MOST [ATHLETES] try to act too cool. It always bugged me. Be interesting. Say something. Show a little personality. Have fun with yourself. Don't take it too seriously.

MICHAEL STRAHAN,
cohost of Live with Kelly and Michael and former NFL player, in Men's Fitness

MY GENERATION WAS raised being able to flip channels if we got bored, and we read the last page of the book when we got impatient. We want to be caught off guard, delighted, left in awe.

TAYLOR SWIFT,
musician, in the Wall Street Journal

People say to me, "Why don't you play weak characters?" And I say, "I don't know any weak women!"

REESE WITHERSPOON,
actress, on huffingtonpost.com

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ART *of* LIVING

Giving Is Great. Giving *Smart* Is Better

Once homeless and hungry, writer **Deb Martinson** tells us how to donate goods that won't go to waste

FROM XOJANE.COM

☛ **TRADITIONALLY**, those of us who give to food banks will clean out our cabinets and drop off the rejects. As a formerly homeless person, I'd like to ask you to try something different this year: Give like a hungry person. If all your meals for the next week were ➤



coming from a donation box, what would you put in there? Here are a few suggestions:

1 DON'T GIVE OUTLANDISH THINGS

I once received a tub of candied fruitcake fruit from a food bank. When I ran out of everything else and ate some, I thought, I am so poor, I've been reduced to eating other people's rejects. Some food is just too horrible to wish on anyone else; throw it out instead.

2 DO GIVE NO-COOK FOODS

When I was homeless, I didn't carry my microwave around. Others have a hard time cooking if their landlord won't fix the broken stove or if the power company shut off the electricity. So give granola bars, crackers, Spam, tuna, peanut butter, dry milk—anything you'd take on a long hike.

3 LEAVE FOOD IN THE ORIGINAL PACKAGING

If it needs to be portioned out, volunteers at the food bank will take care of it.

4 THINK SIMPLE

A boxed cake that says *Just add water* is better than one that requires milk, eggs, vegetable oil, and whatever else. Instant coffee is great; ground coffee less so. Also good are multitaskers—Bisquick rocks.



5 LABEL SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

People with food allergies or celiac disease often can't find donated food they can eat. If you donate gluten-free food, mark it *GLUTEN-FREE* in large print. Do the same for allergen-free items. Clear labeling will help get the right food to the right clients.

6 MAKE IT EASY TO OPEN

Aseptic—or sterile—packaging and pouches are better than pull-top cans, which are better than traditional cans. It sucks even more than usual to be hungry if you've got a perfectly good can of food and no way to get the thing open. And avoid glass jars—they break too easily.

7 ASK WHAT'S NEEDED

The food bank may want non-food items, like soap, toilet paper, tampons and pads, diapers, and pet food, because these can't be

purchased with food stamps. I never would have guessed the food bank near my house needs plastic bags.

8 CHECK YOUR GROCERY STORE

Many stores work with local food pantries to assemble bags of food you can buy and donate for five or ten bucks. It's an easy way to give.

9 BE NICE

I still remember how finding cookies in my bag could make me happy all day. When you're poor, small things take on more signifi-

cance. Try to include at least one item you'd choose as a treat for your kids. Someone else's kids will love you.

10 CONSIDER DONATING CASH

Large organizations can get much better deals on food than you can. With \$10, Feeding America (feedingamerica.org) can provide 90 meals to hungry people.

Of course, the important thing is to do what you can. Giving food to hungry people is awesome, and I love you for it no matter what you donate (unless it's candied fruitcake fruit).

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YOU DONATED ... WHAT?!

When an earthquake or hurricane strikes, we want to help. But sending the wrong items can bottleneck important donations and waste the time of aid workers, which is what happened with these unhelpful donations:

- A 200-pound king-size mattress
- Designer shoes and handbags
- Pork for Muslim earthquake victims in Turkey
- A load of Spanish flags
- A case of Viagra
- Refrigerators that run on a voltage different from what is used locally. (They were used as tables.)
- Crates of Red Bull
- A carnival-style tiger costume
- Winter coats for earthquake survivors in Haiti, even though it's never cold enough to warrant a winter coat there, even in January
- Pets
- Swimsuits

From: fastcoexist.com, yahoo.com

Not sure what to give or to whom? The National Donations Management Network (aidmatrixnetwork.org) is a clearinghouse for relief organizations and includes a list of their immediate needs.



A young writer struggled to say goodbye until he got one final look at ...

Dad's Closet

BY DAMON BERES

☛ PAUSE FOR A moment and imagine what's in your closet. There might be an old pair of shoes, a ratty denim jacket that you wore on a memorable first date, and a box of junk you wouldn't know how to sell or get rid of.

And that's exactly as it should be: A closet is haphazard, untamed—a slow, years-long collection of exactly what makes you the person you are. So the tension rose in my chest when my mom recently decided to move because it meant we would have to clean out Dad's closet, nearly a decade after his death.

Dad's closet remained a constant for the 18 years I knew him, though I had no idea how important it would one day become. A brain tumor ate away at the parts of the mind that made Louis Harry Beres the special

person he was—sharp, warm, and the best kind of always-prepared worrier—until he was bound, mostly silent, to a hospice-provided chair. But when your body goes, your closet stays.

In the years after his death, I would sometimes walk into that closet when I was home visiting for the holidays. I had moved many miles away, starting a life elsewhere as my mom took pains to slowly evolve her home—upgrading the decor, sweeping away the dust of



grief, and making it once again a place for warmth and gathering.

When I opened the door to Dad's closet last Christmas, I saw so many ties, any number of too-big shirts, and more loafers than I had remembered. And there were the vital things: a burgundy handkerchief I'd rip out of his jacket pocket when he'd lift me up after arriving home from work, the bright red Windbreaker he'd wear golfing and on family vacations. Beneath all of that were massive jars of pennies, clearly worth far less now than he'd thought they would be when he'd started the stockpile. Even these germ bits

of currency were a part of this man, the son of an immigrant candy-shop owner who would get on his hands and knees to retrieve any wayward coins we left on our bedroom floors.

In the closet, I could remember the dad I had before I knew the words *malignant glioblastoma multiforme*. I worried that would go away when my mom moved.

I talked to my girlfriend about it. I rolled around nervously in bed. Could I stand to see this closet one last time before Mom moved? Would I find the strength to help clear that stuff out?

Then, a shock: "I had no idea," my mom said. "I cleaned it out already."

The announcement knocked me sideways. What had she thrown out? Was the Windbreaker safe? What about the hankie? Would seeing this empty closet to which I'd secretly ascribed such meaning jolt my heart and cause me to have a meltdown?

I flew home shortly thereafter, trying to keep my mind off it with fitful naps on the plane. It was all I could think about during the car ride home. When we finally got through the front door, I knew where I was going: to see this hollow closet that I swore would crush me.

I pulled the doors open. What happened next surprised me: There was no panic—just peace. Sure, Dad's stuff was mostly gone, but I realized then that I didn't need to see the handkerchief and Windbreaker to remember what we had. (My mom had known to save these things for me anyway.) The objects were just an outer layer above the warm memories I held within.

This closet had been a connection to him, but it was more a relic I couldn't let go of. What I found, standing in what remained, was that it was easy to move on from old shirts and jackets. After all, clothes don't make the man, and though objects may help us tell a story, they are not stories themselves.

“

A closet is a slow, years-long collection of exactly what makes you the person you are.

R

Cut Holiday Cleanup Time in Half

BY JANET SOBESKY FROM *WOMAN'S DAY*

■ **BLENDER** Fill it one-third full with warm water and a few drops of dishwashing liquid. Run it for ten seconds. Rinse and dry.

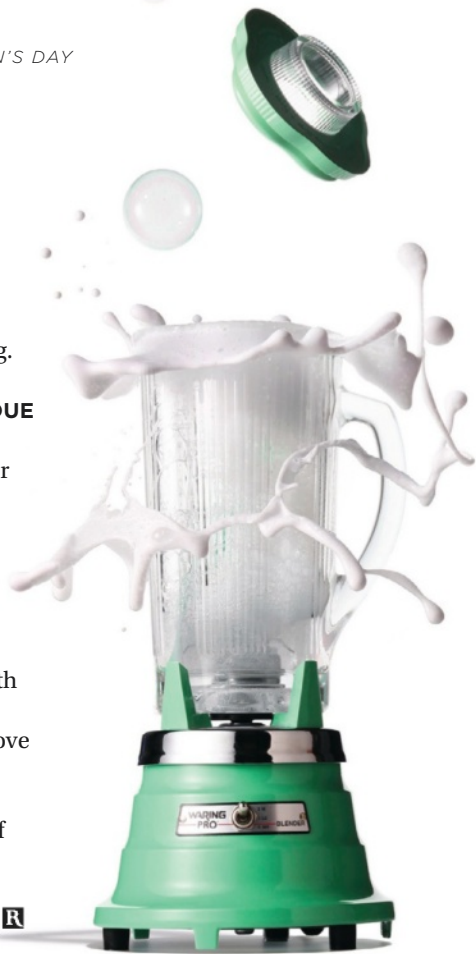
■ **FINE CHINA OR GLASSWARE** Place a soft towel on the bottom of the sink as a cushion when washing.

■ **EGG, MILK, AND CHEESE RESIDUE** Rinse dishes with cold water first; then wash with hot water. Hot water can “cook” foods onto surfaces, making them harder to scrub.

■ **BOX GRATER** Rub a raw potato over the openings; rinse and dry.

■ **PLASTIC CONTAINERS** Wash with a solution of 4 tablespoons baking soda to 1 quart warm water to remove oil stains. Rinse and dry.

■ **GREASY DISHES** Add a couple of tablespoons of white vinegar to the rinse water to reduce oil buildup and make dishes sparkle.





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

Food-Storage Tricks the Package Won't Tell You

BY KELSEY KLOSS

Brown Sugar

Store the sweet crystals with “friends” to prevent hardening. Transfer to an airtight plastic container and include moist items like marshmallows, a slice of bread, or apple slices; the sugar will soak up the moisture and stay soft. Or, invest in a Brown Sugar Bear (pictured). Soak the reusable terra-cotta teddy in water for 20 minutes and store with your sugar to prevent hardening or to soften sugar that's become a brick.

Flour

Keep whole wheat flour chilled. High oil levels in the wheat germ can make this baking staple go rancid if kept in the pantry too long. If you

use it infrequently, store in an airtight container in the fridge, where it can last two to six months. Sniff to check freshness—it should be almost completely odorless. Toss it if it smells sharp or bitter. (Regular white flour can last about a year in the pantry in an airtight container.)

100% Maple Syrup

Once opened, store in the freezer

to preserve if you use it rarely. Because of its high sugar content, syrup won't freeze. Pure maple syrup should last indefinitely unopened in the pantry; once opened, it can last up to a year refrigerated.

Cheese

Let it breathe. Wrap cheese in porous material. If you



don't have cheese paper, parchment will also work. Avoid tinfoil and tight plastic wrap. Failing to expose cheese to enough oxygen will cause it to dry out quickly.

Soy Sauce

Watch the color. Common varieties are reddish brown when fresh. If it's darkened, this go-to Asian-food ingredient has likely fallen victim to oxidation. Soy sauce doesn't need to be kept chilled, but refrigeration will help the flavor remain at peak quality longer. It should last up to two years this way.

Butter

You can freeze bars you don't plan to use quickly. This will prevent spoilage and the scent absorption of, say, Chinese leftovers. In the fridge, unopened butter should last about four months. It can stay in the freezer for about a year. Leave wrapped sticks in the original carton, then enclose in double plastic freezer bags. One sign you need to freeze butter: inconsistent color, which means you're not using yours fast enough. Butter that is lighter on the inside than on the outside is no longer fresh, thanks to oxidation—color should be consistent.

Spices (Red Ones)

Stash red spices in the fridge. Paprika, cayenne powder, and chili powder will stay fresher and keep their bright color—which can be dulled by light and heat—longer.

Olive Oil

Stick to small bottles unless you're heavy-handed. Once opened, olive oil can go rancid in as little as three months (even though the bottle might say it will last longer). Fresh olive oil smells like green, ripe olives and has a bright, peppery taste with a kick; be wary of a crayon- or putty-like odor, which indicates spoilage.

Honey

Revive crystallized honey by placing the jar in a frying pan on the stove with simmering water; stir the honey until the crystals have dissolved. Don't keep honey in the fridge, which can make it crystallize. Honey can last forever even once opened (pots of it have been excavated from ancient Egyptian tombs, still preserved) because enzymes in bees' stomachs create by-products that fight bacteria.



Peanut Butter

Flip natural varieties upside down to allow the pool of oil near the lid to move through the rest of the jar and make the peanut butter creamier (and to skip messy stirring). Just make sure the cap is screwed on tight to avoid a greasy pantry shelf.

Mayonnaise

Store in the fridge door. In the inner part of the fridge, mayo may get too cold, which will cause it to separate and leave oil at the top of the jar. If kept in the refrigerator door, your tasty sandwich dressing will last two to three months past the purchase date.



6 STAPLES THAT LAST LONGER THAN YOU THINK

■ **VANILLA** Because of its high alcohol content, it can keep indefinitely, although the flavor and aroma will be best within five years. Keep away from light and heat, but do not refrigerate, even after opening, or the extract will be damaged.

■ **VINEGAR** The high acidity acts as a natural preservative that thwarts germ growth, so it can also last indefinitely. In some varieties other than white distilled, color alterations or cloudiness may develop after time, but this doesn't affect taste or quality.

■ **WORCESTERSHIRE SAUCE** Like many wines, this sauce gets better with age. The flavor intensifies as the liquid evaporates. Worcestershire should last for

up to ten years unopened and two to three years opened if stored in a cool, dark place.

■ **SALT** It's essentially a stone. Just as granite won't become infested with mold and bacteria, neither will your favorite edible "rock star" condiment.

■ **DRIED PASTA** If you cook and eat it after a decade, for instance, it may lose a bit of flavor, but unopened dried pasta is edible indefinitely.

■ **CANNED OR DRIED BEANS** They'll be ready to cook even if they've been stashed in the corners of your pantry for years. Dried beans may need a bit more soaking after long periods of time. **R**

Sources: spicesinc.com, [Good Housekeeping](http://GoodHousekeeping.com), livestrong.com, answers.com, [Smithsonian](http://Smithsonian.com), lifehacker.com, thekitchn.com, formaticum.com, about.com, [Cook's Illustrated](http://Cook'sIllustrated.com), foodservicewarehouse.com, thenibble.com, wildernessfamilynaturals.com, rodellekitchen.com, organizeyourlife.com, kitchendaily.com, ivillage.com, businessinsider.com, Institute of Culinary Education

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It all starts with a **NESCAFÉ.**

A babysitting bachelor lays out his cookie-baking battle plan. But his nephew, niece—and Barbie—have their own agendas.

It's Uncle Stevie Time!

BY STEVE FRIEDMAN FROM *WONDERTIME*

Step One Coax staff to the table. Ask the children if they're ready to have some great fun making cookies. Tell the children it's cookie-making time. Inform them that Mommy will be upset if she comes home and they haven't helped Uncle Stevie make cookies. Rub head. Wonder, not for the first time, why you promised your sister you would babysit for five hours. Tell staff they can watch *Barbie as the Princess and the Pauper* for five more minutes, and then they're going to make cookies.

Twenty minutes later, promise Isaac, the seven-year-old, that if he comes to the table right now he can watch *Shark Tale* and *Finding Nemo* and *Shrek* and *Shrek 2* when Mommy comes home, and of course he can read a few chapters of *The Lion, the Witch, and the*



Wardrobe before bedtime and that yes, why *wouldn't* Mommy fight a best-of-seven sword-fighting duel with him and then sing songs to him until he falls asleep? Assure Iris, the 3¾-year-old, that, affirmative, if it's important to her, you will henceforth address her as "Little Dog" because "that's my name today," and certainly she can eat as much cookie dough as she wants before you make the cookie balls.

Step Two Establish chain of command. Demand that your staff identify themselves. Ask, "Who are you?"

"We're kids," Iris says.

"No, we're not," Isaac barks. "We are cookie-making soldiers!"

Adopt a stern tone.

"You're what, soldier?"

"We're cookie-making soldiers, sir! Uncle Stevie, sir!"

Iris is crying. "You scaring Barbie!"

"It's OK, Iree. I'm just—"

"My name is Little Dog!" she screams.

"You have to say, 'Yes, sir, Uncle Stevie, sir!' first," Isaac reminds her.

"You shut up!"

"No, you shut up!"

"C'mon, kids, let's all—"

"We're not kids, sir, Uncle Stevie, sir!"

"No, I know, Isaac, you're soldiers. But let's just relax. It's OK, Iree, you don't have to cr—"

"I'm not Iree. I'm Little Dog!"

Step Three Assign titles. Tell Little Dog that she will be your assistant. You read somewhere that giving children titles helps them feel empowered. "So when I want you to do something, I'll say, 'Assistant, please help me,' OK?"

"Only if Barbie can be *my* assistant."

"That's fine, Ir—, I mean, Little Dog."

"Sir!" says Isaac. "Uncle Stevie, sir! I suggest that Iris start at something lower than assistant because she's little, and sometimes she doesn't get things right the first time."

Thank God that Iris is so busy making Barbie jump on the bags of chocolate, she doesn't take offense.

"And since I was already assistant, Uncle Stevie, sir, I think I should have another title."

"OK, soldier, what title do you want?"

"I think I should be 'apprentice.'"

"OK, Isaac, soldier, you're apprentice."

Rub head. Rub eyes. Wonder how your sister does it. Wonder how any parent does it.

Step Four Establish hygienic standards. Announce hand-washing maneuvers. Include Barbie.

"Uh-uh," Iris says. "We didn't just go potty, so we don't haveta."

"She's right," Isaac says. "That's the rules."

Reflect upon the places you have seen the children's hands since you

arrived earlier in the afternoon and wonder that you haven't already started manifesting symptoms of diphtheria and typhoid. Marvel that all parents on earth aren't in bed, shivering with a fever and exhaustion and shattered spirits.

Explain that while everyone present loves and respects Mommy, it's Uncle Stevie time, with Uncle Stevie rules. Pray that no one you know ever learns you used the phrase "It's Uncle Stevie time, with Uncle Stevie rules." Beg your apprentice to persuade your assistant to participate in hygienic maneuvers.

When your assistant informs you that under no circumstances will she wash her hands, and that you're stupid and mean, just like her brother, and that Barbie hates both of you, try this: "If you don't wash your hands, some really horrible germs that make you throw up and give you diarrhea might get in the cookies, and everyone will eat them and then even Barbie might get diarrhea!"

Spend a few minutes drying 3¾-year-old tears and hating yourself.

Step Five Complete campaign. Make cookie dough. Form cookie balls. Help Little Dog make cookie ball for Barbie. Allow Little Dog to gobble as much cookie dough as she can hold. Promote apprentice to sous-chef. Place cookie balls in oven. Settle staff back on couch in front of DVD player. Cue up *Barbie as the Princess and the Pauper*. Sink into couch. Hold face in hands. Breathe.

"Stevie?"

"Yes, Little Dog."

"Barbie's cookie will be the prettiest."

"I think you're right, sweetie."

"And Stevie?"

"Uh-huh?"

"Barbie says she loves you, and can we make cookies with you tomorrow, if we promise we'll wash our hands and remember to call you Uncle Stevie, sir?"

Don't let your staff see you weep. **R**

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PUTTING THE "SMART" BACK IN PHONES

- My phone keeps autocorrecting "exercise" to "dreadful idea."

@REXHUPPKE

- "Thou putst the 'fie' in selfie." —Modern Shakespearean insult

@JAMESURBANIAC



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A fresh look at one of the oldest health controversies on the planet

Caffeine: Does It Harm Or Heal?

BY DAVID SCHARDT

FROM NUTRITION ACTION HEALTHLETTER



When Caffeine Helps

■ SLEEP DEPRIVATION

Caffeine combats drowsiness by tricking your brain into feeling alert. It temporarily blocks adenosine, a naturally sedating brain chemical, to prevent fatigue. “If you don’t get a full night’s sleep, you’ll wake up with more adenosine in your brain than you normally would,” explains Timothy Roehrs of the Sleep Disorders and Research Center at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. A hit of caffeine neutralizes adenosine and helps you feel less sleepy. If you’re a regular coffee guzzler, though, you

may need an extra boost to counter your late night. “As tolerance develops, the brain makes more receptors for adenosine,” says Roehrs. “So you need more caffeine to block the added receptors.”

■ ALERTNESS

People who don’t use caffeine regularly “usually become significantly more alert and better able to perform cognitive and motor tasks—like paying attention during boring or rote routines such as typing—if they’re given the proper caffeine dose,” says Laura Juliano, a professor

of psychology at American University in Washington, DC. (For people who do use caffeine regularly, however, it offers few, if any, benefits.)

■ WORKOUTS

“Caffeine can improve physical performance in an endurance exercise like running, but the effect is less for short bursts of movement such as lifting weights or sprinting,” says Matthew Ganio, a professor of kinesiology at the University of Arkansas.

Caffeine prompts the body to burn more fat stores instead of the limited stores of carbohydrate in our muscles. When the muscles run out of carbohydrate, you get tired. The benefit may be smaller in regular caffeine users.

■ PARKINSON'S DISEASE

In a study of more than 300,000 U.S. men and women, those who consumed at least 600 mg of caffeine a day (an eight-ounce cup of coffee has between 95 and 200 mg) were about 30 percent less likely to be diagnosed with Parkinson's over the following ten years than those who consumed the least caffeine (less than 20 mg a day). Parkinson's patients gradually lose the nerve cells that produce the neurotransmitter dopamine. Caffeine protects those nerve cells.

■ ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

“In mice, caffeine not only defends against inevitable memory impair-

ment,” says Gary Arendash of the University of South Florida, “but also substantially decreases the amount of beta-amyloid, the bad protein that many researchers believe is the root cause of the disease.” The few human studies have been inconsistent. In a Hawaiian study that tracked nearly 3,500 middle-aged men for 25 years, those who had reported consuming at least 400 mg of caffeine a day were 55 percent less likely to have brain lesions characteristic of dementia at their death than those who said they consumed less than 140 mg a day. However, they were no less likely to be diagnosed with dementia during their lifetime.

■ HEADACHE

When the pain comes on, the blood vessels in your brain widen; caffeine constricts them. It's also a mild pain reliever.

When Caffeine May Hurt

■ PREGNANCY

The March of Dimes recommends that women who are pregnant or trying to become pregnant consume no more than 200 mg of caffeine a day because the harmful effects of more than that on fertility and fetal health “cannot be ruled out.”

■ DISRUPTED SLEEP

“People don't realize how much caffeine affects their sleep,” says Juliano. “For those who are slow metabolizers

of caffeine, there's still enough in their system to disrupt sleep at night even if they stop consuming it much earlier in the day." People who go off caffeine typically say they sleep longer and sounder, both Roehrs and Juliano report.

When Caffeine Doesn't Matter

■ HEART RHYTHM

In a study that followed more than 130,000 men and women for 30 years, drinking coffee (regular or decaf) didn't increase the risk of cardiac arrhythmias, even among those with existing heart conditions.

■ WEIGHT

Many companies add caffeine to weight-loss pills because it speeds up the metabolic rate, at least for a short period of time. Yet "there's little evidence that consuming caffeine leads to significant weight loss or helps people keep weight off," says Ganio.

■ BLOOD PRESSURE

While caffeine users experience a modest increase in blood pressure, long-term studies don't show a clear link between coffee consumption and the development of hypertension, notes Rob van Dam of the National University of Singapore. **R**

CENTER FOR SCIENCE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST (DECEMBER 2012).
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ARE ENERGY DRINKS DANGEROUS?

The evidence is ominous: Energy drinks can have more than five times the caffeine of a cup of coffee, as well as other stimulating ingredients that can amplify caffeine's effects. Consumption of energy drinks resulted in 20,783 emergency room visits for adverse reactions or abuse in 2011, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. A recent study found that energy drinks may disrupt heart rate and raise blood pressure. Since 2004, over 30 deaths have been linked to energy drinks in the United States, prompting the FDA to announce an investigation in 2012. Last year, a 16-year-old girl from Arizona went into cardiac arrest and died while on vacation in Mexico: According to reports, she'd consumed multiple energy drinks without water that day. Experts say healthy adults can safely consume about two energy-shot drinks daily, but those with underlying heart conditions should ask their doctor before trying them, and teens and children should abstain completely.

KELSEY KLOSS

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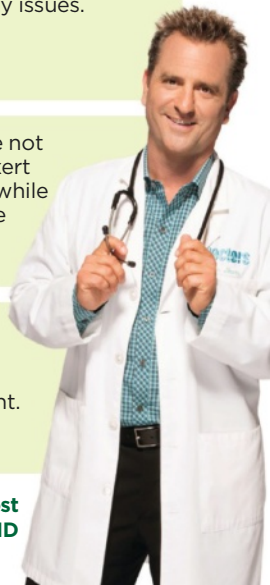
Doctor's Orders

Natural Cold Fighters: What Works, What Doesn't

BY THE PHYSICIANS OF THE DOCTORS

☞ THERE IS NO CURE for the common cold. Some treatments may relieve symptoms or slightly shorten the length of your illness, and some healthy habits may reduce your risk of getting sick in the first place, but there's no silver bullet. But since many of our patients experiment with natural remedies anyway, we combed the latest studies for the best sniffle soothers.

	THE REMEDY	DOES IT WORK?	WHAT'S THE DOWNSIDE?
GO FOR IT	MEDITATION	Adults who meditated for eight weeks had about one third fewer colds over the winter compared with a control group, an <i>Annals of Family Medicine</i> study found.	Too busy feeling Zen to report any issues.
	EXERCISE	The same <i>Annals</i> study found that people who began a moderately intense exercise program had 29 percent fewer colds than a control group. Mild exercise may relieve symptoms like congestion.	Take care not to overexert yourself while under the weather.
	SLEEP	People who got fewer than seven hours a night were nearly three times more likely to develop symptoms when exposed to a virus than those who got eight or more hours, research found.	None—head to bed, and sleep tight.



Cohost
Jim Sears, MD

WORTH A TRY

NOT OUR FAVORITE

PASS

	THE REMEDY	DOES IT WORK?	WHAT'S THE DOWNSIDE?
WORTH A TRY	ZINC	This mineral shortens illness by about a day (it stops the virus from replicating) if you take it within 24 hours of feeling sick, a 2013 Cochrane review of 18 randomized controlled trials found.	Lozenges may leave a bad taste or cause nausea. Avoid nasal sprays, which can damage your sense of smell.
NOT OUR FAVORITE	PROBIOTICS	They may prevent colds. A 2011 analysis of ten studies found probiotics decreased the number of people who had at least one cold. But not all studies show benefits.	They may cause bloating at first. Strains vary, but some studies used those in OTC brands, such as <i>Lactobacillus</i> .
	ECHINACEA	Most evidence suggests it's not useful, but some experts still recommend it. One <i>New England Journal of Medicine</i> study found that echinacea did not prevent or treat colds. A 2014 review of 24 trials found that echinacea shortened colds more than a placebo, but evidence wasn't strong.	Studies use various preparations, plant parts, and species, so results are hard to generalize. Side effects aren't common, but check with your doctor if you're allergic to plants in the daisy family (including ragweed).
PASS	VITAMIN C	Maybe the most studied of the bunch, vitamin C falls short of the mark. In a 2013 review of 29 trials, it didn't reduce colds. Huge doses to ease symptoms had small effects in some but not all studies.	Expensive urine. The studies didn't find risks, although megadoses can cause stomach upset and possibly kidney stones if you're prone.
	GINSENG	Some trials have found that taking ginseng preventively shortened the duration of colds, but experts question how well the studies were done and worry about inconsistent results.	It's generally safe, but it might lower blood sugar (a concern for people with diabetes). In high doses, it can cause headaches and insomnia.



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When the view goes on forever, I feel like I can too.


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D-SPD



NEWS FROM THE

World of Medicine

BY REGINA NUZZO

Silverware for Shaky Hands

A new spoon can counteract hand tremors, allowing Parkinson's disease patients to feed themselves with relative ease. Called Liftware, the cordless, rechargeable tool uses a motion sensor to figure out which way the user's hand is shaking; two small motors immediately move the spoon head in the opposite direction, which means that food stays put as it travels from bowl to mouth. A clinical trial showed that the technology significantly improved the volunteers' ability to eat. Liftware is available for \$295 on the company's website, at liftlabsdesign.com.

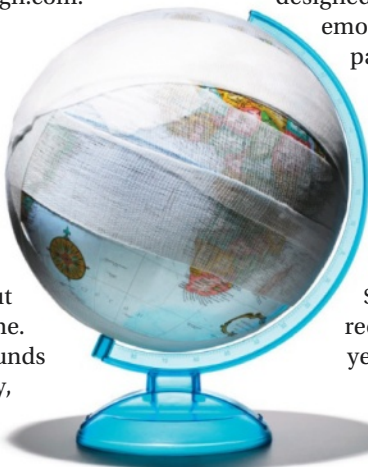
Dogs to Sniff Out Cancer

Italian researchers spent five months training two German shepherds—Zoe and Liu, who had worked detecting explosives—to sniff out prostate cancer in urine. Exactly which compounds they smell is a mystery, but when researchers tested the pups'

prowess on urine samples from 677 men, Zoe and Liu reached a combined accuracy of 98 percent. They detected prostate cancer nearly all the time and returned a false alarm about 3 percent of the time—results comparable with current prostate cancer screening. Humans have five million olfactory cells in our noses; canines boast about 200 million.

For Better Decision Making: Be Grateful

An attitude of gratitude may help you avoid impulsive choices. People did a short psychological exercise designed to elicit various emotions, then participated in a test of monetary self-restraint. Those who were grateful showed more financial patience. For example, non-grateful people needed only \$18 now to give up receiving \$100 in a year; grateful people required nearly twice as much money (\$30).



PROP STYLIST: JANINE IVERSEN

Fight Stroke with Fish

People who eat more protein—especially from seafood—may be less likely to have a stroke, according to a new meta-analysis of more than a quarter million people. Eating just 20 additional grams of protein every day lowered the risk of stroke by 26 percent. The link was strongest for people getting their protein from seafood rather than from grains or red meat. Protein and the fatty acids in fish lower blood pressure, which may help protect against stroke.

Chilly-Home Health Risk

Keeping the thermostat low could increase the odds of falls. Muscles function best above a certain temperature, and this becomes more important with age. A study of women ages 70 and older found that just 45 minutes of sitting in a chilly room shortened stride length and caused leg strength to drop by 6 percent, both of which can hamper the body's ability to catch itself when falling. The study tested a 59-degree room; researchers think that 68 degrees is closer to ideal for most people.

Tomatoes for Heart Health

When heart disease patients took 7 mg of lycopene daily, their blood vessels' response to nitric oxide, which helps them dilate and maintain healthy blood flow, improved by 50 percent compared with those

on a placebo. Over time, the function of the tissue lining the heart's blood vessels was just as good in the lycopene-consuming patients as in healthy people. A 7 mg dose of lycopene is the equivalent of about two raw tomatoes or a third of a cup of tomato juice a day.

Sleep Off Alzheimer's

Cutting out shut-eye may buy you time during the day, but it may speed along your brain's aging. That's the implication of a small study that followed Chinese adults ages 55 and older for a couple of years, studying changes in brain size. As we age, brain tissue shrinks in volume, but the less sleep the study participants got, the faster their brains shrank—and the more steeply their cognition declined. Sleep might help remove toxic waste from the brain.

Snack on Exercise Before You Eat

The best pre-meal appetizer: ultrashort bursts of activity. A New Zealand study found that overweight people who did just six 60-second bursts of intense activity before a meal (such as walking quickly up a steep hill) saw a 13 percent greater drop in blood sugar after they ate than those who did a moderate-intensity workout for a half hour. The effect, which can protect against diabetes, lasted for up to 24 hours afterward.



ALL IN

A Day's Work



ONE OF OUR INTERNS asked another if she was planning to sign up for the company's 401(k).

"I'm considering it," replied the second intern.

Later, the first intern approached me looking concerned.

"I did the math," she said, "and 401K is almost 250 miles. She'll never make it!"

REBEKAH SHUE, Lancaster, Pennsylvania

A WOMAN CALLED the Colorado State Division of Wildlife regarding a snake in her backyard. "Can you tell me what kind it is?" she asked.

"Can you describe it?" I asked.

"Yes," she said. "It's long and thin."

CHARLES LOEFFLER, Monument, Colorado

RECENTLY I HEARD the former mayor of Reading, Pennsylvania, recount some funny stories about

his time in office. One happened while he was running for reelection; he was in a bar and paid for a woman's drink. She thanked him but wondered why a stranger had bought her a beer.

"I'm running for mayor," he told her, "and I want your vote."

"You got it," she said, grabbing her glass. "Anyone's better than the jerk who's in there now."

JAMES LANDIS,
Lancaster, Pennsylvania

SCENE: MY CLIENT telling me what was required for the project.

Client: "We want a total of eight languages—English, French, Spanish, Canadian ..."

Source: clientsfromhell.net

A STUDENT SEEKING a job at our university was handed an application. He dutifully filled out his name and address. When it came to the entry "length of residence," he wrote: "Approximately 30 feet."

FRED KARN, *Kearney, Missouri*

AS I ENTERED the elevator at our hospital, a disheveled-looking man rushed in behind me carrying a ceramic blue baby bootie filled with carnations.

I smiled knowingly and asked, "Does he look like you?"

"I hope not," he said. "I just deliver flowers."

S. M. K., *via mail*

TAKEN FOR A RIDE

From a passenger of the Vacaville, California, public bus company:

Dear Sir,

I would like to commend driver Lea Schroeder for the following reasons:

1. She frequently doesn't stop for me when I'm waiting at the bus stop, but she always waves as she goes by.
2. If she's running behind, she tells me, "Sit your butt down," in a courteous way.
3. She nearly comes to a complete stop now when I disembark, so I haven't fallen in almost a week.
4. Although she usually gives me wrong instructions on which bus to take, I enjoy riding all around Vacaville on the different routes.
5. The way she suddenly starts and stops, rides the rear bumper of the car ahead, and pulls several Gs of force when she turns corners unfailingly elevates my heart rate. This has obvious health benefits.

Once again, I would like to commend Lea Schroeder for her outstanding work.

Sincerely yours,
Robert V.

From **LEA SCHROEDER,** *Vacaville, California,*
a bus driver with a great sense of humor

Forget the bus! Rent a limo with the \$100 you'll get if we run your funny work story. Go to rd.com/submit for details.

What Your Doctor's Really Thinking

(But Won't Say to Your Face)

35 things your doctor would tell you if he weren't worried about time, lawsuits, or hurting your feelings **BY NANCY KALISH**

Put away your phone!

"I hate when patients text during a visit. It tells me that they do not value my time. I feel disrespected. I have left patients talking on their phone in the examining room and moved on to see another patient." **DAVID BROYLES, DO,**
a doctor of family medicine who practices in the Philadelphia suburbs



Oncologists hate pink

"Of course raising money is great. But during breast cancer-awareness month, in October, everyone comes in thinking she has advanced breast cancer. Our patients hate it because they can't go anywhere without being reminded of their disease."

JAMES C. SALWITZ, MD,
a medical oncologist specializing in breast cancer in East Brunswick, New Jersey

Don't ask me to lie

"I'll get a call from a daughter who says, 'Don't tell my dad I called you, but you need to know he's having chest pains again.' Now I'm not supposed to know, but I do know, which is bad for everyone. I want to sit down and say, 'John, your daughter says you're having symptoms that you're not telling me about.' I don't like those kinds of secrets."

VINCENT BUFALINO, MD,
senior vice president of cardiovascular services for Advocate Health Care in Chicago

Your missed appointments really worry me ...

"I want to give my patients the best care, so I get frustrated when they turn it around and accuse me of trying to 'pay for my new boat' instead of taking responsibility for their disease. When patients delay treatment, something as simple as a filling can become involved and costly."

COLLEEN DELACY, DDS,
a dentist in Sandusky, Michigan

... But late is better than never

"When a patient finally comes in, years late, I walk in with a smile and an outstretched hand. 'Where have you been, stranger? So glad you are here! Tell me, what has happened since I last saw you? I know patients are busy. I know it is not in our nature to think about our health, even though we should. With good health, you can always make more money. With more money, you can't always buy good health. So the fact you are here is a good thing.'"

DAVIS LIU, MD,
a board-certified family doctor in Sacramento, California

I'm not scared of your Google search

"When patients come in with three inches of printouts, I know I'm going to have a good conversation. But they've also almost always terrified themselves beyond need. I wish they would e-mail or call me so I could put things in perspective. But in general, patients who have researched their condition tend to educate faster and take better control of their care."

JAMES C. SALWITZ, MD

I could use sympathy too

"Many doctors have depression, so don't take it personally if they seem distant. Our greatest desire is to help patients. That's why we delayed starting our lives until our 30s. Many doctors give up their own family life to overextend themselves to you. And they're kind of

*That's a lot
of printouts.*

*At least he's
done his
homework.*

*I see he's
been on Google
again.*



a mess after years of doing that. I'd like to see more patients have more empathy for doctors. It would be so great if a patient said, 'You look kind of frazzled today. Can I give you a hug?'"

PAMELA WIBLE, MD,
*a board-certified family physician
in Eugene, Oregon*

Tell me your story, not your symptoms

"I like it when my patients in the ER tell me things like 'I was running my usual five miles when at mile one, I started to have chest pains that stopped when I sat.' That's much more helpful than just saying 'I had chest pains.'"

LEANA S. WEN, MD,
*director of Patient-Centered Care
Research at George Washington University*

I contradict you very carefully

"Even if a patient is wrong about her problem, it's not helpful to tell her so. Finding the right answer is the best way to dispel the wrong answer. I never try to shake someone's belief until we have enough facts to do it."

MARK LIPONIS, MD,
*corporate medical director of Canyon
Ranch in Lenox, Massachusetts*

I trust your gut

"Parents are so smart and so intuitive and know what's normal for their child and what's not. So I always work to take them seriously."

WENDY SUE SWANSON, MD,
a pediatrician in Mill Creek, Washington

Sometimes I don't know what's wrong

"Doctors are supposed to know everything, but we don't. When I'm worried about whether a treatment will work, getting sued is always in the back of my mind. It's scary."

LISA SMIRNOW, DO,
*a family practitioner and the
medical director of Sagebrush Treatment
Center in McLean, Virginia*

I welcome your e-mails—within reason

"I tell all my patients that we need to be on the same page for surgery. If that means you need to e-mail me 30 questions, then it's totally fine. But don't expect that I'll e-mail you back. I'll call instead."

ANTHONY YOUN, MD,
a plastic surgeon in Troy, Michigan

I may cave to your pressure

"If you really want a test that's not covered by insurance and not really necessary, I'll give in as long as it's not ridiculously expensive or invasive. In primary care, our relationship is important. If you feel like I resisted your seemingly innocuous request, you're not going to trust me. This way, I keep you as a patient so I can steer you toward appropriate tests."

KENNETH LIN, MD, MPH,
*an associate professor of family medicine at
Georgetown University School of Medicine*

I run late for good reasons ...

"It's hard to be a patient, but it's also really hard to be a doctor and walk into

a new room every 15 minutes with a new family and new challenges. One person shows up late, and it creates a domino effect. But when a teen comes in and admits feeling suicidal, I'm not going to kick her out. Sometimes I want to go into the next exam room and say to the irritated person who's been waiting, 'You are so lucky your child is healthy. If you've never had to double your doctor's time, you're just really lucky.'" **WENDY SUE SWANSON, MD**

... But you'd better have a good excuse if you're tardy

"When patients are very late, the good doctor in me feels that there must be a

valid reason, and I want to accommodate them. The bad doctor wonders how they could be so inconsiderate. Why should my other patients have to wait because someone else could not be punctual? Typically, I will see a late patient as long as it does not inconvenience other patients."

DAVID BROYLES, DO

Second opinions help me too

"They could confirm my diagnosis, which means the patient will have confidence in it, and that could reduce my liability. And if the other doctors don't agree, I might learn something."

MARK LIPONIS, MD

The Worst Thing a Patient Did During Treatment

"I've had patients hit on me, threaten to hit me with their car, ask me to party in the college dorms with them, and accuse me of having an affair with their wife (who was 30 years older than me)."

ANTHONY YOUN, MD

"Ignored sound medical advice for an alternative that hurt him, like the 20-year-old college student who, with the support of his family, refused curative therapy for lymphoma and chose exercise, diet, vitamins, enzymes—and a quick death."

JAMES C. SALWITZ, MD

"Told me she mailed in her stool-testing packet (screening for colon cancer), when she didn't. Later, when I was seeing the patient's daughter, I mentioned how bad I felt that we'd lost the packet. She rolled her eyes and said, 'Right—like she would ever do the specimen collection!' I was shocked that a patient would flat-out lie to her doctor."

MITCH KAMINSKI, MD,

a board-certified family medicine physician in Hammonton, New Jersey

"Lied about pain to trick me into prescribing drugs."

KENNETH LIN, MD, MPH

I read your body language

"A patient's gaze tells more than any exam. A patient who is modifying his history—because of anxiety or concern about what I might say—makes poor eye contact, squints, and looks slightly distracted. If he is trying to control me, he may stare without blinking, ignoring things I say, and tend to give short answers. You can spot pain from the distant, glazed nonfocus of a patient's gaze."

JAMES C. SALWITZ, MD

I relish your tough case

"Here's how I react whenever a new patient tells me, 'Every other doctor

said that this was all in my head.' On a bad day, I might think, This patient has a million complaints, and I am never going to figure out what's really wrong. On a good one, I will see it as a therapeutic challenge. Most days are good days."

KENNETH LIN, MD, MPH

I never get over losing patients

"An old doctor friend used to say that a piece of you dies with each of these cases. When you're taking care of people for 15 years, you really get to know them and their families. I know all the children and the best vacations and who fishes. I go to most

The Patient I'll Never Forget Is ...

"The first one whose life I saved. I was a new medical student, and all I did was spend time listening to him and showing him I cared. I convinced him to undergo lifesaving surgery, while all the doctors had written him off."

ANTHONY YOUNG, MD

"The one whose intuition told her she'd live longer than the six months her doctors predicted. Her spirit and drive to try alternatives gave her six more quality years."

MARK LIPONIS, MD

"One woman, well into her 80s, who golfs with people in their 60s and 70s because those her age can't keep up with her. She exercises every day to stay healthy and started doing so only when she retired."

DAVIS LIU, MD

"The ones who have true dental anxiety and start shaking and sweating as they walk into the reception room. The fact that they show up and 'get it done' impresses me."

COLLEEN DELACY, DDS

"Harry. He used to hitchhike six hours round-trip to see me. I excised a lesion from his back that turned out to be metastatic lung cancer."

PAMELA WIBLE, MD

"My mother, who played golf with two cancers and chose a final view of the water instead of sterile sheets, white tile, and barren halls."

JAMES C. SALWITZ, MD

of the funerals. After someone has passed away, you wake up at 3 a.m. thinking about him or her."

VINCENT BUFALINO, MD

I hate seeing you suffer

"I know the old joke that dentists like to inflict pain, but I hate it. I spend a lot of time telling patients to let me know when they feel they need a break or additional anesthetic. I think about those patients quite a while after the procedure."

COLLEEN DELACY, DDS

Your vaccination joke isn't funny

"I deal all the time with parents who don't want to vaccinate their kids. Some people get so scared by myth that they can't pay attention to science. My job is to listen to their true concern and dispel their worry with the best science. But I can get really upset when they joke that their choice not to vaccinate is going to make my job harder. Yes, it does make it harder, and that isn't funny at all."

WENDY SUE SWANSON, MD

Why don't you follow directions?

"When I was new and patients didn't take my advice, I would be like, 'Why are you even seeing me?' I'm still a little irritated, but I'll try to probe what's really going on. Maybe there's a financial reason, or they didn't understand directions. Sometimes patients won't want to be helped until after a heart

attack or a stroke. In a few cases, it may never happen. It's been part of my maturation as a physician to feel comfortable with that."

KENNETH LIN, MD, MPH

This is a judgment-free zone

"When I diagnose a 14-year-old with an unplanned pregnancy, of course I feel a sense of dread. Who wouldn't? But we have many years of training, so we're prepared for these fastballs. There's a pit in my stomach, but I feel empowered to help patients make the best decisions. That's why I practice."

WENDY SUE SWANSON, MD

Herbal remedies can give me pause

"When a patient asks about an un-studied supplement, I think, 'You'll pay \$100 for this unproven 'natural supplement' but not \$4 for the scientifically proven drug I recommended? From what medical school did the health food store clerk get his degree?'"

DAVID BROYLES, DO

I cringe when you save the best part for last

"It's frustrating when people don't know what [symptoms] are important or not, so they go on and on. My 15 minutes is taken up by stuff that doesn't matter. Or they're worried about a scary symptom but delay bringing it up. Then, as I'm leaving, they say, 'By the way, I have chest pains.' What?!"

LISA SMIRNOW, DO **R**

In 1955, David Hickman found an infant in a field. He spent the next 58 years trying to find her again.

Where Are You, Baby Roseann?

BY MELODY WARNICK

At the end of a long day of squirrel hunting not far from his home in Richmond, Indiana, 14-year-old David Hickman sat at the side of a country road skinning his prizes with his grandfather. His head was filled with the sounds of the woods: the rustle of September leaves, the crashing of birds through the branches.

Then he heard an odd cooing that sent a chill down his spine. “Did you hear that?” he asked his grandfather Clay Smith.

“I think it’s probably an animal,” Clay replied.

David had been listening to animals all day. This was different. He stood up. “I want to see what it is.”

David followed the sound along 60 or 70 yards of fence that separated the country road from the forest. The cooing seemed to be coming from the woods. He swung his leg up and over a fence post, avoiding the barbed wire that jutted from the top, and looked down. There was a baby.

Overgrown weeds and brush



ADAMS

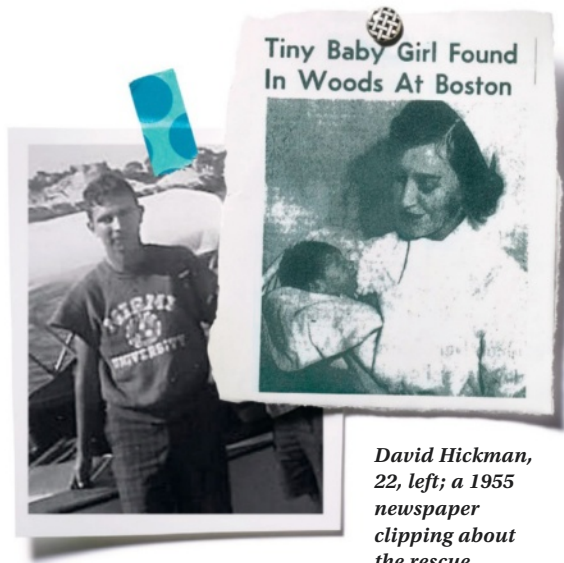
formed a matted jungle three feet deep, and lying in a tangle of weeds was a tiny, dark-haired baby girl, loosely swaddled in a wet white towel. David jumped down. “There’s a baby here!” he yelled to his grandfather.

At David’s shouts, Clay came running. “Don’t touch,” he cautioned the boy. “Let me see.” Clay peered down at the newborn. The towel had come partly open, and he could see a piece of umbilical cord still attached to her belly.

Blood from cuts on her left arm and torso—from the barbed wire, perhaps, or tree branches—had stained the towel red in spots. David knew next to nothing about babies, but to his eye, this one looked impossibly tiny and frail. Her lips were blue, but she was alive.

“We better not touch her,” David’s grandfather repeated. “We might do more harm than good. We’ve got to get her help right now.” Reluctantly, they left the baby in the grass and sped to a nearby farmhouse to call the police. Soon, a deputy sheriff whisked the baby to Richmond’s Reid Memorial Hospital.

That night at the hospital, David described to the police over and over



David Hickman, 22, left; a 1955 newspaper clipping about the rescue

the sound he had heard and the shocking sight of a baby in the grass. He overheard the officers discuss the wet towel—a clue, they thought, that the baby had weathered an early-morning rainstorm that had pushed temperatures into the 50s. No wonder she had been so frail and cold, David thought.

David and his grandfather knew the baby had been suffering when they found her, but in the following days, neither the sheriff nor the hospital would tell them anything new. They did learn, however, that social workers had named the baby Roseann Wayne—Rose for Richmond’s nickname, the Rose City, and Wayne for the county name.

A few months later, David was

called to the principal's office at the junior high school, where he was surprised to meet two nurses. One of them held out a baby wrapped in a blanket. "Dave," one said, "we brought her to you to say goodbye. She's being adopted." Eagerly, he held Roseann for the first time, admiring how healthy she looked compared with the pale infant who'd clung to life in the forest.

The year was 1955.

OVER THE YEARS, David's grandpa Clay had tried to track down Roseann's whereabouts, but he couldn't get past Indiana's sealed adoption records.

For his part, David tried to put Roseann out of his mind and move on. After graduating from high school in Richmond, David served three years in the Army, then joined his parents and grandparents in Florida, where they'd moved. He got a job building houses and designing air-conditioning systems. In 1966, he married his wife, Gaile, and soon they were raising two sons. David and Gaile moved to Vonore, Tennessee, in 2006.

As full as David's life was, the memory of the blue-lipped baby in the woods often surfaced in his mind. "It hurt me to realize that somebody put her out there to die," says David. Even though he didn't expect he'd ever see Roseann again, he couldn't help wondering if she was healthy and happy.

Gaile understood that he fretted

about Roseann as if she were his own flesh and blood. Sometimes she would catch him on their back porch, staring off into the distance. "I would see the ache in his eyes," she says. "He's never stopped thinking about the baby he found."

On yearly fishing trips back to Richmond, David made the rounds from the sheriff's office to the hospital to the newspaper, but he never heard anything new. Besides a few old newspaper clippings, "it was as if she never existed," David says.

AS A CHILD, Ellen loved her adoptive parents, Merwin and Marga Test, but she hated the scars that roped down her left side, from face to arm to torso. "Where did these come from?" she'd ask her mother. "Sometimes when you adopt children, they have scars," was all her mother would say.

When Ellen asked where she had come from and who her birth parents were, her parents seemed to dance around the questions. Ellen knew they were hiding something.

Still, the Tests assured Ellen that being adopted meant she was chosen, a special kid; the swimming lessons, ballet classes, birthday parties, and camping trips they lavished on her proved the point. Her family moved from Maryland to a small town in California the summer Ellen was nine, and in time her parents even bought her a horse to ride.

In 1982, at 27 and with two small kids of her own, Ellen decided to pursue the puzzle of her mysterious beginnings. According to her birth certificate, she'd been born in Richmond, Indiana, where her adoptive grandparents and cousins still lived. If any dark secrets were buried, she suspected, Richmond was where she would dig them up. So that summer, she flew to Richmond from California to start her search.

At the Wayne County Courthouse, a clerk produced a thick file: Ellen's adoption records. Then, thinking twice, the clerk said, "You can't see it. Indiana has a closed-records law." Fighting the temptation to snatch the file from the clerk's hands and run, Ellen marched across the street to the library, where she dug up reels of newspaper microfiche from September 1955, her birth month. She hoped to find a hospital birth announcement. But within 15 minutes, she was staring at a front-page headline: "Tiny Baby Girl Found in Woods at Boston."

On September 22, 1955, the story said, a 14-year-old boy named David Hickman had heard a strange noise that turned out to be that of a newborn infant. Below the headline was a black-and-white photo of a nurse

cradling a dark-haired baby. Wow, that's really sad, Ellen thought. Then: Wait a minute. That could be me.

That night, Ellen tracked down a phone number for Corky Cordell, the town sheriff mentioned in the article. "Mr. Cordell," she said, "do you remember a baby girl found in the woods 27 years ago?"

"Yes!" he blurted. "You live in California, and you have two children!"

Ellen was astounded. "How do you know that?" she stammered.

"I've been following you all your life," he declared. Cordell explained that the sheriff's department never identified her biological parents.

A caseworker had placed her with a couple who had local ties but lived in Maryland—the Tests, Ellen's adoptive parents. The Tests' annual Christmas card to the local adoption caseworker kept Cordell apprised of Ellen's life over the years.

Cordell also told her that her name hadn't always been Ellen. For three months, she'd been Roseann Wayne.

The truth about her identity left Ellen shell-shocked. Back in California, her father, at last resigned to talking about Ellen's history, explained that he and his wife had thought the truth was "too horrific." Maybe they were right, Ellen thought. It sickened her to think that anybody

“
The truth about her identity left Ellen shell-shocked. Maybe her parents were right to keep the facts from her.
 ”

could abandon a baby in the woods.

Before leaving Richmond, Ellen had found an address for the only David Hickman listed in the local phone book. She had questions, yes, but mostly she wanted to thank him. But the address turned out to be the wrong David Hickman. The David Hickman who'd found her, by then a 41-year-old man, had moved away.

OK, Lord, she thought, if I'm ever supposed to meet him, you're going to have to arrange it.

IN 2013, AT 73, David was ready to give up and move on—"I guess I'm not meant to find her," he'd tell Gaile—when a mutual acquaintance recommended he get in touch with a retired deputy sheriff named John Catey. "Let's try this just one more time," Gaile said to David.

They called. Catey pledged, "I'm going to do everything that I can to get you and your baby together by Christmas." As he talked to more than 80 Richmond old-timers, bits of information started to come together. Someone knew that baby Roseann had been renamed Ellen—and that her last name started with *T*. The adoptive parents had moved to Arizona, or was it California? One day, luck led Catey to the home of Kevin Shendler. There Catey came across an old photo of Kevin's aunt and uncle—Merwin and Marga Test. Yes, Kevin assured him, the Tests had adopted a baby in 1955.

ON DECEMBER 21, 2013, Ellen's phone at work rang. "This is Dave Hickman," a voice said.

"I've been wanting to talk to you!" Ellen responded. She rushed to put his mind at ease. "Dave, I've had a great life!"

David was at a loss for words. He had dreamed of this moment for 58 years. Ellen eagerly told him that she was happily married with two grown children and four beautiful grandchildren. Life was good.

Last May, after months of e-mails and weekly phone conversations, Ellen and David met face-to-face at the 4th Floor Blues Club in Richmond, Indiana. Together they drove the country road where David and his grandfather had sat skinning squirrels all those years ago. David showed Ellen the thicket of grass and branches, on the far side of a five-foot barbed wire fence, where he had discovered an infant: the baby named Roseann, aka Ellen Test. Had he been ten feet to either side of the fence post that he'd jumped, he might have missed seeing her. Someone had most likely lifted her over the fence and dropped her into the brush.

Ellen looked at David. "If it hadn't been for you, I'd be dead."

"I was guided there by the grace of God," David says now. "For 58 years, I worried about this little baby. It's like a fairy tale with a very bad beginning and a wonderful end." **R**

What I learned on the slopes with His Holiness

The Dalai Lama's Ski Trip

BY DOUGLAS PRESTON FROM SLATE.COM



DOUGLAS PRESTON has written 26 novels, as well as the New York Times number one bestseller *The Monster of Florence: A True Story*.

IN THE MID '80s, I was working as a writer in Santa Fe, New Mexico, when an assignment came my way. The Dalai Lama would be visiting the city on his tour of the United States, and a friend of mine, James Rutherford, volunteered to arrange his stay.

After securing accommodations and a limousine to shuttle around His Holiness and a half-dozen other monks, Rutherford asked me to act as the Dalai Lama's press secretary. The Dalai Lama, he explained, was a person who would stop and talk to anyone who asked him a question. Someone had to keep him from being buttonholed. And that person was going to be me.

The Dalai Lama arrived in Santa Fe on April 1, 1991. I was by his side every day from 6 a.m. until late in the evening. Traveling with him was an adventure. He was cheerful and full of enthusiasm. He did in fact stop and talk to anyone, no matter how many people were trying to rush him to his next appointment. When he spoke to you, it was as if he shut out the rest of the world to focus his entire attention on you.

During a luncheon on the penultimate day of his visit, a few guests mentioned that Santa Fe had a ski area. The Dalai Lama

ILLUSTRATION BY JOE MCKENDRY (PRESTON)





The Dalai Lama with Preston (third from left) and guides, riding the ski lift to the top of the mountain

“You mean, ride the lift? Dressed like that?”

“Well, can he do it?” Rutherford quickly interjected.

“I suppose so. Just him, or ... ?” Abruzzo nodded at the other monks.

“Everyone,” Rutherford said. “Let’s all go to the top.”

A hundred skiers stared in disbelief as the monks shuffled toward the lift. I sat down next to the Dalai Lama.

“When I come to your town,” he said to me, “I see big mountains all around. And so all week I want to go to mountains.” The Dalai Lama had a vigorous way of speaking, in which he emphasized certain words. “And I hear much about this sport, skiing. I never see skiing before.”

We started up the mountain. The chairlift was old and without safety bars, but this didn’t seem to bother the Dalai Lama, who spoke animatedly about everything he saw on the slopes. Just then, an expert skier sped below us. The Dalai Lama saw him and said, “Look—too fast! He going to hit post!” He cupped his hands, shouting down to the oblivious skier, “Look out for post!”

seized on this news and began asking questions about skiing—how it was done, if it was difficult, how skiers kept from falling down.

That afternoon, rather than taking their daily nap at the hotel, the Dalai Lama and his monks requested to go into the mountains and see the amazing sport that they had heard so much about. The monks piled into the limo, and we set off.

Upon our arrival at the slopes, Benny Abruzzo, whose family owned the ski area, greeted us. Abruzzo was astonished to find the Dalai Lama and his monks milling about in the snow, dressed only in their robes. The Dalai Lama and his monks looked around with keen interest at the humming lifts, the skiers coming and going, and the peaks rising into blue sky.

“Can we go up mountain?” the Dalai Lama asked.

Abruzzo looked puzzled.

The skier, who had no idea that the 14th incarnation of the Bodhisattva of Compassion was crying out to save his life, altered his line of descent and continued expertly down the hill.

With an exclamation of wonder, the Dalai Lama clasped his hands together. "You see? This skiing is wonderful sport!"

Once we reached the top of the mountain, the Dalai Lama and his monks set off, moving swiftly across the snow to get a better look at the landscape.

"Wait!" someone shouted. "Don't walk in front of the lift!"

But it was too late. Just then, four teenage girls came off the quad chair and were skiing straight at the group. A chorus of shrieks went up, and they plowed into the Dalai Lama and his monks. Girls and monks all collapsed into a tangle of legs, skis, and poles.

We rushed over, terrified that the Dalai Lama was injured. Our worst fears seemed realized when we saw him sprawled on the snow, his face distorted, his mouth open, producing an alarming sound. Was his back broken? Should we try to move him? And then we realized that he was not injured after all but was helpless with laughter.

"At ski area, you keep eye open always!" he said.

We untangled the monks and the girls and steered the Dalai Lama away from the ramp to gaze safely over the snowy mountains of New Mexico.

After riding the lift down, we repaired to the lodge for cookies and hot chocolate. The Dalai Lama was exhilarated from his visit to the top of the mountain—he questioned anyone who would listen about the sport.

As we finished, a young waitress began clearing our table. She stopped to listen to the conversation and finally sat down, abandoning her work. After a while, when there was a pause, she spoke to the Dalai Lama. "Can I, um, ask a question?" She spoke with complete seriousness. "What is the meaning of life?"

In my entire week with the Dalai Lama, every conceivable question had been asked—except this one. There was a stunned silence at the table.

The Dalai Lama answered. "The meaning of life is happiness." He raised his finger, leaning forward, focusing on her. "Hard question is not 'What is meaning of life?' That is easy question to answer! No, hard question is what make happiness. Money? Big house? Accomplishment? Friends? Or ..." He paused. "Compassion and good heart? This is question all human beings must try to answer: What make true happiness?" He gave this last question a peculiar emphasis and then fell silent, gazing at her with a warm smile.

"Thank you," she said. "Thank you." She got up and finished stacking the various dirty dishes and cups and took them away. **R**



For a new generation of wounded veterans, one day a year is special. It's the day they didn't die. They call it their ...

Alive

BY STEVE MADDEN

Day

ALEX LEONARD, a former specialist in the 101st Airborne, is at the gym, getting ready to work out. His truck is out front, his baseball cap is on backward, heavy metal pounds from the speakers. Just another 30-year-old guy, doing what 30-year-old guys do. But this day, September 25, 2013, is a little different: It's Leonard's Alive Day, the tenth anniversary of the day a roadside bomb blew off Leonard's right leg and injured his left so badly that he would eventually lose it too.

ALIVE DAY is not, strictly speaking, a formal thing, and probably not something you've ever heard of if you haven't had the occasion to celebrate it or are not part of the military. It certainly isn't something national, like Veterans Day or Memorial Day. But to American soldiers who have been wounded—physically, mentally, or both—in battle, Alive Day is a very real thing: It is the anniversary of the day you were wounded, the day your life changed. The day you could have been killed, or were almost killed, but weren't. It's the day death came right alongside you, and maybe took some of your friends, but didn't take you. You may have survived with terrible wounds, maybe wounds nobody but you can see, but the fact is, you survived. You're alive. And that's a fact worth celebrating.

As he ties his sneakers, Leonard, now 31, tells his story, each little detail embroidered precisely in his memory. He forces himself to keep it vivid. He says he has to, although he's not sure why.

He remembers driving his Humvee past an airfield in Mosul, Iraq, and seeing a local man standing on the median of the busy road and thinking, That's peculiar. He remembers the whiplash in his neck and the thought

that his vehicle had been rear-ended, not bombed, and that he had driven into a sandstorm thick with dust and that was why he couldn't see anything. He remembers his brain feeling rattled, and he remembers looking left, at a credit card-size piece of shrapnel in his triceps, and pulling it out and watching the blood seep down the sleeve of his fatigues. He remembers reaching to unbuckle his seat belt and not being able to feel his legs and realizing his right leg was gone and then suddenly being very, very aware of his situation, of the fact that he was "chewed up," maybe

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**For most vets,
 the day they
 were wounded
 is as significant
 as their
 wedding day.**

paralyzed. He remembers Eddie Broadway, the medic sitting next to him in the Humvee, helping him out of the cab and to the ground. And the extraordinary pain starting to set in.

As Leonard lay there in the dirt and stink on a road in Iraq, one thought dominated his mind: I'm paralyzed; I can just stick the barrel of my weapon under my chin and call it a day right here. But he put that thought away, for good, when the enemy started shooting at them, and his training kicked in. He wanted to return fire, so he told Broadway, "Fix me." The medic applied a tourniquet to one leg to stop the bleeding while Leonard himself tied off the other. On the trip in the back of a truck to an Army hospital,

Leonard's body swelled against his armor. Then his eyes swelled shut. He remembers realizing he wasn't paralyzed but horribly wounded, with one useful limb filled with IV lines.

He had five surgeries in one week in an Army hospital in Germany, then spent 385 days in Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, outside Washington, DC, learning to live with a new reality. Leonard was fitted with an artificial right leg; his left leg, badly damaged in the blast, was amputated three years later. Many of the hospital beds around him were filled with fellow members of the 101st Airborne.

But after all the support of the hospital and the military community, Leonard found himself adrift back in his home state of Montana, working in a bar, after he was released from Walter Reed. "That wasn't good," he says. "I'd joined the Army out of high school to get out of Montana, and going back there wasn't what I had in mind."

ON THIS bright San Antonio morning, Leonard tells me the story the way someone might describe a day at the office or a round of golf. An array of artificial legs made of carbon fiber and titanium are spread on the black rubber mats in front of him as he figures out which ones to use. "This one has batteries and a little computer," he tells me, holding up the prosthetic, his arm covered with shrapnel scars and tattoos of

his Army unit. "It can tell if I'm walking up stairs or down." He straps the new legs on, the right one above the knee, the left below, and makes sure all the connections are tight.

He consults with George Grimes, his CrossFit coach, about today's workout, a high-speed regimen of Olympic weight lifting moves, squats, and medicine ball tosses that would tax even an athlete who had the legs he or she was born with. Leonard gets to work and sets personal records, one for the amount of weight he thrusts above his head (125 pounds), the other for the time it takes to complete the workout: nine minutes and 51 seconds. Sweat, not blood, soaks Leonard's shirt as he gasps for air. He looks up. "That sucks," he says. He's smiling.

A man asks if Leonard thought, ten years ago today, that someday he'd be throwing around heavy weights.

His answer is immediate. "There's a lot I didn't think I'd be doing," he says. "That's why I make myself remember what happened on this day. Because I'm alive."

MOST VETS, stretching back to World War II, can tell you the day they were wounded because for most it is a date as significant as a wedding day or a child's birthday. But the more active celebration of the day—with gatherings and remembrances—started to gain traction with Vietnam vets and is fairly common with veterans of the wars

in Iraq and Afghanistan. Groups that support veterans, like the Wounded Warrior Project (WWP), are urging veterans to make note of their special day as part of the healing process and as a way to reintegrate into the non-combat world. “You could look at it as a celebration of the Day I Didn’t Die,” says John Roberts, executive vice president of warrior relations for the WWP and himself a wounded vet. “It can take a few years for guys to see Alive Day as a good thing, but it can be taken as a sign of rebirth.”

Since the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts began in 2001 and 2003, respectively, some 670,000 soldiers—one quarter of all who served—were injured severely enough in some way to be given disability status. Many soldiers are coming home with profound physical injuries that will require a lifetime of attention and treatment, care whose costs can run into the trillions of dollars over the warriors’ lifetimes. And more are coming home with traumatic brain injuries from concussions, often the result of the roadside bombs the enemies use that can turn the inside of armored vehicles into chambers that amplify blast waves. Thousands of soldiers are also being diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and are seeking

treatment for it. In some ways, PTSD patients are the most challenging, and the ones in the most pain, because their wounds are invisible to a society that tends to think of wounds as only physical scars and missing limbs, if it thinks of them at all.

This is part of the reason Alex

Leonard counts himself among the lucky. “People can look at me and can see what happened,” he says. “I look at some other guys and think, I don’t have it so bad. I’d rather lose both legs than an arm or eye. The burned guys have it the worst. But I’m sure some guys look at me

and feel bad.”

THE FIRST FEW Alive Days can be difficult, as warriors remember friends who were killed and face survivor’s guilt head-on. But that confrontation is ultimately what can help the warrior heal, says Roberts. “Alive Day provides an opportunity to come out of the experience a stronger person,” he says. “But it takes time and help to get there.”

Leonard got that help when he relocated to San Antonio and enrolled at the Center for the Intrepid, an intensive program at Brooke Army Medical Center (now called the San Antonio Army Medical Center) that works with amputees and burn victims to provide

“**Alive Day is like a rebirth,” says John Roberts of the Wounded Warrior Project.**”

*"I'll never know what
I'm capable of until
I give it a shot," says
Leonard. He works
out five days a week.*



cutting-edge care and education. He came into contact with other warriors who had lost limbs, quickly developing a bond with them as they worked toward mastering their new prostheses. Leonard also enrolled in school and will soon earn a degree in information technology management. "It's not every day you get a second chance. You have to take advantage of it," he says.

When asked if he thinks of himself as an inspiration, Leonard demurs and admits his reluctance to even talk with a reporter. "I just did the best I could with a situation that was handed to me," he says, being sure to note, as do many other veterans, that he willingly volunteered for the service, knew what he was getting himself into, and would do the whole thing all over again, with the same outcome, if he had to. He talks about his grandfather, a Seabee who fought his way across the Pacific during World War II. "He spent every day after the war trying to forget about what he saw," Leonard says. "I try to remember."

LATER THAT NIGHT, there's beer at Alex Leonard's Alive Day party, and margaritas too. But it's low-key social drinking, the alcohol just a side dish to the sevice, chips, and salsa he and his friends came to this restaurant for. Most of the veterans here are guys Leonard met in his various rehab programs and who, like

him, have artificial legs. Tyler Sloan lost his when a sniper's bullet severed his femoral artery in Iraq. Josh Holm was a tanker who had his leg blown off in Iraq and proudly sports a T-shirt from the Tough Mudder adventure race series. John Deer lost his lower leg when North Vietnamese rounds pierced the floor of the helicopter he was piloting.

There are girlfriends here, and wives, one expecting, and a couple of trainers from the gym. Kirk Simondinger, the man who built their prostheses, is here, asking questions about devices and talking about stretching. They all talk about their lives, the everyday, the mundane. School, families, jobs, babysitters. The vets rib one another constantly and caustically, about everything and anything, and some of them sneak out for smokes.

On this night, there are no toasts, no speeches, very little talk about the injuries that have brought this group together. But at the end of the evening, there are a lot of backslaps and lingering bear hugs, the better to let the whispered words be heard. Leonard is all smiles and jokes. Because this is how you heal. With time and with a lot of help from your friends. **R**

Steve Madden is a two-time National Magazine Award winner. His book, *Embrace the Suck* (HarperCollins), will be out in December.

To support the Wounded Warrior Project, go to woundedwarriorproject.org.

Laugh Lines

TO BEARD OR NOT TO BEARD?

While you're honoring Movember by not shaving for prostate cancer awareness, I'll be celebrating Doughvember, the pizza month I made up.

@CHRISTHAYERSAYS

Some guy's looking at this old picture of me with no beard. Then he looks at me and goes, "You grow a beard?" No, I shave my photos.

SEAN MOREY

I won't be shaving this November, in order to raise awareness for how lazy I am.

TIM SIEDELL

Do you think shaving cream really softens your beard ... or is it just so you don't lose your place?

JACKIE FLYNN

When is your beard too long? When the comments turn from "Hey! I really like your beard!" into "Hey! ... A beard!"

RON BABCOCK

"I have a beard."
—a bald-faced liar

MYQ KAPLAN





Bad Judges

BY DEREK BURNETT

Most jurists warrant our respect. Then there are those who shake public trust. Here are five who eroded our faith in the system.

The Neglector

JUDGE E. CURTISSA R. COFIELD
DISTRICT SUPERIOR COURT,
NEW BRITAIN, CONNECTICUT

In November 2011, the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) came to Judge E. Curtissa R. Cofield with a fairly standard petition asking her to hear and decide the case of a mistreated boy named Brandon. DCF wanted to terminate parental rights, get him out of foster care, and find him a permanent home. To avoid subjecting children to the stress of drawn-out legal proceedings, state law decrees

that such placements must be made within 120 days. However, it took five months for Cofield to hear Brandon's case, and afterward, she failed to issue a decision. Nine more months elapsed with no word from the judge, as the boy languished in foster care.

By this point, DCF had found that Cofield had delayed action on nine other child-welfare cases, so it asked the state attorney general to intervene. Only after the Connecticut Supreme Court put additional pressure on Cofield did she make a decision on Brandon's case—16 months after DCF's initial petition. Following an investigation, the Connecticut Judicial

Review Council suspended Cofield in July 2013 for 30 days without pay for “neglectfully and incompetently performing her duties as a judge.”

This suspension also gave her the dubious distinction of being Connecticut’s most disciplined judge: In 2009, she was suspended for eight months without pay after being arrested for DUI. During the incident, Cofield threatened the officers and referred to one of them with a racial epithet.

The judge has yet to provide an adequate public explanation for her inaction. She could not be reached for comment; her term expires at the end of 2015.

The Wrist Slapper

JUDGE KURT EISGRUBER

SUPERIOR COURT, MARION COUNTY,
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

In fall 2008, Mandy Boardman made a horrifying discovery on the cell phone of her husband, David Wise: She found videos showing that he had repeatedly drugged her and raped her while she was unconscious. Boardman filed for divorce, and the couple officially split in 2009. Two years later, she went to the police with a copy of the cell phone videos. (She said she hadn’t done so earlier because she didn’t want their two children to grow up without a father.)

Wise was arrested, and after a two-day trial in April 2014, he was found

guilty on one count of rape and six counts of criminal deviate conduct—all felonies and each punishable by six to 20 years in prison. But before Judge Kurt Eisgruber announced his sentencing decision, he wanted to make some remarks.

As Boardman recalls, he turned to her and said, “Was Mr. Wise a bad husband? Yes. Does he deserve to go to jail for being a bad husband? I don’t think so.” Eisgruber proceeded to lecture her about the importance of forgiving her ex and moving on, and then he delivered his sentence: eight years of home detention, which Wise would serve while wearing a GPS tracking device round the clock. Wise, a convicted rapist, would not serve a single day behind bars.

“It was a slap in my face,” Boardman says. “[He] committed the same crime over and over again. If he did that to somebody who lived and slept with him, he could do it to anybody. Does it make it better that he was my husband? Something tells me if he had done it to a stranger, he wouldn’t have been put on ‘staycation.’”

Ultimately, though, Boardman did receive some justice. In July, after Wise violated the terms of his detention—by letting the battery expire on his GPS device and by not returning his correction officer’s calls—Eisgruber decided to send him to prison for five years. The judge, who ran for election unopposed this fall, will be on the bench through 2020.

The Bigot

JUDGE AUBREY RIMES

PIKE COUNTY JUSTICE COURT,
MAGNOLIA, MISSISSIPPI

It all started with a flat tire. That's why highway patrolmen in Pike County, Mississippi, stopped to talk to California truck driver Jagjeet Singh after he had pulled over to the side of the road in January 2013. Singh is a devout Sikh, and like other male followers of his religion, he always wears a *dastaar* (a turban-like head wrap) and a *kirpan* (a sheathed ceremonial dagger).

The troopers ordered Singh to remove the *kirpan*, but he explained that it was a legal religious object (which is correct). The officers were insistent: Remove it or face arrest. Singh opted for arrest and was booked for "failure to obey lawful command." He bailed himself out after promising to return to Mississippi for his arraignment.

Singh hired attorney LeeAnn Slipher and decided to plead guilty. On the morning of Singh's hearing in March, Slipher approached Judge Aubrey Rimes in his chambers to ask if Singh's case could be heard earlier in the day due to her schedule. In response, Slipher says Rimes peered at her over his glasses and said, "He's not going to be heard in my court until he takes that



rag off his head." Stunned at his comment, the lawyer left and went to the courtroom to speak to Singh. When she arrived, she found troopers ejecting her client. Singh and Slipher waited until all the other cases had been handled before reentering the courtroom. Rimes heard Singh's case, and the trucker was fined \$750 for disobeying the troopers' orders in January 2013.

After the incident became public, the U.S. Justice Department opened an investigation into the Pike County court, which subsequently amended its nondiscrimination policies. Rimes has not been disciplined, and he declined to comment for this story. His term will expire at the end of 2015.

The Victim Blamer

JUDGE JEANINE HOWARD

CRIMINAL DISTRICT COURT NO. 6,
DALLAS, TEXAS

Contrary to his name, Dallas high school student Sir Young was anything but a gentleman. In 2011, the 18-year-old raped a teenage girl at the school they both attended. The girl's family notified police, Young was arrested, and in 2013, he came before Judge Jeanine Howard in his criminal trial. He pleaded guilty, admitting that the girl had repeatedly told him "No" and "Stop," and the prosecutor pushed for a five-year prison sentence. Young, who had another rape case pending (brought by another classmate), was sentenced by Howard to only 45 days in jail, followed by five years of probation and 250 hours of community service—at the Dallas Area Rape Crisis Center.

When Bobbie Villareal, the center's executive director, heard that the judge had ordered a convicted rapist to volunteer there, she was livid. "We're a safe place for victims," she says. "It's like telling a pedophile to go work in a day care."

Howard changed Young's community service order, but in a newspaper interview, she defended her original sentence. The victim, she said, "is not the victim she claims to be," nor is Young "your typical sex offender." She based her reasoning in part on her

understanding that the girl had had three prior sexual partners and had already given birth. (The girl's family adamantly denies both of the claims.)

Not only were Howard's remarks distasteful, but they also may have been illegal. In Texas, as in many other states, "rape shield laws" prohibit a rape victim's sexual history from being considered as evidence. If Howard gave Young a short jail sentence and probation because she thought the girl was promiscuous, she might have done so in violation of the law.

The victim's mother has reportedly filed a complaint with the State Commission on Judicial Conduct; the trial for Young's next rape case is scheduled to start this month. Meanwhile, Howard is running for reelection this fall—unopposed.

The Enabler

JUDGE JEAN HUDSON BOYD

323RD DISTRICT COURT,
TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS

Ethan Couch, the son of a wealthy businessman, bookended the night of June 15, 2013, by participating in two crimes. For the first, his friends lifted three cases of beer from a Walmart, while the 16-year-old Couch waited, and then the boys drove to the Couch family mansion in Burleson, Texas, to drink the beer. His second crime occurred a few hours later, after he and seven friends decided to go for a ride.

Couch got behind the wheel of his father's pickup truck, while some of his buddies squeezed into the cab and the rest piled into the truck bed.

Traveling on the same road as Couch was Breanna Mitchell, 24. Her car had broken down on the shoulder, and three people—a youth pastor and a mother and her grown daughter—had come to offer help. The Good Samaritans were standing with Mitchell near her vehicle when Couch, hurtling along at approximately 70 mph in a 40 mph zone, plowed into them. All four were killed, and two of Couch's friends who'd been in the truck bed—Sergio Molina and Soliman Mohmand—were seriously injured. Amid the carnage, according to notes later shared at trial, the teenager said to one of his friends, "I'm Ethan Couch. I'll get you out of this."

Six months later, Couch came before Judge Jean Hudson Boyd in juvenile court. During the trial, Boyd heard the victims' distraught loved ones describe finding their body parts scattered on the road. She listened to testimony from the bereft family of 15-year-old Molina, who was

paralyzed and communicated only by blinking. Although Couch pleaded guilty to four counts of intoxication manslaughter, he did not express remorse. Prosecutors recommended 20 years of prison. And after all of this? Boyd sentenced Couch to ten years' probation (during which he can't drive or consume alcohol) and to treatment in a rehabilitation facility.

Her decision aroused ire, much of it focused on the testimony of an expert witness, psychologist Gary Miller. Arguing for the defense in sentencing hearings, Miller contended that Couch's parents had spoiled him and had not taught him the difference between right and wrong, so the teen suffered from "affluenza," a wealth-induced inability to attach consequences to one's actions.

Did this influence Boyd? She is legally barred from commenting on the case, and the hearings were closed to the public, so we may never know. But if Couch is afflicted with affluenza, the judge's sentence seems unlikely to cure it. Boyd, who is not seeking reelection, remains on the bench through the end of the year. **R**



SPARE THE BOD

Exercise is a dirty word. Every time I hear it, I wash
my mouth out with chocolate.

CHARLES SCHULZ

Sicily and the Tiny House

If these walls could talk, they'd tell the story of a family tragedy—and of a girl, her mom, and a community that simply refused to give up

BY JAMIE GUMBRECHT FROM CNN.COM

AS THE SCHOOL YEAR came to a close, 12-year-old Sicily Kolbeck needed a project. It was a key requirement at the small, independent school she attended just outside Atlanta. If she found the right project—something big and passion-driven—it could set the course for her next academic year. She thought maybe she could start a natural makeup line or dive into some type of research. Or she could just keep wasting time online.

As she clicked around, she stumbled onto the idea of tiny houses—dwellings that pack the conveniences of modern homes into a couple of hundred square feet. She found a rabid community around them, blogs and documentaries filled with DIY builders and eco-lovers and folks who lived happily with less.

This could be it, Sicily thought. She'd hardly swung a hammer before, but maybe she could build a tiny house.

She remembered “renovating” the

loft in her family's old barn to make it homier and how she'd once turned a massive TV box into a playhouse, complete with a doorbell. Building a tiny house became a bit of an obsession.

Her parents didn't blink. It didn't matter that Sicily was a child. She would be the architect, builder, fundraiser, and client.

Her mother, Suzannah Kolbeck, a teacher who was the principal and founder of Sicily's school, would serve as the project manager, guiding



*Big heart in a little space:
Sicily Kolbeck*

her daughter in creating a budget and reaching milestones.

Dane Kolbeck, Sicily's dad, would help with the hands-on. He was a sailor and woodworker with a great collection of tools, and though he'd never built a house, he'd provide the guidance to get the project off the ground.

Sicily launched a blog, *La Petite Maison*, a nod to the French classes her mother insisted she take, and an Indiegogo fund-raising campaign that quickly exceeded its \$1,500 goal. She

drew clumsy blueprints—piles and piles of possibilities—then built scale models and a birdhouse that introduced her to using power tools.

The first few weeks of construction in January 2013 were rocky. Dane was impatient, and it was hard for him not to snatch the tools away from his daughter. Meanwhile, Sicily was exasperated when his well-trained hands homed in on *her* house. It took a little while, but they were starting to understand how to work together.

“He taught me a lot of the lingo—*flush, plumb, even, straight, square*,” Sicily says. “If somebody needs something jigsawed, I got that on lock now. There was a lot of figuring things out.”

Then everything came to a halt when Suzannah’s phone rang around 4 a.m. on February 16. She was out of town, caring for a relative. An unfamiliar voice told her Sicily was safe in bed at home, but Dane had been killed in a car accident.

In the first blank hours, mother and daughter just sat on the couch at home. There was bawling and sometimes silence. Text messages and phone calls came, then trickles of friends and family, then streams. They ate whatever food people brought, and talked about Dane, or avoided talking about him. They played, by Sicily’s estimate, 20 million games of gin rummy.

After a few days, Luke Bair, an old family friend, was desperate for another distraction. Luke was a home builder and had encouraged the family to take on the tiny house project. When he looked out the window, he saw the unfinished work of his best friend and the dashed childhood of a young girl. “We can sit around here and whine and cry and tell stories and drink beer and do whatever we have to do,” he remembers saying.

“We can also start working on the project again.”

They trudged to Home Depot, bought materials, and resumed construction. It seemed everyone who stopped by drove in a nail or raised a board. Within days, the shell of a small home stood in the backyard.

But as mourners dispersed, there was no life as usual.

School didn’t resonate like before for teacher or student. Suzannah calculated that she couldn’t possibly be a single parent and a school principal. She placed her small school on hiatus, uncertain it would ever reopen. For

Sicily, the academic year faded to an end. The tiny house sat untouched.

That spring and summer, Sicily’s softball team helped ground her, but she wasn’t herself. Her dad had been a coach, and she still listened for his booming voice from the dugout. She turned up at tournaments without her cleats, socks, or sunscreen. She stopped making decisions, small or large.

“She started saying ‘I can’t’ a lot,” says Suzannah, 43. “And I started saying ‘I can’t’ too. But it’s all about the try. We have to make decisions about what we’re going to do.”

On a break between sports and school, mother and daughter took

“
It seemed everyone who dropped by drove in a nail or raised a board.”



"To have given up would've felt wrong, just a reminder that we'd been beaten by this awful event," says Sicily, with mom Suzannah.

a five-week trip, staying at friends' homes from North Carolina to Pennsylvania. Suzannah drove; Sicily directed. To navigate every traffic jam or country road, they needed each other.

"He used to drive, and she was the navigator," Sicily says of her parents. "Now I was the navigator. I could no longer live with indecision."

And when the road finally led them back to Georgia, they looked back at the plywood husk in the yard and knew it was time to start building again.

This time, Sicily and Suzannah became regular posters to tiny house Facebook groups; a simple ques-

tion could draw dozens of answers. Friends and a few experts pitched in. A retiree with building skills showed Sicily how to wire the house; workers at the local Home Depot taught her how to plumb the kitchen and bathroom. A roofer donated time and materials to top the house (the only part Suzannah refused to let her teen handle on her own).

"People just showed up," says Andrew Odom, creator of the blog Tiny r(E)volution. "They thought they were going to go at it just as a family. They didn't know how much they needed a community. The project could easily have been scrapped.

Whether Sicily ever lives in it or not, it bears the touch of everyone special in her life, including her dad.”

Finishing the house took focus, frustration, and sometimes weeping and screaming. It meant working around crooked corners, rebuilding a rickety staircase, and painting about a dozen coats of white on the yellow pine paneling inside.

Sicily labored over how to fit an oddly shaped window into the loft. She was a pro at fitting squares and rectangles, but this one was special; it came from her dad’s boat.

Over time, she says, she realized that “I’m doing it to show him that I can do stuff, to show him that I am capable.”

The house isn’t a memorial to Dane, Luke Bair says. Building it was. “It’s not dreams anymore. It’s skill. The act is more powerful than the product.”

In April, after the final coats were painted, fresh gray curtains were hung, and a few throw pillows fluffed, it was official.

“My house is DONE,” Sicily wrote on her blog. “Yes, yes, yes. I know. Who would have thought I would finish? Not me. Just kidding. (Kind of.)”

She’s 14 now and the owner of a 128-square-foot tiny home with a fully

functional kitchen and bathroom, queen-size bed, closets, and cubbies. It took a year and a half and nearly \$10,000 to pull it off.

This summer, the Kolbecks moved to Suzannah’s hometown of Baltimore, where Sicily attends public high school, plays softball, and is consid-

ering her next project; she’d like to rebuild an old Volkswagen Beetle.

The little house made a big move too. Wishbone Tiny Homes, a North Carolina-based tiny home builder, drove it from the Kolbecks’ backyard in Georgia to Washington, DC, in June. There Sicily and her house participated

in the first White House Maker Faire, a celebration of all things hands-on and DIY. After Sicily showed off the house to crowds that included Bill Nye, “the Science Guy,” and the Obama family dogs, Bo and Sunny, La Petite Maison arrived at its new location—a peaceful, wooded area near a beach in Delaware.

Home, Sicily now knows, can go anywhere.

“I don’t think I’m ever going to be 100 percent great or 100 percent OK,” Sicily says. “It’s not like learning how to forget him, but learning how to go through life remembering him—and still kind of living and being happy.” **R**

“

The house bears the touch of everyone special in Sicily’s life, including her dad.

”

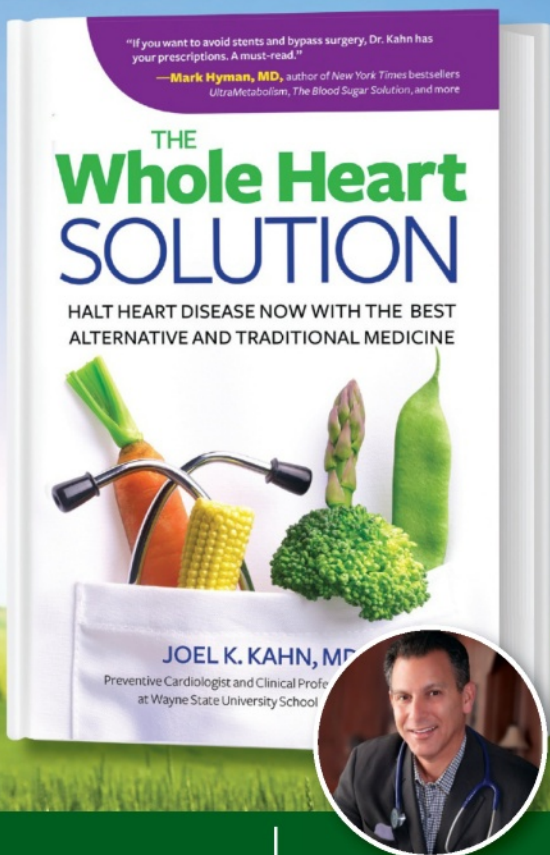
“If you want to avoid stents and bypass surgery, Dr. Kahn has your prescriptions. **A must-read.**”

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Treat, help prevent and even reverse the effects of heart disease with the expertise of Dr. Kahn, America's Holistic Heart Doc and Reader's Digest columnist.

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WHOLEHEARTBOOK.COM

Joel K. Kahn, MD

Clinical Professor of Medicine
at Wayne State University
School of Medicine

Laughter

THE BEST MEDICINE



WHAT DO BLACK FRIDAY shoppers and the Thanksgiving turkey have in common? They know what it's like to be stuffed and then jammed into a small place.

I DON'T WANT TO BRAG or make anybody jealous or anything, but I can still fit into the earrings I wore in high school.

From humorlabs.com

BAD, BETTER, BEST

■ **3 Musketeers** is a good name for a chocolate bar but a *bad* name for an Army division.

■ **Shout** is a good name for a stain remover but a *better* name for a senior citizen home.

■ **PetSmart** is a good name for a pet store but the *best* name for a university.

ANDY SIMMONS

THREE FANS WERE bemoaning the sorry state of their football team.

“I blame the general manager,” said the first fan. “If he signed better players, we’d be a great team.”

“I blame the players,” said the second fan. “If they made more of an effort, we’d score some points.”

“I blame my parents,” said the third. “If I’d been born in Seattle, I’d be supporting a decent team.”

THE WORST TIME to have a heart attack is during a game of charades.

DEMETRI MARTIN

UNLOCKING THE TRUTH, a heavy metal band made up of eighth graders, recently signed a \$1.7 million contract with Sony. Here are more kid bands we’re bound to see:

- Rage Against the Curfew
- Food Fighters
- Electric Night-Light Orchestra
- Alice in Time-Out
- Math Test Dummies
- Pre-KC and the Sunshine Band
- Onesie Direction

From humorlabs.com

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH hired an enthusiastic new apprentice willing to work long, hard hours. He instructed the boy, “When I take the shoe out of the fire, I’ll lay it on the anvil. When I nod my head, you hit it with the hammer.”

The apprentice did exactly as he was told, and now he’s the new village blacksmith.

MY BIGGEST PROBLEM with time travel is: How many days would you pack for?

@JOSHONDELMAN

WHEN I TRACE A TURKEY, it comes out looking exactly like my hand.

@CONANOBRIEN



THAT REMINDS ME OF A JOKE

Here’s the News:

Justin Bieber saved the life of a Russian fisherman recently. The man was headed toward his favorite fishing hole, when he was attacked by a brown bear. The massive animal clawed and mauled the man, intent on killing him. But then the man’s cell phone rang. His ringtone: Justin Bieber’s hit “Baby.” The bear ceased his onslaught, listened, and immediately fled the scene.

Source: ibtimes.com

Here’s the Gag:

I owe my life to Justin Bieber. I was in a coma for two years, until a nurse played one of his songs on the radio in my room, and I had to wake up to turn it off.

Here’s some news—send us your joke or other funny item and we might send you \$100. Go to rd.com/submit for details.

7 LESSONS
FROM THE
FOOD LAB



Scientist **Brian Wansink, PhD**, has spent 25 years researching offbeat and innovative ways to help us eat healthier. Here are seven of his most revealing stories.

FROM THE BOOK *SLIM BY DESIGN*

MOST NUTRITION education isn't very effective. People know that an apple is better than a Snickers bar, but they often eat the Snickers bar anyway. After conducting hundreds of studies on the psychology of how and why we eat, I've seen that it's good to understand nutrition, but it's much better to change your eating environment. Doing so can help you make better choices without even thinking about it.

1 What Would Batman Eat?

Millions of parents take their happy kids to fast-food restaurants every day. Most of us don't even try to get our kids to order the apple slices instead of the fries or the milk instead of the juice. We're there because we don't have the time, energy, or motivation to cook—or to argue with our kids.

We all know children can be stubbornly habitual in what they want to eat. If kids had french fries yesterday, they want them again today. We came up with a simple way to interrupt this default. Instead of asking kids what they want, what if we ask them about someone they admire?

We studied this with elementary school-aged children at a 4-H camp one summer. We treated 22 kids to apple slices or fries at a fast-food

restaurant. The first week, 20 of them ordered french fries, and two ordered apple slices. But the next week, we asked, "What would Batman eat: apple slices or french fries?" After they answered for Batman, we asked them what they wanted. This time, the number of kids who ordered apple slices jumped from two to ten—almost half of them.

We've done this a bunch in different ways, and here's what's crazy. It doesn't matter who you say: Batman, Joker, the kids' teacher, or their best friend. Simply having to answer for anyone makes them think twice—and often upgrade their order. It also doesn't matter what they answer. They could precociously say that Batman or their third-grade teacher would eat french fries, but they'll still order apple slices half the time.

OUTSIDE THE LAB: If you ask yourself

before deciding between the salad and the cheesy bacon fries, “What would my role model ____ choose?” you’ll be a lot less tempted. Thinking about what a well-liked person would do makes us less indulgent.

2 The Duct-Taped Shopping Cart

What’s the right amount of fruits and vegetables to put into a shopping cart? We don’t really know. When most of us grocery shop, fruits and vegetables take up 24 percent of our cart. But suppose your grocery store divided each cart in half by putting a piece of yellow duct tape across the middle interior. And suppose a sign on the cart recommended that you put all the fruits and vegetables in front of the tape and all the other foods in back. This dividing line doesn’t moralize or lecture. It just encourages shoppers to ask themselves whether the food in their hands goes in the front or back—they’re simply sorting their food.

We made a few dozen of these divided carts to test at supermarkets in Williamsburg, Virginia, and Toronto, Canada. Shoppers who used

the carts bought 23 percent more fruits and vegetables than those who didn’t. They spent twice as much on produce and also spent about 25 percent more time at the store. Not only did this fruit-and-vegetable divider make them think twice about what they bought, but it also made them think that buying more fruits and vegetables was normal. People wondered how much healthy stuff their neighbors bought. It must be about half, they thought as they threw in some pears and three more red peppers.

OUTSIDE THE LAB: Put something down the middle of your cart—a bag, a scarf, a coat. Claim the front half for whatever you want to purchase more of. (For example, a shopper with high blood pressure might want more low-sodium food; a diabetic might want foods with a low glycemic index.) If that target space isn’t full, you’ll tend to buy more to balance things out.

3 Groceries and Gum

Most of us know it’s bad to go food shopping on an empty stomach. We think it’s because we buy more food when we’re hungry, but in our studies, starving shoppers buy the exact same amount of food as stuffed shoppers. They don’t buy more, but they buy worse. When we’re hungry, we buy things that are convenient to eat right away and stop our cravings, what we call the Four C’s: crackers, chips, cereal, or candy.



BRIAN WANSINK, PHD,
*is the director of the
Cornell Food and
Brand Lab at Cornell
University in Ithaca,
New York.*

Our imagination is the problem. Hunger leads us to dream about what a food would feel like in our mouth if we were eating it. So we tested whether chewing gum could interrupt these cravings, making it too hard to imagine the sensory details of crunchy chips or creamy ice cream.

A colleague and I gave gum to food shoppers at the start of their shopping trips; at the end, they rated themselves as less hungry and tempted by food. In another study, shoppers bought 7 percent less junk food than those who weren't chewing gum.

OUTSIDE THE LAB: If you shop for groceries when you're hungry, make sure the first thing you buy is gum. Our early findings show that sugarless bubble gum or mint might work best.

4 The Soda Solution

A man was referred to our lab once for advice on how to break what his doctor called a "Pepsi addiction"—12-plus cans a day. He was on the express train to diabetes. He even had one of those mini refrigerators in his office—fully stocked. Anytime he stretched, he was within six inches of grabbing a fix.

Telling him to get rid of his refrigerator and go cold turkey, or even just to drink half as many, wouldn't work.



He would have resisted, cheated, or obsessed about how many he had left in his stash.

Instead, we told him he could drink all the Pepsi he wanted if he agreed to one thing: He could keep only one can in the refrigerator at a time. When we made him decide how badly he wanted to drink a warm Pepsi, he trimmed his consumption down to about four or five a day. Without much thinking or self-denial, he sliced his addiction by almost two thirds.

OUTSIDE THE LAB: Make your trigger foods as inconvenient and unattractive as warm Pepsi. An ice cream container mummified in aluminum foil looks a lot less tantalizing than

when it radiates Chunky Monkey goodness. It's a third less likely to be eaten within the first week of being wrapped up.

5 Chinese Buffet Confidential

Some people say there is only one way not to overeat at a buffet: Don't go. Yet here's what's strange—visit any buffet, and you'll see a lot of slim people. What do they do at buffets that heavy people don't? When we ask, they almost all say, "I don't know." Most people eat the way they eat with very little conscious thought. You can find out their habits only by carefully watching them. So researchers in my lab did—at 11 Chinese buffets from New York to Iowa to California.

Here's the first thing we discovered: 71 percent of slim diners scouted out the buffet before they picked up a plate—they scanned the salad bar, the steam trays holding 14 seemingly identical chicken dishes, the sushi station, and the dessert bar. Only after they had figured out the lay of the land did they grab their plates and start cherry-picking.

Heavier diners, on the other hand, were twice as likely to charge ahead to the nearest stack of plates and start filling up. They also sat at tables that were on average 16 feet

closer to the buffet and were three times more likely to sit facing the food, which could remind them to take second and third helpings.

OUTSIDE THE LAB: Our researchers have a saying: "If you want to be skinny, do what skinny people do." In our study, slim people also were more likely to use chopsticks, choose smaller plates, and chew each bite more than heavy people did. Survey the spread before fixing your plate. Sit as far away from the food as possible.

6 The Case for Half-Size Portions

Why are restaurant portions so huge? Restaurants think that the more food they give, the more likely we'll eat there and not across the street. But this can backfire. When burritos become as big as their head, reasonable people either split one or they don't buy any side dishes or desserts. Either outcome is bad for the restaurant—they win the largest entrée size but not the largest check size.

We did a test with Trail's Travel Center, a Minnesota truck stop on I-35 that has a ten-foot-high chain saw-carved wooden Viking in the lobby. We suggested they offer half-size portions of popular dishes. They did it, but instead of losing money, they made more. Here's how.



Whereas a couple named Lester and Grace would regularly visit the restaurant and split a \$10 chicken breast entrée because it was “big enough for two,” they now each ordered their own half-size entrée. And they still had room to order an appetizer or side salad. Within three months, more people went to the restaurant, and more total entrées (including half-size options) were sold. They also sold 435 more side orders of salad per month than they had before.

OUTSIDE THE LAB: Ask for a half portion for “a reduced price, so I’ll have room for an appetizer or a drink.” It’s surprising how often this works—even at big chain restaurants. If this isn’t possible, you can always have them box half the entrée (before it arrives) and order a side salad.

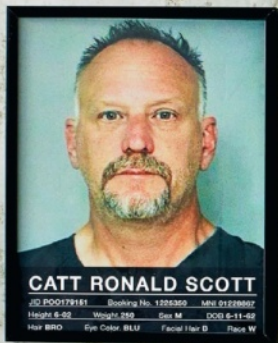
7 The Slim Person’s Kitchen

If we knew what a skinny person’s kitchen looked like, we could set up our own kitchens in a similar way. We chose the demographically representative city of Syracuse, New York, for our study. (It’s commonly used as a test city for billion-dollar companies with huge markets at stake. If it’s good enough for them, it’s good enough for us.) Once we got into people’s homes, we took pictures of everything: their dishes, sinks, refrigerator shelves, counters, snacks, pet-food dishes,

tables, lighting—even random items held up by magnets on their refrigerators. Nothing went unsnapped. We were like a busload of Elvis-obsessed tourists in the Jungle Room at Grace-land. Then we spent eight months coding these kitchens to see what thin people do differently.


We wondered if big kitchens turn us into big people. But it turns out that kitchen size isn’t the problem. It’s what’s you *see* in the kitchen. The average woman who kept potato chips on the counter weighed eight pounds more than her neighbor who didn’t. Those who had even one box of breakfast cereal that was visible weighed 21 pounds more than their neighbors who didn’t. “In sight, in stomach.” We eat what we see, not what we don’t.

OUTSIDE THE LAB: Rearrange your cupboard, pantry, and refrigerator so the first visible foods are best for you. You’re three times more likely to eat the first food you see in the cupboard than the fifth one. In another study, we asked people to move all their fruits and vegetables from the crisper bin to the top shelf and put less-healthy foods in the crisper. After one week, they reported eating nearly three times as many fruits and vegetables as the week before. (Produce might keep longer in the crisper, but the goal is to eat it—not to end up composting it.) **R**



Neighbors said the Catts were "regular, everyday people." What happened?





The Family That Robbed Banks



Widower Scott Catt had a secret life as a bank robber. But when he wanted accomplices, he turned to the two people he trusted most in the world: his kids.

BY SKIP HOLLANDSWORTH
FROM *TEXAS MONTHLY*

JUST AFTER SUNRISE ON AUGUST 9, 2012, in the Houston suburb of Katy, Scott Catt, a 50-year-old structural engineer, was awakened by his alarm clock in the apartment he shared with his 20-year-old son, Hayden, and his 18-year-old daughter, Abby. Scott took a shower, dried off, got dressed, and walked into the living room. Abby and Hayden were waiting for him on the couch. “OK, kids,” Scott said. “You ready?”

Abby and Hayden nodded. The family headed out the door and walked toward Abby’s 1999 green Volkswagen Jetta. Scott was big, six foot four and 240 pounds, and he squeezed himself into the passenger seat. Hayden, six-two and 200 pounds, crammed into the backseat.

Abby started the car, and five minutes later, she pulled into a shopping center and parked about 50 yards from a Comerica Bank.

Scott grabbed a black garbage bag from the floorboard and took out two pairs of white painter’s coveralls, two painter’s masks, two pairs of latex gloves, and two Airsoft pistols (which look like real guns but shoot plastic pellets). He and Hayden put on their disguises in the Jetta. Scott clipped a walkie-talkie to his coveralls and handed another to Abby.

It was 9:30. They sat for the next 30 minutes, until Scott said it was time to make their move. Abby dropped them off a few stores from the bank

and drove to the alley behind it. Minutes later, her dad’s voice crackled through her walkie-talkie.

“We’re going in,” he said.

ROBBERING A BANK is the most traditional of crimes. It’s a simple act with an immediate payoff. All sorts of criminals have tried it. “If you’re in law enforcement long enough, you’ll eventually come across bank robbers of every shape and size,” said Troy Nehls, sheriff of Fort Bend County, which includes part of the Katy area. “But I’m not sure there has ever been a bank-robbing family.”

The Catts were as unlikely a set of robbers as one could imagine. They had no pressing financial issues and no obvious personal problems. Scott, a widower, worked for an energy company. Abby was a salesclerk at Victoria’s Secret, and Hayden was hoping to be a hotel concierge.

Around their apartment complex, the Catts were regarded as “regular,

everyday people," one of their neighbors said. Yet when it came to robbing banks, said Nehls, "they were very bold, very daring, and very risky. They're lucky they didn't get caught up in a shoot-out."

The Catts pulled off two robberies: the first being the Comerica heist and the second being the robbery of a credit union, two months later. They were getting ready for a third when they were arrested in November 2012.

Reporters tried to find out why a father and his two children would turn to bank robbery, but the Catts weren't talking. Then, late last year, the three agreed to plea deals, and they consented to let me interview them.

I was allowed to speak to only one Catt at a time. Abby was the first to be escorted to the visiting room. She sat on a chair, ducked her head, and said after a silence, "Sometimes I feel so embarrassed about what's happened that I just want to disappear."

Hayden came next. "Every night I stare at the ceiling, and I ask myself, 'What were we thinking?'" he said.

Then Scott walked in. He gave me a firm handshake, sat down, and pushed his fingertips together. "All I can tell you is that I thought it would help us as a family," he said. He took

a breath and blew it out. "I did it for the family," he said. "I swear to you, I would rob banks only for my family."

THE STORY BEGINS in McMinnville, Oregon, southwest of Portland, where Scott was born and raised. His father was a loan officer at First Federal Savings and Loan. At McMinnville High School, Scott played football and fell in love with Beth Worral, a star of the swim team. They married after graduation. After Beth had Hayden and

Abby, the Catts built a house in Dundee—"our dream house," Scott told me. But in 1995, Beth was diagnosed with breast cancer, and she died two years later. Hayden was five, and Abby was two.

At that point, Scott told me, "life sort of came to a halt." He began

drinking heavily. He had a brief second marriage. He went to rehab. He fell behind on house payments, and the family moved in with Scott's mother. He went through a couple of jobs. His car was repossessed.

Between 2000 and 2002, he began thinking about how to make extra money. He remembered one day his father had come home and said First Federal had been robbed. When Scott asked why no one had stopped the

"I didn't feel like a criminal. I didn't load my pistol. Who was being hurt?" said Scott Catt.

thief, his father replied that the tellers were trained to comply with robbers—because the money was insured, the bank would get it back.

One morning, after dropping off the kids at school, Scott drove to a branch of his dad's old bank. He strode in wearing a ball cap, black sweats, a white painter's mask, and sunglasses. He was carrying a trash bag and an antique pistol—unloaded. He went up to a window, demanded the teller's money, and ordered her not to add bait bills or dye packs. She dumped around \$2,500 into his bag. Scott walked back to his truck, drove around for a while to see if he was being followed, and went home.

A couple of days later, the local paper published a grainy black-and-white frame from a video showing the robber. "My mother said the man looked a little like me, and I just laughed," Scott said. "And that was it."

Scott did his next heist a year later after falling behind on bills, and he got \$1,500 from another small bank. Then he landed a full-time job with an engineering company, earning \$25 an hour. Still, once a year he'd pull off a robbery, hauling in between \$5,000 and \$10,000. (Authorities believe that he robbed at least five banks in Oregon.) "I didn't feel like a criminal," he told me. "I didn't load my pistol. I knew I wasn't going to shoot anybody. And I kept telling myself that whatever money I got was insured, so who was really being hurt?"

MEANWHILE, SCOTT was a devoted single father. He cooked dinner for his kids almost every night and took them on vacations. When they got interested in competitive swimming, Scott drove them to practice every day.

Abby and Hayden never once suspected that their father had a secret life. "He'd be up and gone to work by 4:30 or 5 in the morning," Hayden said. "He didn't make great money, but we always appreciated how hard he worked to keep us afloat."

"Dad was a great motivator," Abby told me. "At the beginning of each [swim] season, he pushed me to work hard and set goals. He told me I could be somebody. The night before every swim meet, he would cook us pork chops, noodles, applesauce, and a protein shake. I loved it."

One time, Hayden qualified for the state meet, and there was talk about a college scholarship. But by the age of 17, he said, he was drinking too much and quit swimming. Abby lost interest in the sport when she was 15. She started running with what she called "the drinking, partying crowd," and she ended up in an alternative school. After graduation, Hayden found work as a hotel bellman and as a weekend tour guide, and he was still drinking too much. And Scott was again falling behind financially. By 2010, it was time for another robbery.

Scott knew that if he had accomplices, he could get cash from several



tellers' drawers and perhaps even get to the bank's vault. But there was no one he could trust to stay quiet—except his children. Maybe he should talk to them about joining him.

He rationalized the idea. As long as they did what he said, they wouldn't get caught. And he would use the money to start a small business they could run. "They were floundering," he told me. "I could see the despair in Hayden, and I thought he could use—I don't know—some inspiration, some excitement. Same with Abby. All I can tell you is that I thought doing it would give us all a little boost in our lives—that it would help us as a family."

He approached his son. "We were sitting at the kitchen table," Hayden recalled. "He said he had something

important to tell me. He said he had a second job as a part-time bank robber. The way he looked at me, I knew he wasn't kidding."

Scott said he would be the "muscle," leading the way in and scaring the employees and customers, and Hayden would be the "bag man," ordering tellers to put money into his bag. They'd wear disguises, go to the bank early in the morning before there were many customers, and be out within three minutes. Scott told his son they could easily grab \$40,000 or more.

On the morning of the robbery, Hayden was scared. Scott did the robbery by himself, getting a few thousand dollars, and came home before lunch. "He did it so quickly and so easily that it planted a seed," Hayden told me. "I thought, My dad really does know what he's doing."

Then Scott was laid off. By January 2012, he'd found work in Houston and relocated there. Abby moved in with her grandmother in Oregon, and Hayden went to Hawaii and got a job at a hotel. It seemed like a new era. Scott's job paid well, and he hoped he'd quit thinking about banks. But there were just so many in Texas.

BY MARCH, SCOTT had persuaded Abby to move to Texas. She landed a job at Victoria's Secret. (She proudly announced on her Facebook page that she was a Victoria's Secret "Pink Girl.") A few months later, Hayden joined them,

and it wasn't long before he began talking to his father about a bank robbery. He wanted money for college.

Scott picked out a nearby Comerica. He began walking past it in the mornings with the family's yellow Lab, Bella, to see when it got busy, and he had his son go in to learn the layout of the lobby. But they needed a getaway driver—and there was only one person who came to mind.

Hayden went into Abby's room. "I need to tell you something," he said. "Dad's a bank robber; I'm going to become one, too, and we want you to join us."

The next day, Scott talked to Abby, promising her that all she'd have to do was drop them off, wait for them to return, and drive home at a normal speed. She agreed to participate. "This was something I felt like I had to do, to protect them, to make sure they got out of the bank and didn't get shot or something," she told me. "I didn't want to let Dad down."

In the apartment, Hayden and Scott practiced bursting into a bank and yelling at everyone to get their hands up. They scheduled the robbery for August 9, when Abby had a day off from Victoria's Secret. The night before, Scott had the kids steal license plates from a car at another complex

and put them over the Jetta's plates.

The robbery went off as planned. Outside, Abby gave them time updates over the walkie-talkie. At the three-minute mark, Scott and Hayden ordered the manager to unlock the back door, and they jumped into the Jetta. Abby drove to another neighborhood, and Hayden and Scott threw their disguises, pistols, stolen plates, and gloves into a Dumpster. In their apartment, they stared wide-eyed at the money, close to \$70,000—a stunning haul from a little branch bank.

They heard sirens and decided to go out. Scott took a ride on his motorcycle, Hayden went shopping, and Abby got a manicure. That night Abby was still nervous—"I kept looking at the door, waiting for the police to walk in," she said—but Hayden was overjoyed. "I felt ex-

hilaration, the most intense high I've ever experienced," he said. "It changed my life. I'll be truthful about that."

Scott paid off his bills. He bought a second motorcycle and a \$17,000 Tahoe for Hayden and a \$12,600 Ford Focus for Abby (the Jetta had engine trouble). He and the kids split the remainder, but by late September, all the money was spent.

He and Hayden decided to rob the First Community Credit Union.

At home, the family stared wide-eyed at the money, close to \$70,000—a stunning haul.

Because there was a construction crew working nearby, Scott sent Hayden and Abby to Home Depot to buy two orange safety vests for disguises. Hayden also went to a costume shop to buy a fake mustache.

On October 1, Abby took the day off from work and drove Hayden and Scott to the credit union. The men entered at about 1:50. Their size and guns terrified everyone, and they were in and out so fast that no one got a good look at them. As Abby drove them home, police cars came screaming from the opposite direction. Not one officer gave her a second look. All they heard over the radio was that two tall men had committed a robbery.

The Catts got \$29,953, a decent sum. A few days later, Abby told her father she couldn't handle the stress. She wanted to take her cut and move into her own place. Scott promised her an apartment but begged her to remain their wheelman. He had decided to quit his job and make a living as a full-time bank robber, and Hayden would join him.

"The greed had snowballed," recalled Hayden. "I had become consumed with money: spending it, getting more. It was all I thought about, like an addiction."

On November 8, Abby drove them to another bank, but there was too much foot traffic, so they called it off. The next morning, as Scott and Hayden prepared to try again, the police came knocking.

WHILE STUDYING VIDEO of the credit union robbery, veteran detective Jeff Martin had noticed that the safety vests worn by the robbers weren't tattered or dirty at all. He could even see creases from where they'd been folded. He found that Home Depot sold that style of vest and got a subpoena to review purchases at area Home Depots. Just before the robbery, two vests had been purchased in Katy with a debit card belonging to Scott Catt. Security footage showed a young man and a blond teenage girl buying them. After doing a check on Scott, Martin learned he had two children, Hayden and Abby, whose photos matched the customers.

Martin deduced that Scott and Hayden were the robbers, and Abby was the one whom tellers heard counting time over a walkie-talkie. His case was bolstered by video of Abby applying for an account at the credit union a few days before. (Scott had sent her to scope the layout.) He had the Catts arrested and placed in separate interrogation rooms.

Martin decided to first talk to Scott. He assumed that he would declare his innocence, claiming a case of mistaken identity. But Scott confessed all, even talking about his Oregon robberies, which Martin knew nothing about. The detective was dumbfounded, and he was equally dumbfounded when Hayden and Abby confessed.

Although the getaway driver in a

bank robbery is liable under Texas law for the same punishment as the bank robbers, the police and prosecutors felt sympathy for Abby and gave her a mild five-year sentence. (She'll be eligible for parole in seven months.)

Hayden received a ten-year sentence (his parole will come up in about four years), but Scott was hit with a 24-year sentence.

When I talked to Scott, he'd lost 70 pounds since his arrest, which he attributed mostly to "a lot of remorse" for what he'd done to his children. "When I look back on what I did, what led to this place, I would have been better off—we all would have been better off—if I had gone on welfare and been a stay-at-home dad."

Abby and Hayden didn't seem to know what to think of their father. "He should have been protecting me, instead of the other way around,

having me protect him," Abby said. A few minutes later, she mentioned that she had run into her father a day or so earlier in the infirmary. "He told me he loved me, to be strong, and to be patient. And then he said he was so sorry. I broke down and started crying. I mean, like I've said, he is my dad."

Abby plans to become a nurse when she's released. Hayden wants to get a degree in advertising, architecture, or engineering—"that's right, engineering, like my dad," he said, smiling.

Scott told me his one hope is that his kids will visit him after they're free. He'll be 62 when he's eligible for parole. "If I get out, I want to have a homecoming dinner that night, me and the kids," he said. "We'll go to a good restaurant, tell stories about the old days." He paused. "About the days when we were a family." **R**

"My dad should have protected me instead of the other way around," said Abby Catt.

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NEVER ...

"... do anything you wouldn't want to explain to the paramedic."

SHANNON RYAN

"... go to a doctor whose office plants have died."

ERMA BOMBECK

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How one woman's generosity multiplied a hundredfold

EFFIE'S COMPOUND INTEREST

BY HENRY MORTON ROBINSON

ANY APPLES TODAY?" a cheery voice asked at my studio window. "Winesap, Wealthy, Northern Spy? Can't you use a bushel?"

I stepped out into the haze of an October noon to take a look. At first glance, the woman seemed older than the world's aunt. Her face, wrinkled with twice my years (I was then an arrogant 26), was an herbish bouquet that made you think of tansy and thyme. But the most remarkable thing about her was the light that burned in her wonderful brown eyes.

I followed her to a small truck with the legend *Euphemia's Apples* painted on its side. She plied me with samples, and I ended by buying a bushel of red-cheeked Winesaps. On credit, of course. Cash was the one thing in the world I lacked just then. I had a wife, a baby, ambition—everything but money. "Pay me whenever you like," said Effie, climbing into her truck.

PROP STYLIST: SARAH CAVE FOR EH MANAGEMENT

All pretense of payment was dropped during that desperate autumn while our funds, food, and fuel ebbed to alarming lows. Euphemia came often, always bearing some gift: a gallon of maple syrup or a jar of peaches.

She guessed that my work was not marching and could see that I was too young, too inexperienced, to make it march. Well, there was nothing she could do about that. But she could do something about my woodpile—and she did. One day before Christmas, she rode up in her truck. It was covered with pine boughs, and under the holiday camouflage was a half cord of seasoned rock oak sawed into just the right lengths for my drum stove.

There were other generosityes, always unobtrusive. Our baby was not doing well, so Effie financed my wife's trip to New York for consultation with a specialist.

We were not the only recipients of her kindness. Effie's soul was a house of many mansions, jammed with people whom she had befriended. One day she read in the paper that a pregnant mother traveling from San Francisco had arrived penniless in New York, only to learn that her husband had been killed in an accident. Effie cashed a \$500 bond and sent her the entire amount. A lifelong correspondence with an intelligent and grateful

human being was Effie's recompense.

Effie was not a rich woman. Her income, derived from investments she had made while running an interior decorating shop in New York, had never exceeded \$200 a month. The 1929 crash reduced this to a pittance, which she eked out by peddling her apples. But even when her funds were lowest, she always managed to help someone poorer.

ONE OF EFFIE'S cardinal principles was never to “lend” money. She preferred to give it outright. Surprisingly often, the money came back. Many times I saw her come out of the post office waving a check. “Bread cast on the waters,” she'd say triumphantly—adding, with a touch of rue at the wasting years—“ever so long ago.”

In dealing with touchy customers like myself, Effie tried to conceal her generosity under the guise of a business arrangement. For instance, her father, who had been a painter, had written his autobiography. In the trough of my worst financial crisis, Effie dug out the dusty manuscript and offered me a fee for editing it. Not until after her death did I learn that she had sold another bond to pay me for this job.

Effie's chief delight was conversation or, rather, a kind of Scheherazade story-



Effie's story first appeared in the November 1947 issue of Reader's Digest.

telling. I would sit enthralled while she depicted the lives and loves of people she had known in Paris, Rome, or New York, furnishing her discourse with heroes, heroines, and villains.

One day she told me her own story. At the age of 30, she had dared break the taboos of her day by having a secret love affair. Five years later, her lover died. The remainder of her life was spent “in unmourning remembrance” of her short-lived happiness. This memory gave Effie her special sympathy for young husbands, wives, and lovers.

YEARS PASSED before I was able to return the money that Effie had given me from time to time. She was ill now and had aged rapidly in the last year. “Here, darling,” I said, “is the negotiable part of what I owe you.”

Tears were in her eyes as she handed back my check. “Don’t give it to me all at once,” she pleaded.

“Why not, Effie?”

Her face was very old, tired, and beautiful as she said, “Give it back as

I gave it to you—a little at a time.” I think she believed there was magic in the slow discharge of a love debt—some secret talisman that would shield her against death till the account was closed.

The simple fact is that I never repaid the whole amount to Effie, for she died a few weeks later. At that time it seemed that my debt would forever go unsettled. But a curious thing began to happen.

Whenever I saw a fellow human in financial straits, I was moved to help him—as Effie had helped me—by small outright gifts of money. I can’t afford to do this always, but in the ten years since Effie’s death, I have indirectly repaid my debt to her a dozen times.

The oddest part of the whole affair is this: People whom I help often help others later on. By now, the few dollars that Euphemia gave me have been multiplied a hundredfold. So the account can never be marked closed, for Effie’s love will go on compounding interest in hearts that have never known her. **R**

EDITOR’S NOTE: This classic was recommended by Peter Mayer, president and publisher of the Overlook Press: “The story of Effie’s apples is a quintessential one about an earlier America. I first read it when I was 11. The deep human feeling that underlies it means much to me not only because I now live in Effie’s house in Woodstock, New York, but also because reading about one person’s kindness cannot help but inspire others.”

The writer, Henry Morton Robinson (1898–1961), was a bestselling novelist and a senior editor at *Reader’s Digest*.

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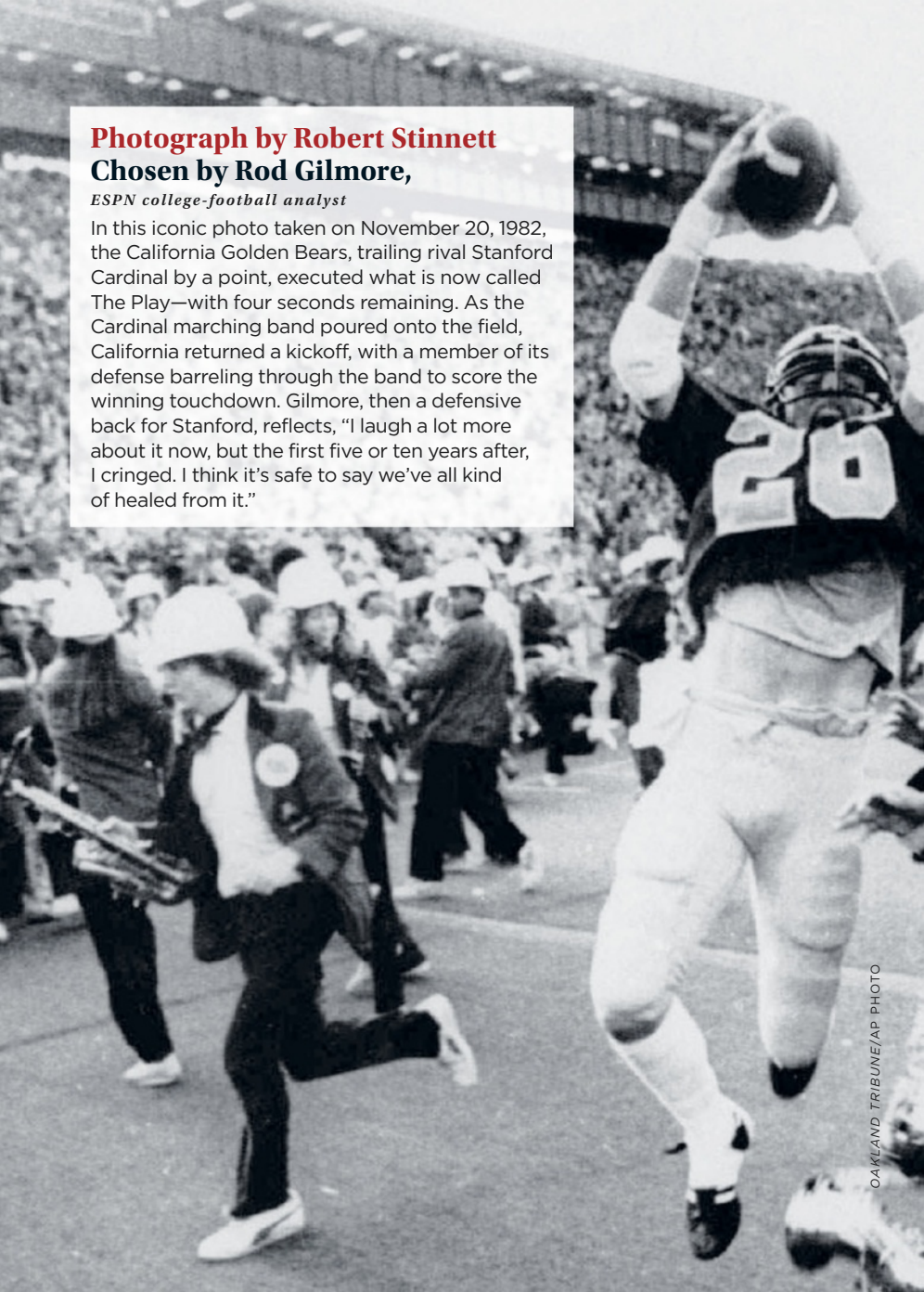
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Photograph by Robert Stinnett
Chosen by Rod Gilmore,

ESPN college-football analyst

In this iconic photo taken on November 20, 1982, the California Golden Bears, trailing rival Stanford Cardinal by a point, executed what is now called The Play—with four seconds remaining. As the Cardinal marching band poured onto the field, California returned a kickoff, with a member of its defense barreling through the band to score the winning touchdown. Gilmore, then a defensive back for Stanford, reflects, “I laugh a lot more about it now, but the first five or ten years after, I cringed. I think it’s safe to say we’ve all kind of healed from it.”



PHOTO

OF LASTING
INTEREST



The two of them fell in love. He said he was undocumented; she told him it didn't matter. She was wrong.

Madina & Zunu Say Goodbye

BY ELI SASLOW FROM THE *WASHINGTON POST*

EACH ORDINARY MOMENT now seemed worthy of preservation, so Madina Salaty, 45, turned on her cell phone camera and hit Record. “Four days left,” she said, her voice and the video both shaky as her husband leashed their dog, Bear. He walked past the framed picture of their wedding in 2011, past the University of Kansas flag on their porch, past the perennials they had planted together in the garden. He led Bear onto the wide sidewalks of downtown Lawrence.

“We are going on a walk,” Salaty said, narrating and focusing the camera on her husband, Zunu Zunaid, 37.

“Hi, baby,” he said.

“Hi, baby,” she said.

For the past five months, she had been documenting the gradual unrav-

eling of their lives, in moments mundane and monumental: the first visit to their home by immigration officers, the delivery of Zunaid’s deportation orders, his final trips to eat American ice cream and watch American basketball. Now only four days remained



A final kiss for the couple in Kansas City International Airport, May 17

before he would be sent off to Bangladesh, and the deportation would upend not just one life but two. Zunaid would be forcibly separated from the United States after 20 years; his wife, an American citizen, would be forcibly separated from her husband.

It is the latter of those separations that has become the focus of attempts to overhaul the country's immigration policies, since more than 100,000 American citizens lose a spouse or parent to deportation each year. President Obama has asked the Department of Homeland Security to

review the humanity of its procedures. At a time when nearly one fourth of undocumented deported immigrants have children or spouses who are U.S. citizens, the government faces a choice: Deport undocumented immigrants who've broken the law, or protect the citizens those immigrants often provide for?

"When you're gone, I will look at this video and pretend I'm on a walk with you," Salaty said now, still filming. "We're going to miss you."

"Try to be strong, baby," Zunaid told her.

"I am trying," she said.

Zunaid had come to Kansas on a student visa in 1994 to study petroleum engineering and stayed illegally for more than 15 years after his visa ran out. He had been making an annual salary of nearly \$60,000 as the manager of a Best Buy when he was pulled over for a DUI in 2009, which began his procession toward deportation. Now he was relearning Bengali, scheduling immunizations against Third World diseases, and searching for a place to live in Dhaka with relatives, many of whom he hadn't spoken to for decades.

What he worried about most was his wife, Salaty, a preschool teacher. She had been diagnosed with acute insomnia and situational anxiety. She was seeing a therapist for the first time and had started taking an anti-anxiety medication and an antidepressant, neither of which had halted the rashes on her hands and arms. She had tried to calm herself by doing breathing exercises and yoga, but her preferred coping mechanism was to chronicle every moment on video, even now, as the dog circled a tree, sniffed a patch of dirt, and began to lift his leg.

"Oh, here he goes," she said.

"This is always his favorite spot," Zunaid said as the camera recorded.

SALATY HAD started documenting their last months together at the suggestion of the therapist, after her husband's deportation

became all but certain during the final days of 2013. She had met Zunaid one night at her favorite bar. He was tall and handsome and called everybody "buddy." She was talkative and emphasized her points by touching his shoulder. He told her he was undocumented and facing deportation, but she said it didn't matter. "We can deal with it," she told him, and she surprised him at their wedding by arriving in a sari and with henna tattoos. She helped him quit smoking; he did yard work for her mother. They went to a pro soccer game and took a road trip to Texas. They were beginning to research adoption when they learned that his final appeal had been denied. His case did not meet the standard of "extreme hardship," since he had a signed removal order, no children, and a recent DUI. Their lives became a countdown to May 17.

"Crying, shortness of breath, panic attack," Salaty wrote in her journal one day in February.

The next day: "I feel the anxiety like a tight helmet on my head. I feel it in my eyes and my teeth."

She explained Zunaid's case to five lawyers, spending \$10,000 on fees, only to learn there was nothing left to do. Due to a 1996 change to law, marriage to a U.S. citizen no longer canceled out many immigration violations. She tried talking with her congresswoman, meeting activists, and working with a lobbying group. She approached strangers at the

grocery store to help. She asked so many people to e-mail their politicians that Zunaid pleaded with her to stop.

"Let these people live their lives," he told her, with two days left. "You will drive yourself crazy. I need you to be OK, or we will both come apart."

"You're my husband," she said. "I'm supposed to just let go?"

She left him watching basketball in the living room and went into their office, signing in to an Internet support group for family members of undocumented immigrants. She had visited the site dozens of times with questions: How had spouses dealt with the sudden loss of more than half of their family income? Did anyone have advice on finding mortgage assistance or signing up for food stamps?

This time, she wanted to know about the particulars of Zunaid's deportation. The government had given him a choice: be detained in an immigration jail and then placed on a flight, or stay at home wearing a monitoring device and pay for his own airfare. He'd chosen the latter, cashing out his IRA to buy a ticket for \$1,072 so he could spend a few extra days with his wife. It would be her job to take him to his one-way flight out of Kansas City on May 17.

"Did anyone here have to drive

their husband to the airport?" she wrote to the support group, and in a country with more than one million families living separately because of deportation, the responses came fast.

"I collapsed when he went through security," wrote one woman. "That was back in 2005."

"I used to call it the rip/tear because walking away was a nightmare."

"It was the worst day of my entire life. I still get upset when I drive up there, to the last place that I saw him."

Salaty had thought about moving to Bangladesh with Zunaid, but what about the fact that she was a born-and-raised Kansan

who spoke no Bengali, with an aging mother, a sister, nieces, a job she loved, and a house with her name on the deed? A few friends suggested that Zunaid could hide in the United States, but how long would that last? He had been given a ten-year ban before he could reenter the country, and Salaty had hired a lawyer to file appeals to bring him back sooner.

THEY CHOSE the same restaurant for their last night together as they had chosen for their first date, a sushi place. She wore his Adidas jacket, and he ordered their usual three rolls.

“*We will be OK,” Zunaid told Salaty at the airport. “I want you to say it.”*”

"How are you doing?" she asked him as they waited for their food.

"I'm good, baby," he said.

"But really?"

"I don't know," he said. "I'm trying not to go there."

He preferred to think of his deportation as a list of logistics. "Pack." "Research international cell phone." "Set up Skype." It was only when his mind wandered that a wave of nausea began to rise from his stomach. Could he get an Internet connection at home in Dhaka so he could communicate with his wife? Who would hire a recent deportee with no local knowledge and rusty Bengali? Would his family accept him back after 20 years away?

Twenty-eight people had taken him to the airport when he'd left Dhaka for America, a goodbye befitting an only son who'd aced his tests and earned a chance at a college degree. But during his junior year, his father ran out of money and stopped paying tuition, and Zunaid dropped out of school and started working at Best Buy. When his father died, he didn't find out until a few months later, over e-mail. Now he was going back to Bangladesh with no degree and less than \$2,000. Deported from one country and a disappointment in another—that was how he sometimes felt.

"I canceled the car insurance today," he told Salaty, eating sushi.

"Good," she said.

"I deposited my paycheck," he said. "You should have enough to pay the

mortgage for at least three months."

"OK," she said.

"The tomatoes are planted and good to go," he said. "The gutters are cleaned. Your Skype is set up."

The only task left was to buy presents for relatives, so they drove to Best Buy to use his discount. "Do these work over there?" Zunaid wondered, picking out a Bluetooth headset for his uncle. "Will they understand this?" he said, choosing a DVD for the nieces and nephews he had yet to meet. His flight would leave in ten hours.

HE AWOKE at 3 a.m., and she awoke at 4. He put his head back on the pillow and tried to quiet his thoughts. She logged in to her support group, took an anti-anxiety pill, e-mailed a lawyer, put on makeup, considered a second pill, and checked her congresswoman's schedule. "Do you think I could somehow talk to her today?" she asked Zunaid as they walked to the car.

"I think you should try to slow down," he said. "Maybe I should drive."

He said goodbye to Bear, and she recorded it on video. He loaded his suitcase into the trunk, and she recorded it. He stopped for coffee, and she recorded that too.

"We need another Rosa Parks-type figure for immigration," she said as Zunaid squeezed her hand. "Think about my dad, a Russian immigrant, a professor—how many people were better off because he came to this

country?" she said as Zunaid traced circles on her back.

They parked at the airport, and he brought his luggage, 20 years divided into three suitcases. He had wedding photos, a suit for job interviews, a Kansas Jayhawks statue, and a copy of the decision made by an immigration judge. "Ordered removed," it read.

He checked in for his flight, and Salaty paced. An hour left. Thirty minutes. Twenty. "It's time," he said, finally, and she took out her camera. "Look at me," he told her, and so she put the camera down. For a moment, there was nothing to do and no one to see other than her husband, leaning down to rest his forehead against hers.

"We will be OK," he told her. "I want you to say it."


"We will be OK," she repeated.

"We will be OK," he said, slower this time.

"We will be OK," she said.

She waved to him as he walked through security, watching until he turned a corner and disappeared. Eventually a text message arrived on her phone. "We will be OK."

By then he was on the plane. He pressed his head against the window, picking out the places that were familiar to him: a park, a stadium, the river.

"Twenty years," he said. His mother had told him that she would be waiting for him in Dhaka. "I hope she recognizes me," he said. 

"My hands become so dry from washing, and it's difficult to do my job. O'Keeffe's really does work, and it's reliable!"

Maureen,
Veterinary
Technician



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Like a picked flower cut from the source,

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WHO ? KNEW

13 Things Motivational Speakers Won't Tell You

BY MICHELLE CROUCH

1 Most people think the way to add emphasis is to raise your voice. But if you really want to attract attention, be silent for a moment. I always pause before I say something important, and all the heads that were looking down jerk up.

2 When I'm speaking, I can see you. Really. If you're texting, I know. If you've got buds in your ears, I know. Usually I let it go. But if you're distracting the people around you, I may have to call you out.



3 Here's the key to good networking: Think about what you can do for others, not what they can do for you. When you meet new people, don't make the mistake of marketing yourself. Instead, think about someone you know who would be helpful to them. Connect two people, and suddenly you're a hero.

4 You have no idea what they do to us backstage. One time I had a keynote speech that was cut from half an hour of talking time to seven minutes because the speakers in front of me were going on too long. So I ripped up the speech I had, wrote a few notes, and winged it.

5 Never before have we had more power to educate ourselves. If you give a smartphone to a Masai warrior in Africa who's never seen technology, he will have access to more information than the president of the United States did in the year 2000. That's a stunning statistic; take advantage of it.

6 The key to a good speech is to have a surprising truth. Find something that everyone thinks is one way, and explain that really it's this other way. If you can achieve that, you've hit a home run.

7 Smaller audiences are murder because people lose focus. The sweet spot is any group of about 150 to 200 people; that size allows you to establish a collective crowd reaction.

8 Stuck in a creative rut? Try this: Look to your left and focus on whatever random object is there; then think about how your life or your problem is like that object. It's a simple exercise, but it can help get your creative juices flowing.

9 Often I'll pick out a person in the crowd who has a big sour-puss expression, and I'll make it my mission to make that person laugh. If I can do that by the end of my speech, then that's success for me.

10 I built my career by soliciting exotic international gigs where I had credibility because I was an American from Silicon Valley. Meanwhile, I got credibility at home because I was speaking internationally. That one trick made me an established keynote speaker.

11 The best speakers don't always command the highest fees. Case in point: Rutgers paid *Jersey Shore* reality TV star Snooki \$32,000 in 2011 for two Q&A sessions. That was \$2,000 more than it paid Nobel Prize-winning author Toni Morrison to deliver a commencement address.

12 Last spring, I was giving a speech in a multiplex theater, and the power died. It could have been terrible, but it was great. First one person turned on his phone's flashlight to light me up. Then everyone did. And I just kept going.

13 Delivery matters. When I have an important speech, I record it and listen to it repeatedly so there will be no mistakes whatsoever. **R**

Sources: Motivational speakers James Marshall Reilly, founder of the Guild Agency; Patrick Schwerdtfeger; Ian Tyson; Kinja Dixon; Gayle Carson; and Rabbi Issamar Ginzberg





SEE

THE WORLD ...

—
Turn the page ➤➤

... DIFFERENTLY

Inspiring the same wonder as a peacock's tail, this humanlike mask helps the Western Australian peacock spider attract females. The male uses its brightly patterned abdominal flap (made of scales and hair) to court a mate.



Human Tales Behind Useful Inventions

BY ALANA HOROWITZ
FROM *BUSINESS INSIDER*

Bendable Straw

Sitting in his brother's soda shop, Joseph Friedman observed his daughter as she struggled to drink a milk shake through a straight paper straw. An inventor, he thought of a way to help her out and fix this drinking conundrum for good. Friedman decided to insert a screw into the straw and wrap it with floss to create a ribbed texture. When he removed the screw, the straw bent over the rim of the glass, and his daughter was able to drink her milk shake with ease. Friedman patented his idea in 1937 and founded the Flexible Straw Corporation (which was later renamed the Flex-Straw Company) in 1939. He sold the patent rights to the Maryland Cup Corporation, which now sells about 500 million of the straws every year.



Friedman's detailed patent for the bendable straw

Upright Paper Bag

In the 1860s, Margaret Knight was working in a paper-bag factory when she noticed how difficult it was to pack things into the flimsy, shapeless sacks. So she decided to invent a handy machine that folded and glued paper to make a flat-bottomed bag. Unfortunately, Knight couldn't obtain a patent until she made her very own prototype of the device out of iron. Meanwhile, Charles Annan—an employee who worked at the shop building Knight's prototype—copied her idea and got a patent for it. Knight sued Annan for copyright infringement. Annan had argued that because Knight was a woman, she

couldn't have been the true inventor. But Knight's sketches won her the case. To protect her ideas, she made her own paper-bag company.

Intermittent Wipers

On a rainy night in 1963, engineer Robert Kearns tried to squirt through the sporadic showers that blurred his windshield. In the 1960s, windshield wipers typically had two settings, high and low. If rain wasn't steady, driving could be extremely difficult. Kearns wondered why windshield wipers couldn't react like blinking human eyes and respond to all kinds of precipitation. He built a model of his idea, patented it in ➤➤

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Information regarding study results and health care legislation can be found by visiting the Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water website, www.marines.mil/clwater. New study results were released in August 2014, and additional study results are expected in 2015.

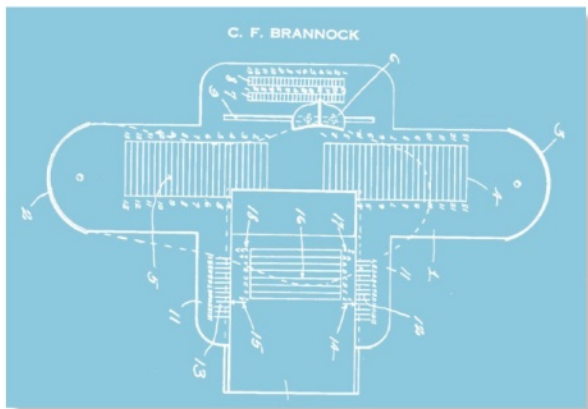
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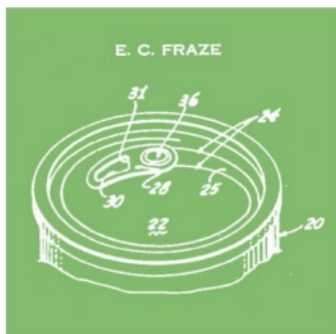


1967, and sent it to the major American car companies, but none bit. However, they suddenly started to use his wipers in their cars without asking for his approval. After battling Ford, Chrysler, and other manufacturers, Kearns won more than \$30 million.



Pop-Top Soda Can

Ernie Frazee, the owner of a machine tool company, was attending a picnic in 1959 when he realized he didn't bring a can opener, a tool necessary to open the fully sealed flat-top soft drinks that were popular in the 1950s. The result: He had to pry them open using a car bumper. Later that year, he designed a pop-top can that could be opened with a removable tab. Eventually, his company began mass-producing these cans for soft drink and brewing companies. By 1980, Frazee's company was making more than \$500 million in annual revenue from his invention.



Shoe Scale

The son of a shoemaker, Charlie Brannock wanted to figure out the best way to measure feet and, in turn, help his father's business. The only way to determine shoe sizes in the early 1900s was by using an inaccurate wooden block. While attending Syracuse University, Brannock used a toy construction set to build a prototype of a device that accurately measured foot size. The Brannock device has since become a staple for shoe stores all over.



The patents for Brannock's shoe scale (top) and Frazee's pop-top can (left)

IT PAYS TO INCREASE YOUR


Word Power

You already know that staying in shape is a key to good health. But just as important: keeping your vocabulary finely tuned and toned. Try this quiz—about shapes of the literal sort—then hit the next page for answers.

BY EMILY COX & HENRY RATHVON

- 1. gangling** ('gan-gling) *adj.*—
A: loose and lanky. B: bulging with muscles. C: short in stature.
- 2. helix** ('hee-likes) *n.*—A: pointed tip. B: warped outline. C: spiral.
- 3. deltoid** ('del-toyd) *adj.*—
A: triangular. B: circular. C: squared off.
- 4. trefoil** ('tree-foyl) *adj.*—
A: pliable. B: having a three-leaf design. C: tapering narrowly.
- 5. conical** ('kah-nih-kul) *adj.*—
A: like an igloo. B: like a cone. C: like a tunnel.
- 6. pentacle** ('pen-tih-kul) *n.*—
A: star. B: crescent moon. C: square.
- 7. elliptical** (ih-'lip-tih-kul) *adj.*—
A: slanted. B: embossed. C: oval.
- 8. sigmoid** ('sig-moyd) *adj.*—
A: crossed like an X. B: curved like a C or an S. C: bent like an L.
- 9. whorl** ('hworl) *n.*—A: well-rounded muscle. B: flat surface. C: circular pattern.

- 10. serrated** ('seh-rayt-ed) *adj.*—
A: interconnected, as with circles or rings. B: elongated. C: having notched edges.
- 11. cordate** ('kor-dayt) *adj.*—
A: stringlike. B: heart shaped. C: free-form.
- 12. svelte** ('svelt) *adj.*—
A: undulating. B: lean. C: in a checked or repeating pattern.
- 13. zaftig** ('zaf-tig) *adj.*—
A: pleasingly plump. B: moldable, like putty. C: seedlike, as in an avocado or a peach.
- 14. lozenge** ('lah-zunj) *n.*—
A: 90-degree angle. B: level used in architectural design. C: diamond.
- 15. ramify** ('ra-meh-fiy) *v.*—
A: become solid, as cement. B: jut out. C: split into branches or parts.

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

Answers

1. gangling—[A] loose and lanky. The protagonist of “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” was the *gangling* pedagogue.

2. helix—[C] spiral. Judy is a DNA researcher, so she’s getting a tattoo of a double *helix*.

3. deltoid—[A] triangular. The pyramids’ architects obviously knew a thing or two about the stability of *deltoid* structures.

4. trefoil—[B] having a three-leaf design. The gardening club uses a *trefoil* symbol—a gilded clover—as its logo.

5. conical—[B] like a cone. My favorite *conical* item? Why, the ice-cream cone, of course, topped preferably with three scoops of chocolate.

6. pentacle—[A] star. Hey, this tarot deck is missing all the cards with *pentacles*!

7. elliptical—[C] oval. Just two times around the *elliptical* running track, and Rebecca was wiped out.

8. sigmoid—[B] curved like a C or an S. On Superman’s chest sits a single scarlet *sigmoid* symbol.

9. whorl—[C] circular pattern. To find the treasure, take 50 paces east from the tree with the *whorl* in its trunk.

10. serrated—[C] having notched edges. “I’m not sure that old serrated knife is best for carving the turkey,” Dad advised.

11. cordate—[B] heart shaped. Sarah is baking *cordate* cookies for her cardiologist boyfriend.

12. svelte—[B] lean. The holidays pose a serious challenge to my *svelte* frame!

13. zaftig—[A] pleasingly plump. Known for her *zaftig* figure, Caroline was a surprising choice for the fashion magazine’s debut cover.

14. lozenge—[C] diamond. The boys dug up the grass to create a make-shift *lozenge* so they could play ball.

15. ramify—[C] split into branches or parts. “We need to *ramify* this department to keep productivity high!” Kerrie emphasized at yesterday’s staff meeting.

WHAT’S THE ANGLE?

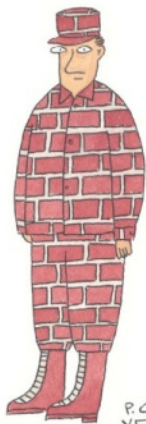
In geometry, you find various shapes called *polygons*, from the Greek *poly-* for “many” plus *gonia* for “angle.” Hence, a pentagon has five angles (and sides), a hexagon has six, a heptagon has seven, an octagon has eight, and so on.

VOCABULARY RATINGS

9 & below: Obtuse
10-12: Well-rounded
13-15: Full circle

Humor in Uniform

GOOD NEWS! The Army is replacing its camouflage uniforms. Uncle Sam didn't want our help, but that didn't stop us from asking our top "designers" to conceptualize a few. Let's just see the Pentagon turn these down!



"The Urban Warrior"



"The Star Recruit"



"The Made-U-Look"



"The Castaway Commando"



"The March of the Penguins"

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ILLUSTRATIONS BY P.C. VEY (2), JOHN CALDWELL, TERESA BURNS PARKHURST, KIM WARP

Don't hide your funny military memory, list, or news story—send it to us. It might be worth \$100! See page 7 or rd.com/submit for details.

Quotable Quotes

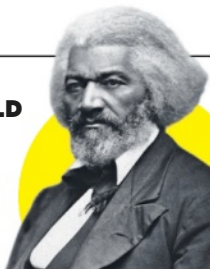


A cookbook is only as good as its poorest recipe.

JULIA CHILD

IT IS EASIER TO BUILD STRONG CHILDREN THAN TO REPAIR BROKEN MEN.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS



A vote is the great equalizer, but only when it is cast.

CHARLES M. BLOW,
columnist



WARNING: EVERYTHING NOT SAVED WILL BE LOST. NINTENDO WII QUIT SCREEN

If life boils down to one thing, it's movement. To live is to keep moving.

JERRY SEINFELD

IF YOUR DREAMS DO NOT SCARE YOU, THEY ARE NOT BIG ENOUGH.

ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF,
president of Liberia



Passion makes the world go round. Love just makes it a safer place.

ICE-T, rapper

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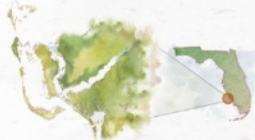
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