

THE NEXT DISASTER
Are We
Prepared?

No Pain
No Pills!
NEW RESEARCH

How Bad
Lawsuits
Hurt YOU



Reader's Digest

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breaking up &
bouncing back

**Are You
Rude?**
Take Our Quiz

**NEVER
GIVE UP**
6 Inspiring
Stories

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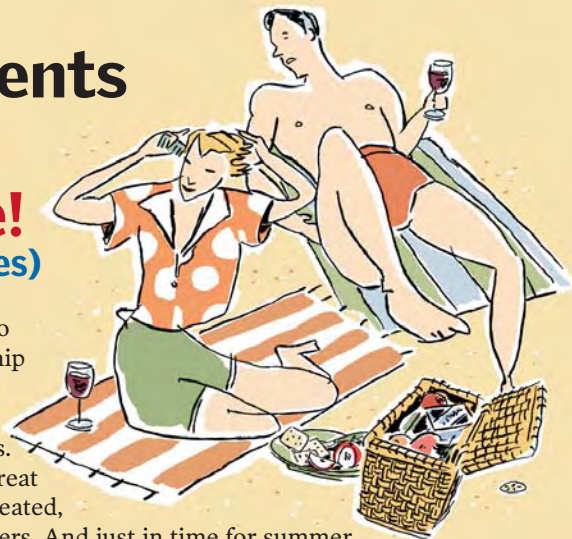
RD Presents

Picnic Time! (great, free recipes)

Reader's Digest is proud to announce a new partnership with **Allrecipes.com**, the world's largest online community of home cooks. The site features 30,000 great American recipes, each created, tested and reviewed by users. And just in time for summer, **Allrecipes.com** is offering a collection of its Top Ten 5-star (★★★★★) picnic recipes—exclusively for you. This 12-page gift to RD readers is available for free download at allrecipes.com/picnic.



So take a look, grab your shopping list, and put together an outdoor feast your family can really dig into.



WARD SCHUMAKER

Summer Slim-Down

Ready to put on that swimsuit? If not, ChangeOne, RD's official diet and fitness program, can help you meet your goals. Get one month free! For details, visit changeonediet.com/summer.



Pain at the Pump

Gas prices got you down? During this vacation driving season, make a pledge to consume less fuel by using some of our save-a-gallon tips. Even little changes help! Go to rd.com/saveagallon to learn more.



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America's 100 Best

ETHAN BERMAN, head of Risk-Metrics Group, is an example of what a leader should be (#93, Best Payback). In this age of scandals, huge bonuses and corporate bankruptcies, he is unique for acknowledging his “overly generous raise” was “due more to his workers’ efforts than his own.”

KATHLEEN HOOVER, Holtwood, Pennsylvania

The giant peach water tower in Gaffney, South Carolina (#46, Best Skyscrapers) isn't just a water tower to my family. Our youngest is treated at Shriners Hospital for Children in Greenville, and the drive there is over six hours. The giant peach is our landmark for “almost there!”

SUSAN JACKSON, Columbia, North Carolina

I've got more entries for #10, Best Street Names: Avenue Avenue in White Oak, North Carolina; Street Street in Anoka, Minnesota; Way Cool Way in Wishon, California; Losers Loop in Sula, Montana; and the “last” street in the country—ZZZZ Street in Kearney, Nebraska.

JOE SNYDER, Nipomo, California



The air tent (#36, Best Cover-Up) caught my attention. When my husband and I were honeymooning in Spain, we rented a tent from an elderly British couple and camped on the beach. The small tent had crisscross “air beams” with an extension pole in the center.

Five minutes with a foot pump, and we had it standing.

Well, what goes up must come down. When we finally emerged from the collapsed tent the next morning, sweating, disheveled and looking like a couple of newlyweds who'd made a night of it, we were greeted by our highly amused hosts.

We suspected they'd unscrewed the valve and had a little fun at our expense. They predicted that with our sense of humor and knack for teamwork, we'd have a long, happy marriage. And we certainly did—35 years. SHIRLEY KUKTA, Lake Forest, California

A Promise Kept

TOM HALLMAN'S STORY about Antonio Seay, the young man who got legal custody of his siblings, was incredible (“Brotherly Love”). With many of our young people falling victim to drugs and lack of

guidance or motivation, here is a family who is going against all odds.

Antonio's willingness to unselfishly sacrifice his plans and become a "father" to four teens is a tribute to their mom and the values she instilled in her children.

CONNIE MAYFIELD, Spokane Valley, Washington

If Antonio has a business degree and has shown the initiative and organizational skills to have a job, care for a family and inspire his siblings to achieve, why aren't Miami companies breaking down his door to hire him for a better-paying management position? Come on, Miami, good deeds should be rewarded.

FLO SAMUELS, Hayward, California

Grapefruit Concern

IN "THE BUZZ" section of "Health IQ," it says that a grapefruit a day lowers cholesterol in patients with heart disease. This is true, but as a pharmacist, I tell patients to avoid grapefruit juice and grapefruit if they are on certain medications, including some cholesterol-lowering statins. Grapefruit interferes with the body's ability to metabolize some medications.

WENDY T. CRICK, RPH, Mount Juliet, Tennessee

If you're starting a new prescription, tell your pharmacist if you regularly consume grapefruit. Ask about potential problems. Otherwise, you may not need to alter your intake of this healthy fruit, since your system is

used to it. But it's smart to check with your doctor.

DR. ROIZEN AND DR. OZ

Best Fish Tale

I WAS CRYING by the time I finished "Whale of a Rescue" about the 50-ton humpback that got tangled in ropes and nearly drowned.

I, too, have looked eye to eye with a humpback, while on a whale watch in Hawaii. It is truly a never-to-be-forgotten moment! That whale knew those men were trying to help her.

TERRY WESTDYKE, Sussex, New Jersey

**Reader's
Digest**

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IDEAS, TRENDS, AND INTERESTING BITS FROM ALL OVER

Getting Mighty Crowded in Here

Does it feel like it's harder than ever to maintain your personal space? Maybe it is. Sometime this October, the Census Bureau predicts, the U.S. population will top 300 million. That's nearly double the number of people who called this country home just 50 years ago. No wonder there's less elbowroom.

The United States, it seems, is going through an adolescent growth spurt. The

nation added 32.7 million people during the 1990s—the highest one-decade increase in the nation's history. The surge isn't slowing down: Experts see the population approaching 400 million by 2040.

Meanwhile, we've got only so much space. We can't just expand to handle the growth. So we'll have to accept more bumping up against one another—and learn to do it with minimal bruising.

"The more people we have in a limited territory," says Joel Cohen, demographer and author of *How Many People Can the Earth Support?* "the more we'll have to make trade-offs."

Here's one to consider: Let's preserve our wide-open spaces. They come in handy when we can flee the crowds.

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rd.com Learn more from the Nature Conservancy. Visit rd.com/green.



Bleacher Creatures

TALK ABOUT the dog days of summer. More and more Major League baseball teams—including the Chicago White Sox, Florida Marlins and, this year, the Oakland Athletics—now host a bring-your-pooch-to-the-park promotion each season. (Chicago's came first, in 1996.) In most cases, a section of outfield stands is reserved for fans and their pet pals, with specific areas set aside for when nature calls. And if Rex doesn't reach the designated spot in time? Guess that's when you count on your cleanup hitter.

THE BIG IDEA

A Sweet Change

A year ago, Kimberly Reindl, 35, was an FCC lawyer in Washington, D.C. Peter Clement, 38, was a financial analyst. They and friend Paul Allulis, 38, also a lawyer, had secure, high-paying jobs. But "we all felt we were lacking something in our careers," says Clement.

That something turned out to be chocolate.

In spring 2005, Reindl read about an Oregon-based company called Vacation-Vacations. Started in 2004 by Brian Kurth, a former corporate exec who'd seen his father work for years in an insurance job he hated, the firm offers people the chance to test-drive a dream by spending up to several days working at one of 75 jobs—actor, brewmaster, cattle rancher—with a pro.

Demand surely exists for such a service. A 2004 Uni-

versity of Phoenix survey found that 23 percent of working adults don't like their careers and want to switch—just like the Washington crew. The trio signed up, via Kurth, to work last year under master Portland chocolatier Jack Elmer, spending long hours cranking out truffles—and loving it. Soon after getting home, Reindl and Clement quit their jobs (and self-employed Allulis says he'll join them full-time soon). Now they're ordering gear, testing recipes and preparing to open their new Baltimore store, Manzanita Chocolate, later this year. Call it their just deserts.



From left:
Allulis,
Reindl,
Clement

Forget the Lipstick, Just Pass the Soap

CHALK UP another milestone on the march toward gender equality: These days, women swear as much as men—sometimes more. A recent AP/Ipsos poll found that 61% of women ages 18-44 swear at least a few times a week (a percentage equal to that of men the same age); nearly 1 in 4 of these young women swear several times a day. Among men 45 and up, 48% swear a few times a week; 14%, a few times a day. Where do they pick up this habit? Not Mom: Just 4% of women over 45 swear a few times a day. So let's not blame them for this new family curse.



ARTIGA PHOTO/MASTERFILE

Stuff That's Really Out of This World

Did you know that NASA's mission includes spinning its technology off into the private sector? Check out these recent space-age gems it's helped create:

PRODUCT

EXTRATERRESTRIAL EDGE

The Mosquito Killing System

Developed by an American firm with help from engineers at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, this device emits heat and carbon dioxide to mimic a tasty, breathing human. Its interior electric grid then fries hungry bugs.

The Hutch Snuggle

This U.K.-built outdoor home for pet rabbits is kinder to critters than its bug-zapping cousin. Its NASA-designed fabric walls keep hutch temperatures constant—and bunnies cozy—regardless of weather conditions outside.

GOLD-TOE Socks With Outlast

Outlast's NASA-developed Smart Fabric Technology moderates temperature and wicks away moisture in men's GOLDTOE All Day Comfort socks made with these fibers. Also available in select khakis and Eddie Bauer sweaters.

Digital Media, Inc.'s fish locator

A GPS/satellite-info system that claims to detect where fish are hiding. And once you've cleaned and cooked your catch, wash it down with a big glass of Tang.



Worth Checking Out Before You Check In



DOMESTIC TRAVEL is up, with tourists expected to spend \$674 billion jetting around the country this year. That's fueling a hotel-building boom: Nearly 450,000 new rooms are in the pipeline. Owners of existing hotels are responding with a makeover frenzy. "Renovation is the order of the day," says Pat Ford of Lodging Econometrics, a lodging-industry consulting firm. The upshot: Hoteliers are ditching furniture—everything from bed sets to drapes to armchairs—that smart shoppers can find for low prices at stores like Hotel Surplus Outlet in Los Angeles. One more reason not to swipe the towels.

CHRIS CRAYMER/STONE/GETTY IMAGES

RD INDEX

A quick review of some of the good, bad and ugly to cross our radar recently.

YEA

Soft-drink makers For agreeing to stop selling most sodas in schools. A small step, and a bit late, too, but we'll raise a glass, since it should help improve children's health.



The U.S. Postal Service For its proposal to create a new "forever" stamp for first-class mail. Once bought, the stamp could be used at any time in the future without a sender needing to add postage when rates increase. That's what we call pushing the envelope.

NAY

William Swanson For trying to pass off as original wisdom material that wasn't his in *Swanson's Unwritten Rules of Management*. The Raytheon CEO broke one of the most basic rules: Don't claim others' work as your own.



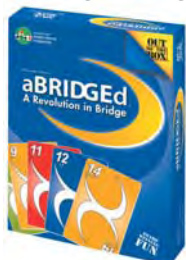
The U.S. Postal Service For tying its good idea to a bad one: a new rate hike. The service wants to raise the price of a stamp from 39 to 42 cents next year—after boosting it by 2 cents in January. Return this one to sender.

5 THINGS We Don't Want You to Miss

RD's picks for great ways to spend your free time this month

GAME

aBRIDged teaches beginners the basics of bridge, making it easy



for the whole family to enjoy playing a hand. Hard to trump that.

On sale mid-July

BOOK

John McPhee's *Uncommon Carriers* is a rollicking portrait of America from the sometimes scary vantage point of barge captains, truck drivers and freight-train engineers who haul all the stuff—from seafood to coal—that we consume. Hop aboard for an eye-opening ride. On sale now



TV SHOW

With Katie Couric tapped to helm *CBS Evening News*, PBS's *American Masters* looks at iconic anchor **Walter Cronkite**, "the most trusted man in America." Aired 7/26

CD



On *The River in Reverse*, British songsmith Elvis Costello teams with New Orleans rhythm-and-blues legend Allen Toussaint to produce a batch of smoky, swampy and soulful songs. Listening to it, the Crescent City sounds so strong you'd think the hurricane never hit. On sale 6/8

MOVIE

The higher gas prices rise, the more we think about other options. In his documentary *Who Killed the Electric Car?* Chris Paine probes the tortured life of what once looked to be a promising alternative. Right or wrong about where the blame for the car's failure lies—and there seems to be plenty to go around—it's a timely take on an important topic. Opens 6/28

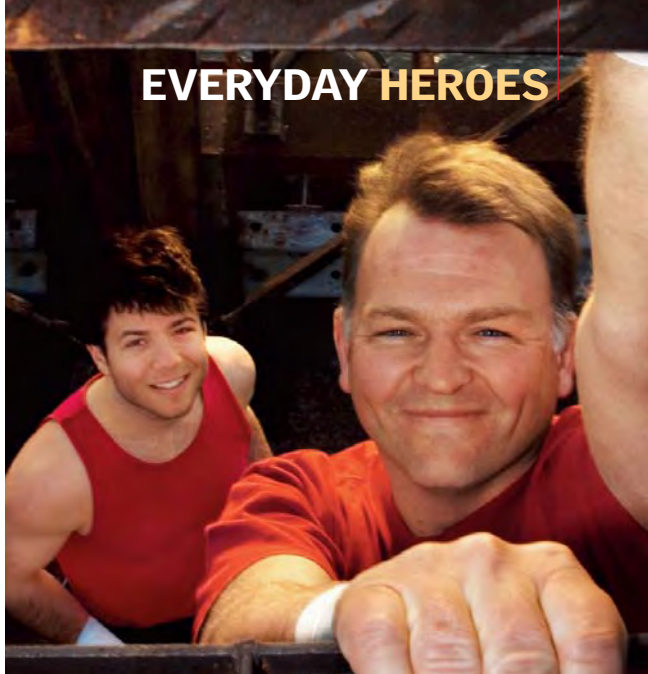


Taking the Plunge

BY GAIL CAMERON
WESCOTT

JUST PAST NOON on a clear, windy day last September, Jonah Spear and Paul Cannon were in the final stages of preparing ten students, mostly beginners, to soar through the air on a flying trapeze. Catching them midair would be the 6'4" Cannon, swinging upside down from the opposite direction with outstretched hands. Spear, a 24-year-old actor and gymnast, handled the safety lines from below. "Like you see in the circus," says Cannon, 41.

Situated outdoors in lower Manhattan's Hudson River Park, Trapeze School New York looks like a giant aluminum jungle gym for grownups. Its takeoff platforms, 23 feet in the air, offer spectacular views of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island—which, Spear points



Fortunately, trapeze instructors Jonah Spear (left) and Paul Cannon can also handle themselves in water.

out, can be a comforting distraction for novice daredevils who experience last-minute jitters.

Since the school opened in 2001, nearly 17,000 people have felt the thrill and exhilaration of flying through the air. Many return again and again. (Business is booming since Al Roker, Kelly Ripa and others have taken their turns on TV.)

Cannon and Spear have been teaching since the school's first days. Spear learned trapeze flying as a teenager, at a summer camp specializing in circus performing. When a friend told him about Trapeze School, he showed up on the second day, asking if more staff was needed.

The answer was yes. Cannon, who was already on-board, trained him.

Classes run two hours, and that Thursday morning, the group had been working for nearly an hour and a half. Spear was holding the safety lines for a student swinging on the bar, while Cannon changed into

"Got any rope?" a police officer called. **"There's a guy in the river."**

tights and prepared to mount the ladder for the culminating "catch phase" of the class.

Suddenly a police officer appeared at the front gate. "Got any rope?" he called. "There's a guy in the river." His tone seemed more matter-of-fact than urgent. Cannon went to the equipment shed to grab a spool of rope, while Spear kept working.

"Forward drop!" he yelled to his student, who, on command, plunged two stories into the net below. As the young woman scrambled to her feet, Spear stopped the class and joined Cannon at the edge of the Hudson River, just 40 feet from the school.

They expected to toss a line to someone splashing around or hanging onto the retaining wall. Instead, looking into the murky water, they could barely make out a shadow.

"He's sinking!" yelled someone in the small crowd that had gathered. "He's under the water!" Police officers were busy tying the end of the

rope to a guardrail, but no one else appeared to be taking any action.

"A lot of people seemed to expect somebody to do something," says Spear. The two trapeze instructors decided they were on deck. Cannon dived in first, and Spear, carrying the end of the rope, jumped right after him, wallet and cell phone still in his pocket, sneakers on his feet.

The water was lukewarm and choppy, so dirty down below that it was impossible to see anything. Cannon swam as deep as he could and came up empty. The victim was obviously sinking fast.

"We looked at each other," says Spear, "and knew, without saying it, that the next dive was it. We both went down."

This rescue mission was not unlike what the two men do together every day. "My extensive experience hurling myself to unimaginable heights and letting Paul catch me made it very easy to jump in the water with him," says Spear. "We've both tied knots and hung ropes on which the other's life depends."

At a depth of about ten feet, Cannon literally bumped into the drowning man. Groping clumsily, he managed to grab one wrist. In blue jeans and boots, the man was dead weight. And although Cannon was in great physical shape—he's an expert mountaineer who recently summited Kilimanjaro—he was rapidly running out of breath. Kick-

ing as hard as he could, he struggled to push the victim to the surface.

Spear swam over with the rope and helped raise the man's head higher out of the water. His eyes were rolled back, and foam was coming out of his mouth. Certain he was dead, they strained to get the rope around his body. But the thin, lightweight cord used in trapeze-spotting was difficult to hold in the water, and they couldn't get enough slack to tug him out.

Noticing some students standing onshore, Spear yelled for someone to toss down a safety belt. He dived again and managed to get the belt around the man's waist and the rope through one of the buckles.

Finally, police were able to pull the victim from the Hudson. By the time Cannon and Spear climbed out of the water, 23-year-old James Kue was lying on his back receiving CPR from one of the trapeze students. Audra Alexander, a stay-at-home mom from Indiana, used to teach CPR, so she knew just what to do. After four cycles of chest compressions and breaths—nearly two

minutes—the young man spit out a mouthful of water and started to breathe again.

Alexander rolled him over on his side into what's called recovery position—arm up under his head and one knee bent. The rest of the students gathered around to shield him from the bright sunlight until an ambulance arrived.

A few days later, Spear and Cannon went to visit James Kue in Bellevue Hospital. Turns out he was visiting from Michigan and had been in New York for only a few days. He said he had no memory of even being in the water, and no clue how he wound up there. (According to the police report, no one is certain exactly what happened.)

"It was so amazing to see him with color in his cheeks, breathing," says Spear. He took Kue's hand and told him, "You got another chance. Now you can do anything."

At Christmas, Kue sent an e-mail to his rescuers, saying thanks, and announcing that he hopes to return to Manhattan one day for a good swing on the trapeze.

HEY, WE GOT ONE!



My geography teacher always told us that not many people lived in Wyoming. But I never knew just how rare human sightings were until I came across a recent newspaper headline. It screamed "Man Found in Wyoming."

LOWELL WEED



Lawsuit Lunacy

There's big money in blaming others for your own bad luck. Too bad it costs all of us.

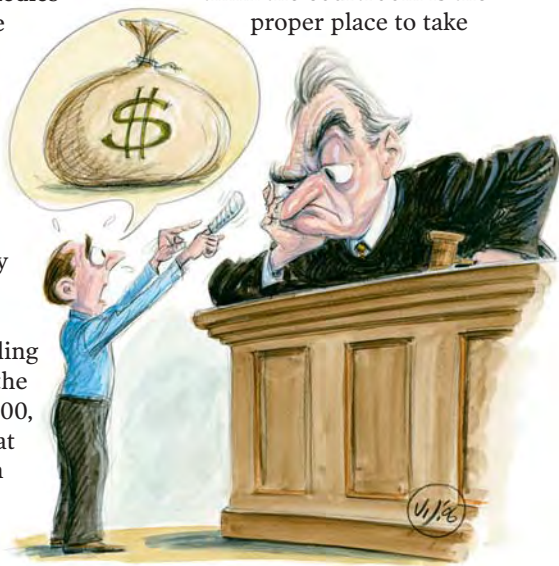
THREE YEARS AGO Bob Dougherty had some bum luck at a Home Depot in Louisville, Colorado.

Dougherty sat down on a toilet in the store's bathroom—and couldn't get up. A prankster had smeared glue on the seat, and Dougherty was bonded to the toilet. As paramedics rushed him to the hospital, the toilet seat came free—but not without leaving some skin behind. Ouch!

Sounds like Dougherty had a horrible day, right? Not necessarily. You see, Dougherty is hoping to turn that really bad day into a really big payday. About two years after the incident, Dougherty wrote to Home Depot demanding \$3 million in damages. When the company offered him just \$2,000, he sued. Dougherty argued that the store was slow to help him and paper seat covers should

have been available. Was he laughed out of court? Hardly. The lawsuit is slowly moving forward. Meanwhile, the jerk who actually put glue on the toilet was never caught.

Three million bucks over toilet-seat covers? That's what passes for a legitimate lawsuit these days. People think the courtroom is the proper place to take



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

any beef, no matter how petty, embarrassing or absurd. “This is a country where it’s hard to satirize what people sue over, because it tends to be overtaken by the reality,” says Walter Olson, a Manhattan Institute fellow and the editor of *Overlawyered.com*. “And the message some of these lawsuits

One man backed a city dump truck into his own car and **sued the city.**

send is that if something bad has happened to you, it must be someone else’s fault, and you must be owed compensation.”

It’s not just ridiculous—it affects all of us. Our society has become so sue-happy that the average federal district judge fields 400 new cases a year. With dockets so clogged with junk, it can take years for any legitimate case to wind its way through the courts. Justice delayed is justice denied.

All of these loony lawsuits hit our wallets too. Insurance premiums skyrocket as everyone scrambles to cover his behind, court costs rise, and astronomical settlements depress corporate earnings and shareholder value. According to a White House Council of Economic Advisors estimate, the United States suffers an excessive “litigation tax” of

\$136 billion per year. Meanwhile, the personal-injury lawyers—whose smiling faces are plastered everywhere on ads encouraging us to join the lawsuit parade—are laughing all the way to the bank.

These days, even people behaving in reckless or flat-out illegal ways want to blame someone when their own stupidity burns them. Take Juan Alejandro Soto, who, after a night of drinking, arrived with his friends at a closed New York City subway platform. Rather than return to street level, the men decided to trek to the next station along a nonpublic catwalk. (Ever hear of a taxi, guys?) Sure enough, a train came along. But instead of standing as far from the tracks as possible, Soto tried to outrun it and, tragically, was struck, losing both his legs.

Soto didn’t curse his foolishness and give thanks he wasn’t killed, however. He sued. Soto argued that the conductor should have been able to stop before hitting him, a theory he bolstered by describing the typical speed he previously reached on a treadmill. Incredibly, last March, a jury awarded Soto \$1.4 million, despite a dissenting judge who said that Soto’s injuries were “entirely his own fault.”

But in our upside-down legal system, the word *fault* can mean strange things. For instance, in May 2003, a trucker was driving on a public road near Cedar Springs,

Outraged? Write to Michael Crowley at outrageous@rd.com.

Michigan, when a small Cessna clipped the top of his landscaping vehicle and crashed into a field. Miraculously, no one was hurt, and it all seemed like a freak accident. So imagine how the owner of Dean's Landscaping felt when he found out that the plane owners wanted *him* to pay \$21,000 for damages to the Cessna. The plane owners contended that, under the state's no-fault insurance law, they weren't technically operating a "vehicle," and because the plane was in the air, the incident didn't occur on a road—which meant they were entitled to compensation. It's a kooky argument, but two judges agreed, and the landscaper's insurance company coughed up the damages.

And nothing takes the cake like someone who actually tries to sue himself. That's what happened recently in Lodi, California. Curtis Gokey was driving a city dump truck when he managed to back the truck into a car—his own car. Incredibly, Gokey filed a claim against the city seeking \$3,600 in damages. His claim hilariously stated that "my personal vehicle was parked and backed into by a city vehicle," neatly skipping the fact that he did the backing into.

There is a small glimmer of hope: Abusing the courts can backfire. One night in 2004, two Colorado teenage girls knocked on a neighbor's door and dashed off, leaving behind a gift of cookies and a friendly note. Sounds sweet, doesn't

it? But for Wanita Renea Young, it was a traumatic experience. Young was terrified by the mystery knock; she spent the night at her sister's house and went to the hospital the next day with an anxiety attack. All over a knock and some cookies! After gently scolding the girls for being out late (it was after 10 p.m.), a judge ended up awarding Young \$900 for her hospital bill. But in the ensuing media flurry, the girls were celebrated as heroes—and Young looked like a scrooge.

YOU CAN almost go on forever. There's the pimp in Florida who sued his clients for getting him arrested. Or the New Mexico woman who took out a restraining order against David Letterman after claiming he was harassing her by code on his TV show. Or the woman suing Seminole County, Florida, after she tripped over a pine cone in a county parking lot. Got any shame, people?

With greedy lawyers poised to take advantage of every goofy mishap, dreams of big bucks have replaced common sense. To rein in this lawsuit abuse, some members of Congress have proposed putting caps on lawyers' fees and damage awards, and switching class-action suits from state to federal courts. But until that happens, my advice is that you retain a good lawyer—and try not to drive into any airplanes.

rd.com Want to help stop lawsuit lunacy? To find out how, go to rd.com/lawsuit.

Revolution! It was 230 years ago that our Founding Fathers finished the Declaration of Independence. So this month we used words from that historic document for our quiz. A lot has changed since 1776, but many word meanings remain the same. Light the fireworks. Answers on next page.

1. refute v.—A: to start a fight. B: prove to be false. C: plan an escape. D: join together.

2. tyrant n.—

A: angry speech.
B: bushy beard.
C: unjust ruler.
D: rebel leader.



3. barbarous adj.—
A: thorny. B: rugged.
C: cruel. D: well cooked.

4. sufferance n.—
A: unfair law. B: patient endurance. C: right to vote. D: objection.

5. candid adj.—A: open and sincere. B: holding high honor. C: showing optimism. D: hopeless.

6. plunder v.—A: to rob. B: plot against. C: make noise. D: deceive.

7. compliance n.—A: act of conforming. B: show of protest. C: efficiency. D: lack of concern.

8. formidable adj.—
A: self-centered. B: well planned out. C: powerful or impressive. D: overly complicated.

9. impel v.—A: to stab with a knife. B: keep under control. C: make safe. D: drive or urge forward.

10. prudence n.—quality of being A: modest. B: indecisive. C: sad. D: wise or cautious.

11. render v.—A: to impose a fine. B: make or provide. C: hold a rally. D: cast a ballot.

12. annihilation n.—
A: partnership. B: both-
ersome detail. C: deep
breath. D: destruction.

13. evince v.—A: to
persuade effectively.
B: bring forth. C: back
away. D: display clearly.

14. usurpation n.—
A: excess material.
B: quick result.
C: wrongful
seizure. D: dis-
respect for authority.

15. abdicate v.—A: to
cast off. B: take by force.
C: wait patiently.
D: point out.

16. consanguinity n.—
A: logical conclusion.
B: close connection.
C: cheerful atmosphere.
D: self-confidence.

Sign Here

John Hancock's signature is probably the most famous on the Declaration of Independence. Do you know the names of some other signers? Answers on the next page.

--m--l A--m- (Massachusetts)
B--j---n -r--k--- (Pennsylvania)
S--u-- C--se (Maryland)
E-w--- -ut-e-g- (South Carolina)
-h-m-- J---er--- (Virginia)
J--n --th--sp--- (New Jersey)
-og-- S---m-- (Connecticut)

ANSWERS

1. refute—[B] To prove to be false or erroneous by argument or evidence. The defense witness was quick to *refute* the prosecutor's accusations.

7. compliance—[A] An act of conforming to a rule or demand. She submitted paperwork in *compliance* with the bank's lending policy.

12. annihilation—[D] Destruction; nullification; rout. The lopsided loss our basketball team suffered could fairly be called an *annihilation*.

2. tyrant—[C] An unjust ruler with absolute power. The Colonists felt that King George III was a *tyrant*.



3. barbarous—[C] Savagely cruel; uncivilized. The pirates were known for their *barbarous* treatment of the sailors they kidnapped.

4. suffering—[B] Patient endurance; misery. After years of *sufferance*, she'd finally had enough of her husband's abuse and filed for divorce.

5. candid—[A] Open and sincere; unbiased. When I asked for my mother's help, she offered me some *candid* advice.

6. plunder—[A] To rob or take, especially by force and during wartime. The enemy forces destroyed the crops and *plundered* the villagers' homes.

8. formidable—[C] Powerful or impressive; causing fear or awe. Our sales reps dreaded weekly meetings with the *formidable* district manager.

9. impel—[D] To drive or urge forward, often by moral pressure. My elderly aunt *impelled* me to move into her home and take care of her.

10. prudence—[D] The quality of being wise and cautious; good judgment. We urged our teenage son to exercise *prudence* behind the wheel.

11. render—[B] To make or provide; deliver. After hearing both sides of the argument, the judge *rendered* a fair decision.

13. evince—[D] To display clearly; show. The writer never forgot the loss of his twin, as *evinced* by the brother portrayed in all his novels.

14. usurpation—[C] Wrongful seizure, often of power, place or office. The rebel army was charged with *usurpation* of the government.

15. abdicate—

[A] To cast off; discard. King Edward VIII chose to *abdicate* the throne so he could marry Wallis Simpson, an American divorcée.

16. consanguinity—[B] Close connection, often from the same blood or origin. The sisters treasured their *consanguinity*, even though they all lived in different parts of the world.

VOCABULARY RATINGS

8-10 Good **11-13** Excellent

14-16 Exceptional

Sign Here Answers:
 Samuel Adams; Benjamin Franklin; Samuel Chase; Edward Rutledge; Thomas Jefferson; John Witherspoon; Roger Sherman.

Are you known for your *magnanimity*? Go to wordpower.com and find out.

Love Handles

HONESTY IS overrated. The other day I came home to find my wife, Jennifer, in tears.

“What’s wrong?” I asked.

“Quinn used the F word.”

She was referring to our three-year-old.

“You mean—”

“Yes. She called me Fat!” Jennifer is not overweight, but like most women I know, she has an inflated view of her body. She cautiously walked over to a full-length mirror and sighed. “Great, the only part of me that’s trim is my breasts. Be honest ...” Uh-oh. “Am I fat?”

“Not particularly.” I tried to catch the words as they left my mouth, but they were quick, juking and jiving from my grasp until they landed with a thud in her ears.

“Listen, Slim, you could stand to lose a few tons yourself!” she said as she stomped off toward the kitchen.

“I like my fat!” I said. “And remem-



ber, I’ve known it longer than I’ve known you. What are you doing?” The refrigerator door was open, and she was flinging pizzas, cold cuts and ice cream out the window.

“I’m going on a diet, and I’m dragging this family with me!”

“No, not the Chinese takeout!” Too late.

The next morning, we waddled off to the bookstore, where the sheer volume of diet books demanded that we split up. I took the books between 41° longitude, 55° latitude and 43° longitude, 57° latitude. Jennifer covered the rest.

There were low-fat diets, high-protein diets, low-calorie diets, high-fiber diets, water diets, vegan diets, fish diets, fruit-juice diets. There were books on portion con-

Andy Simmons is guest columnist this month while Mary Roach is on sabbatical writing her third book.

trol, and books that screamed EAT LIKE A PIG! Overwhelmed, we settled for just one shelf's worth. We'd try a different diet every day for a month until one worked. We dubbed it the Diet-a-Day Diet.

First up was the Color Diet. You can eat all the food you want, as long as it's one hue.

Whoosh! We stood there pitching **one diet book after another** out the window.

"Let's try brown," I said. "We can have steak, fried mozzarella sticks, stout ale, hash browns and chocolate cake. As long as we don't eat a salad, we're fine."

Jennifer thought choosing brown smacked of cheating. She countered with red. I said that red meant beets, and beets were good for one thing: throwing out. Since we couldn't agree, we left it to chance. I grabbed Quinn's box of 64 Crayola crayons, closed my eyes and picked.

"What color did you get?"

"Gray." We dined on skim milk.

The color diet book joined the Kung Pao chicken in the backyard and was replaced by a high-protein diet. Jennifer's not much of a meat eater, so I was surprised.

"You're allowed one glass of wine a day," she explained.

"One glass or one vase per day?" I asked, noting the King Henry VIII-

size goblet she had chosen.

"Dieting is stressful," she said.

"Well, in that case, I'm having a piece of bread."

Whoosh! Out the window went the high-protein diet book. By week's end, the only thing growing in our garden was the pile of diet books.

The first one to fold was Quinn.

She might be only three, but it doesn't take a four-year-old to know dieting cuts into one's ice cream allotment.

After putting her to bed with promises of chocolate bars and more cheese than

a mouse would want in a lifetime, I came back into the living room. There, in front of the TV, I found Jennifer, miserable, watching the movie *The Mummy*.

"She's so beautiful and so thin," she said of the star, Rachel Weisz.

"You look like her," I said.

"Put your glasses on, Simmons."

It was the first time she'd laughed in a week.

"I'm serious." I was, too, and it wasn't just the starvation talking. "I've got the diet for us."

She groaned. "It's called the Denial Diet," I said. "We pretend we're perfect physical specimens and go on with our lives. You enjoy your wine, and I'll consume all the brown foods I want."

Jennifer liked my idea so much that we celebrated by eating all of Quinn's chocolates. That'll teach her to call us fat. ■

Health IQ

GET SMART ABOUT YOUR BODY WITH DR. ROIZEN & DR. OZ

THE BUZZ

1 When it comes to heart attack risk, having lots of good (HDL) cholesterol may be better than low levels of bad (LDL).

2 The number of people who had cosmetic surgery jumped by 38% from 2000 to 2005.

3 Patients who listen to music after surgery need fewer painkillers than those who don't tune in.



4 In 2002 and 2003, an estimated 27,000 people visited the ER for injuries related to eyeglasses.

5 Just six weeks of yoga can boost lung function and breathing.

Got a question for the doctors? E-mail them at HealthIQ@rd.com

Crazy for Coffee

I drink up to four six-ounce cups of coffee most days. How unhealthy is this?

Unless drinking that much gives you more jitters than an opening-night performance, you're in luck. Studies consistently show that coffee and caffeine reduce the risk of Parkinson's, and may even protect against Alzheimer's disease and cancer. Drinking 24 ounces of coffee a day can be good for you.

Why? It could be the flavonoids or the antioxidants. (Coffee is America's biggest source of antioxidants.

Q & A We get six times more from joe than from bananas, the largest food source.) That said, stop the java if you notice migraines, abnormal heartbeats or stomach upset.

Our quick coffee tips: At home, use a paper filter (the paper binds to a chemical that increases bad LDL cholesterol levels). If you lighten it, use skim milk (not cream) and skip the sugar. And you may want to add more calcium to your diet or consider a supplement, since caffeine pulls this must-have mineral from the bones.



HOW TO HEAL SUNBURN

ONE COMMON PROBLEM

THE DERMATOLOGIST

TAKE AN ANTI-INFLAMMATORY in the first 12 hours to reduce the ultimate damage and ease pain. See a doctor if you've got swelling or blisters, or if you feel sick. He may give you antibiotics to ward off infection. If not, stick to the pain pills, moisturize your skin and try soothing cold compresses. One bad burn boosts the risk of skin cancer, so see a dermatologist for skin checks.

DAVID E. BANK, MD,
Director, Center for Dermatology,
Cosmetic and Laser Surgery,
Mount Kisco, New York

THE NUTRITIONIST

TO HELP prevent burns, take beta carotene and vitamin E supplements before you go out in the sun. If you're already feeling the pain of a burn, moisturize your skin using creams with vitamin E or flaxseed, chamomile, lavender or almond oils. All may help speed healing, prevent scarring and reduce irritation and inflammation.

JOHN FOREYT, PHD, Director, Nutrition Research
Clinic, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas

FOUR EXPERT SOLUTIONS

THE PLASTIC SURGEON

TREAT SYMPTOMS with cold compresses and a moisturizer. Avoid the sun, or cover your burn when you do go out. If skin starts peeling, leave it alone, since picking it off can lead to bleeding and scars. If you notice either, wait 6 to 12 months to let the skin heal.

Then a doctor may treat it with a chemical peel.

ROD ROHRICH, MD,
Chairman of Plastic Surgery, University of
Texas Southwestern Medical Center,
Dallas, Texas

In 2005,
**31% of
Americans**
admitted to
getting a recent
sunburn.

THE BEAUTY PRO

DRINK LOTS of water; avoid hot showers or baths (heat dries out skin). Take a lukewarm bath with colloidal oatmeal, chamomile tea bags and a few tablespoons of baking soda to relieve pain. Moisturize with alcohol- and perfume-free lotion. If you see freckling or skin problems after you heal, an aesthetician can exfoliate and heal the skin with microdermabrasion.

KELLY CHARRON, Director, Spa Education &
Development, Klinger Advanced Aesthetics

BOTTOM LINE

If sunscreen runs into your eyes when you swim or sweat, it's not really protecting you. Use a water-resistant product like Coppertone Sport, or Cosmedicine Global Health Face or Body, and reapply often. Once burned, take 325-650 mg of aspirin for a day or two, drop a few Alka-Seltzer tablets into a bath, or add two crushed aspirin to two teaspoons of lotion to ease inflammation. DR. ROIZEN & DR. OZ





Open to Adventure

One passion led to another. Soon he was in uncharted waters, having fun and making juice.

NBC UNIVERSAL TELEVISION

SOMETIMES IT'S BEST to follow your heart and do what you love. For Tom Scott, co-founder of Nantucket Nectars, "a love of boats turned into a love of juices."

A Brown University student, Scott vacationed on Nantucket Island, a resort community off the coast of

Massachusetts. At 19, he spent his days working on his boat, so when someone suggested he make muffins to sell to people docked in the harbor, Scott figured, Why not?

As he and a college friend, Tom First, made their muffin rounds, yachties would ask if they had newspapers or cigarettes for sale. "We'd say, 'Sure, up at the dock.' Then we'd hurry back, buy ten papers and sell the extras to our other customers."

Soon they had a thriving business. With the slogan "Ain't nothing those boys won't do," Tom and Tom could be seen running around the harbor doing everything from selling ice to shampooing dogs.

The summer of 1988 was a hot one. Tom First came back from vacation in Spain praising a particularly thirst-quenching peach juice concoction. He tried to replicate it

Maria Bartiromo is host and managing editor of the syndicated program *The Wall Street Journal Report*, as well as host of CNBC's *Closing Bell*.

COURTESY PLUM TV



Tom Scott

and, as Scott says, “Bang! It was that quick.” Nantucket Nectars was born.

The market opportunity for a healthy, tasty drink was wide open. Bottled water hadn’t yet become popular. Most juices, Scott recalls, “were horrible, full of additives.”

Scott says he never thought about

Scott’s dog was **part Lab, part spaniel, part shortstop.** And part of the company lure.

going into business. He and First both failed an accounting course at Brown. It wasn’t until Scott took a community college class that he began to understand the concept of profit margins. Mostly, he says, “we learned on the job.”

They focused obsessively on quality and getting the product they wanted. When they started bottling their juices, the bottle cap company made caps only in white or silver for other clients. “We wanted a purple cap. They said, ‘We are not putting purple paint in the machine.’ We said, ‘We’ll clean the machine.’”

The purple caps became a hallmark of Nantucket Nectars. So did the messages printed on the underside of each cap—fun trivia about Nantucket or inside information about company employees or the fact that Scott’s ball-retrieving dog Becky was “part Lab, part springer spaniel, and part shortstop.”

“A lot of that stuff is more intuitive than people realize,” Scott says of their offbeat marketing efforts. Although he and First were heralded as mavericks, he admits, “For us, it was so much trial and error. You bounce off this wall and then off that wall, and meanwhile you try to stay on your feet.”

Their balancing act worked. Nantucket Nectars grew to national prominence, landing on *Inc.* magazine’s list of fastest-growing U.S. companies for three years running. They were in

49 states and some 15 countries. Still, Scott felt he couldn’t be complacent.

“There was never a moment when we said, ‘Wow, we are making it.’ I lived in my car for a long time. Plenty of nights I cried because I thought we’d go out of business. But when you have this dream and you love what you do, you do it.”

After a dozen or so years, though, the sense of adventure, of always learning, faded. Growing the company from \$100 million to \$500 million would demand different skills and tasks than creating it from scratch. “The business was no longer about marketing a product the way no one else had before. It was about distribution and shelf space.”

Instead of waking up each day to the excitement and challenge of something new, Scott realized, “I wasn’t having as much fun.”

They sold the company to Cadbury Schweppes in 2002. “It was a

challenging time," Scott recalls. "I didn't know what to do with the rest of my life." After a lot of soul-searching, he concluded, "The only way I can be happy again is to do something I love."

He was approached by Nantucket Television, a tiny local cable station that was always on the verge of bankruptcy. Scott had even bailed them out. This time, he had a new answer: "How about if I buy you guys out, and I'll run the station?"

Four years later, Nantucket Television has morphed into Plum TV, a station serving local news with a global twist to markets in Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard, Vail, Aspen and the Hamptons. "My hope is that one day Plum TV can be very smart, very fair, interesting TV."

For now, though, Scott's loving his job again. And that's enough to make every day an adventure.

Got a money question? Write to Maria Bartiromo at moneymakers@rd.com.

AND FYI ...

- Martha Stewart turned her passion into a billion-dollar empire. She shares her secrets in her book *The Martha Rules: 10 Essentials for Achieving Success as You Start, Grow, or Manage a Business*.
- Dr. Alan R. Zimmerman, author of *Pivot*, says just one turn in attitude can lead to success.
- Looking for a meaningful, happy life? Try *What Do I Do Now? A Handbook for Life* by Mark E. Klein.

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www.paramount.com/homeentertainment

AS HE REVIEWED pilot crash reports, my Air Force military science professor stumbled upon this understated entry: “After catastrophic engine failure, I landed long. As I had no power, the landing gear failed to deploy and no braking was available. I bounced over the stone wall at the end of the runway, struck the trailer of a truck while crossing the perimeter road, crashed through the guardrail, grazed a large pine tree, ran over a tractor parked in the adjacent field, and hit another tree. Then I lost control.”

JOHN D. MILLARD

TO BOLSTER security at our Army post in Germany, we initiated Random Access Control Measures at our gates. This meant stopping and checking cars at various

times of the day, resulting in terrible traffic. One senior officer came up with a solution: “We need more predictability in our randomness.”

JEFFREY CHURCH



“And these are for keeping up appearances.”

While visiting a VA hospital with my son, I overheard a retired Army sergeant asking people which branch of the military they'd served in. Some said Army, a few Navy, others Air Force.

“What were you in?” she asked a man who'd just entered the room.

Confused, he mumbled, “The bathroom.”

SUSAN LOPSHIRE

WITH several years of Army National Guard duty under his belt, my roommate applied for officer training. But his lifelong dreams were dashed after he failed the eye exam.

“That’s too bad,” I sympathized. “Does that mean you now have to quit the Guard entirely?”

“No, I get to keep my old job,” he said. “Driving trucks.”

DIANE HASTINGS

You could earn up to \$300

for your own funny story. Go to rd.com/joke or see page 12 for details.

ILLUSTRATED BY IAN BAKER

A WOMAN walked into our copy shop to pick up a large order. While there, she asked me to make a copy of her driver's license, birth certificate and passport. When I gave her the total price, she asked if she could pay with a personal check.

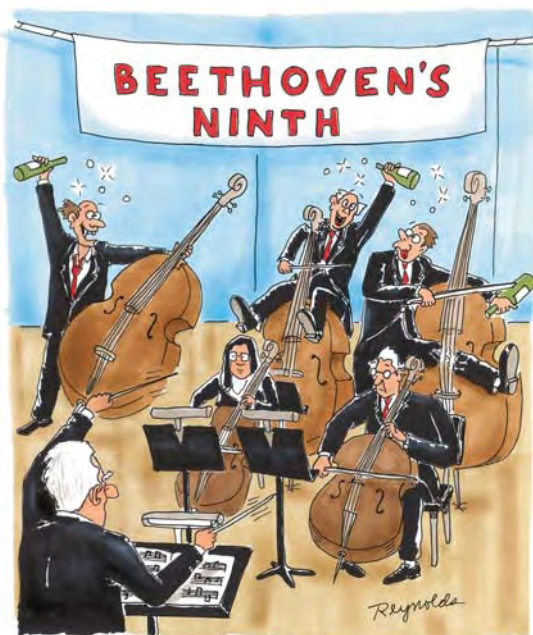
"Sure," I said automatically. "I just need to see some ID."

JEREMY DOLPH

SPANISH NEVER came easily to my sister. Still, she did her best to communicate with the Spanish-speaking staff at the restaurant she managed. But when she made mistakes—and she made a lot—she'd apologize by saying, "*Me estúpido.*"

Finally, a staffer took pity on her. "Susanna, you're not *estúpido*," she said, bucking up my sister's ego. "You are a woman," she continued. "So you are *estúpida.*"

MARY BETH YODER



It was the bottom of the ninth and the bassists were loaded.

"D OES ANYONE in this room need to be dismissed from jury duty?" my father, a judge, asked a roomful of prospective jurors.

A nervous young man stood up. "I'd like to be dismissed," he said.

"And why is that?"

"My wife is about to conceive."

Slightly taken aback, Dad responded, "I believe, sir, you mean 'deliver.' But either way, I agree. You should be there."

BETH DUNCAN

On his way home from work recently, my husband came upon a "Road Closed" sign. Undeterred, he maneuvered his truck around it and continued on. But he didn't get very far. The pavement ended, giving way to another, larger sign: "What Part of 'Road Closed' Didn't You Understand?"

TERI KERSCHEN

When the driver

in front of my police cruiser began weaving in and out of his lane, I quickly hit the sirens and pulled him over. As I approached his window, I was hit with the stench of alcohol.

"Sir," I said, "can you tell me when you started drinking and how much you've had?"

"Well, Officer, I can't tell you how much I've had," he slurred. "But I started drinking in 1967." ROBERT W. MILLER

IN THE MIDST of a creative writing assignment we were doing in class, I asked my first-grade students to come up with a good name for the main character.

"Chicago," called out one student.

"Actually, I was looking for more of a Christian name," I said.

"St. Louis!" he yelled back. BRITE TEMPLETON

You could earn up to \$300

for your own funny story. Go to rd.com/joke or see page 12 for details.

A NURSE FRIEND OF MINE took a 104-year-old patient for a walk in the hospital corridor. When she got him back to his room and sat him down, he took a deep breath and announced,

"That was great! I don't feel a day over 100!" MARY CIPOLLONE

THE GUEST speaker at our training sessions for correctional officers was a leading psychologist. We appreciated the fact that he was able to answer in plain English a question many of us had: What is

the difference between someone who is delusional and someone who is schizophrenic?

"Delusional people build castles in the air," he explained. "Schizophrenics move in and live there." REBECCA LEWIS

MY COLLEAGUES AND I recently received this e-mail from the facilities department: "Due to construction, your office may be either cooler or warmer than usual on Tuesday.

Dress accordingly." DEBRA DONATH

WHILE LEADING a tour of kindergarten students through our hospital, I overheard a conversation between one little girl and an x-ray technician.

"Have you ever broken a bone?" he asked. "Yes," the girl replied.

"Did it hurt?"

"No."

"Really? Which bone did you break?"

"My sister's arm."

A.L. GRABER

My father, a gravedigger,

was told to prepare for a funeral. But on the day of the service, it was discovered that he had dug up the wrong plot. Luckily for him, the deceased's daughter was very understanding.

"Poor Dad," she lamented. "He always complained he could never find a parking space." EMILY WILLMOT

Q At social gatherings, my husband never introduces me to the person he's talking to. I stand around like a statue, and he ignores me. I've complained about this many times, and he says I'm just being sensitive. I say it's rude. He says it's impolite to interrupt the person talking to him. What do you say?

SILENTLY BURNING



A Dear Burning, It's rude, and he's being a dope. But don't hold your breath waiting for him to see the light—and don't stand there like a stone. Stick your hand out and introduce yourself. Move along to other circles, and make new acquaintances. If your husband wanders over after his gab session, stop everything and introduce him. Lead by example!

Q I work in an office where the partners hire pretty girls who simply don't have the skills. The rest of us get their stuff tossed at us to complete. One Monday a partner yelled at me because my cubicle was stacked with unfinished work. Right. Because I spent Friday doing an urgent job Gorgeous had no idea how to handle. Under the circumstances, what can I do?

A REAL WORKER

Jeanne Marie Laskas is the author of *Growing Girls* (Bantam).

A Dear Real, Hard to believe that in this day and age Gorgeous is still getting a free ride, isn't it? Welcome to life, unfair as ever. You have a legitimate gripe, so go ahead and complain to your boss. Ask that your duties be put in writing. Do your job and do it well, but don't expect the culture to magically change. If you can't stand to work in an environment where a premium is on looks, find another place to work—but not Hollywood.

Q My sister-in-law and her husband borrowed several thousand dollars from us for a car and a new apartment. They promised to pay us back after they got settled. They've been settled now three years and have moved into a house. Every time my husband confronts his sister, she starts crying and screaming, and he backs off. What recourse do I have?

TAKEN



*You and
pecans
sittin' in a tree...*



*A personal blend
of nuts with 50% pecans,
made just for you.*

50% Pecans. 100% Love.

planters.com

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A Dear Taken,
If your husband can't talk with his sister, maybe he should put the facts down in a letter. Or you could meet with her husband and clear the air. Remind him of your agreement, and suggest a repayment schedule. If this doesn't work, it may be time to write off the debt as tuition in the school of hard knocks—and leave lending to the banks.

Q My daughter has had this friend since kindergarten. We've met the father once, but have only talked on the phone with the mother. The friend keeps inviting my daughter for sleepovers, but I'm uneasy. We barely know these people and have no idea what their values are. How do I tactfully explain we need to know them better before sending my daughter to their home? **CAUTIOUS**

A Dear Cautious,
This isn't about tact. It's about good parenting. Tell these folks exactly how you feel. If they resist the idea of getting to know you better before you entrust your child to them, well, perhaps your fears were justified. If they agree, and after you've met them, volunteer to hold the first round of sleepovers. Then, only when you're ready, let your daughter go.

Q My boyfriend and I argue over the phrase "Till death do us part." He believes it's absolute. I believe people change and there are

situations when a marriage must end. When I won't agree with him, he begins to doubt me. This has opened a fissure between us. How can we bridge the gap? LADY CREVASSE

A Dear Crevasse, I'm with him. I believe if you go into marriage thinking that it should last only as long as it lasts, you're setting yourself up for failure. I feel commitment to a relationship is an absolute. But I'm not marrying him, you are. If you two see this contract in fundamentally different ways, do *not* walk down the aisle until you reach agreement. This issue is too big to ignore.

Question of the Month

Q My wife's son, 35, was fired from his last job and moved in with us. He's drawing unemployment and isn't looking for work. His daily routine: get up, watch TV, eat and chain-smoke. I've told him about places that are hiring, but he doesn't go. What's wrong? STUMPED

A Dear Stumped, What you and your wife are doing is called "enabling." At 35, he should survive a little tough love. Tell Sonny he has six weeks to get on his feet; then give him the boot.

QUESTIONS ABOUT PARENTS, PARTNERS OR OFFICE POLITICS?
E-mail Jeanne Marie Laskas at advice@rd.com. Sending gives us permission to edit and publish.



*For people who consider themselves
more than just friends
with*
cashews



*A personal blend
of nuts with 50% cashews,
made just for you.*

50% Cashews. 100% Love.



ILLUSTRATED BY KIRSTEN ULVE

America is not perfect, but it's much better than anywhere else in the world.

CATHERINE ZETA-JONES in *In Style*



Never be the first to arrive at a party or the last to go home, and never, ever be both.

DAVID BROWN in *Esquire*

Winning depends on where you put your priorities. It's usually best to put them over the fence. JASON GIAMBI

I think the most un-American thing you can say is "You can't say that."

GARRISON KEILLOR

I've never found an interesting person with a foul mouth. MARILYN VOS SAVANT in *Parade*

My father gave me the best advice of my life. He said, "Whatever you do, don't wake up at 65 years old and think about what you should have done with your life."

GEORGE CLOONEY

The man who complains about the way the ball bounces is likely the one who dropped it.

KENT HILL quoting Lou Holtz

WHO SAID IT?

I spent 30 years sleep-deprived and I got used to it.

- a) Jimmy Carter
- b) Bill Clinton
- c) George W. Bush

FOR ANSWER, SEE BELOW

b) Bill Clinton

Life's like a novel with the end ripped out.

RASCAL FLATTS in "Stand" (Lyric Street Records)

I know it's summer if I hear the tinkle of bells on an ice cream truck. Mentally my feet start running and I'm hollering, "Mama, I need a nickel!"

LINDA ELLERBEE in *Take Big Bites* (Putnam)

\$ We pay \$100 for the wit and wisdom of famous contemporary people. See page 12.



HOLLYWOOD

Keeping
America
Safe



The Next Disaster ARE WE READY?

A special report on 10 high-risk cities

BY ALICE LIPOWICZ

AFTER THE ATTACKS on September 11 and the hurricanes that slammed the Gulf Coast last year, you'd expect our major cities to be ready with disaster plans that will save lives and property. There's no doubt we'll be hit again—maybe even harder—because the list of possible calamities is long: from a bird flu pandemic to a massive California earthquake, to more monster

storms, to another terrorist attack.

But are we really prepared to protect people, as well as their homes and businesses? Every major urban area has received federal funding, much of it from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in order to make their cities more secure. But there are no set criteria for measuring preparedness (the feds are working on that),

(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) JASON HAWKES/CORBIS; BILL ROSS/CORBIS; CRAIG AURNES/CORBIS; CORBIS

and the quality of disaster plans varies widely throughout the country.

So *Reader's Digest* decided to do an independent assessment of 10 high-risk urban areas, focusing on key security indicators. We analyzed public data, consulted with federal and local emergency workers, and contacted the mayors' offices to gauge the readiness of these cities to meet both natural and man-made disasters. For each of 11 separate measures, a city got a ★★ if it met the criteria; a ★★★ if it exceeded them; or a ★ if it was only partway there. If it failed to meet the criteria at all, the city got a -.

We gave point values to each of these marks, then converted the totals into a final grade for each city. (For further details about the grading system, see the box on page 81.)

Our criteria fell under three main categories:

Emergency Readiness

Are there at least 1,000 first responders (such as police, fire and EMTs) per 100,000 residents?

They're our first line of protection in almost any disaster situation—professionals who are trained to handle everything from rescuing victims to providing first aid, to enforcing quarantines, to directing traffic for evacuations.

Are there federal search-and-rescue teams based within 50 miles?

Large cities often have specialized teams to deal with such things as high-rise-building rescues or hazardous chemical spills. But these squads are sometimes small, ill-equipped, or run on a shoestring. This is not true of federal urban search-and-rescue task forces that the DHS supports across the country. Each task force is made of 62 members and 4 canines, as well as a "comprehensive cache" of equipment. DHS task forces are not automatically assigned; a city needs to apply and present its case. (Extra credit was given to cities with two or more task forces within 50 miles.)

Suppose in the midst of a flu pandemic, your city ran low on critical medicines.

Has the city or state earned "green status" from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention?

Suppose that in the midst of a flu pandemic or bio terror attack, your city ran low on critical medicines. The CDC stands ready to help by distributing drugs and medical equipment from its Strategic National Stockpile. But the agency wants to know that a city or state is able to quickly mobilize hundreds of health workers and volunteers trained to handle the logistics, and has space set aside for storage and refrigeration. You're best off if your city has earned the CDC's "green status"—even if the



First responders must get to a disaster scene quickly and be able to communicate with other emergency workers, while hospitals cope with a surge of patients.

state itself has not—because it means local health teams can handle the supplies on their own. (Extra credit was given to every city that has met the criteria for green status.)

Does the city website explain clearly what to do in case of evacuation?

Who can forget the images of stranded New Orleans residents, or the 5-mph crawl out of Houston? It turned out that New Orleans's evacuation plans were both inadequate and poorly communicated. One way cities can avoid a similar nightmare is to put clear and easy-to-find evacuation information on their websites.

Some cities, such as Boston and Washington, post the preferred street routes. Others, like Las Vegas, won't disclose details due to security fears, but their websites may provide ways to quickly get evacuation details when you need them (such as numbers to call or alert services you can sign up for). Among the more important things to address are people without vehicles of their own (a huge failing in New Orleans) and instructions for pet owners.

Does the website include details for residents with special needs?

In July 1995, a vicious heat wave

killed nearly 500 people in Chicago, a disproportionate number of them older residents who lived alone. In any crisis, the elderly and disabled can be uniquely vulnerable. That's why cities such as Houston are creating registries of residents who would need special help. Such lists would indicate, for instance, that a certain person in a certain apartment building is wheelchair-bound. Other cities are instructing people with disabilities to call 911 for assistance—though this relies on phone systems that could be overloaded or go dead. If a city's disaster planning shows no awareness of special-needs people, it isn't complete.

Crisis Communications

Can first responders—police, fire and medical—talk to one another?

On September 11, firefighters died inside the World Trade Center because they could not make contact with police helicopters trying to radio warnings. Incompatible communications is a country-wide problem, and converting or replacing decades-old radio systems can be a long, expensive process. Cities have gotten a big boost if they've taken part in Rapid-Com, a DHS program providing technical assistance and training that speeds up the transition.

On 9/11,
firefighters
died because
they couldn't
pick up
radio
warnings.

Has the city adopted E911?

Many cities have upgraded their 911 call centers in recent years, but they're even better prepared if they've incorporated "E911" (or "enhanced 911"). This technology enables emergency operators to identify the precise location of cell-phone callers through GPS systems. If you wind up stranded in floodwaters, E911 could save your life.

Does the city provide 24-hour emergency alerts?

What if an evacuation order goes out, but it's 3 a.m. and you're sound asleep? Not a problem if your city has a way of alerting you at any time of day.

Some rely on street sirens to do the trick. Others have used their websites to invite residents to sign up for e-mail notifications or automated phone calls in an emergency. (Extra credit was given to cities for adopting the latest e-mail and phone technologies.)

Medical Response

Are there at least 500 hospital beds for every 100,000 residents?

Getting to victims quickly is a critical first step. But you better have a place to take them for treatment. A reasonable standard, according to preparedness experts, is 500 hospital beds for every 100,000 people—a ratio that

would likely mean a city could find enough spare beds in an emergency.

Of course, beds alone won't help a massive number of burn victims or people suffering from chemical exposure unless the hospital is prepared to treat them. But all the cities in our survey have specialty units in their hospitals that can handle such cases.

Are local teams trained to respond quickly and work together?

If an urban area was targeted by weapons of mass destruction, city health officials couldn't just wait for federal help to arrive. First responders and hospitals would need to react right away. They could also need medical volunteers—say, to help vaccinate people or distribute medicines and supplies. How to ensure that all these professionals and volunteers work together as seamlessly as possible? If a city is part of DHS's Metropolitan Medical Response System, it has ob-

tained federal assistance in developing plans, and has received critical training and equipment.

Are labs nearby that specialize in biological and chemical threats?

The CDC is on the cutting edge with its Laboratory Response Network—integrated labs nationwide that have the equipment and expertise to quickly identify pathogens and toxic chemicals. An LRN lab in Florida was the first to detect anthrax in terrorist mailings in 2001.

Laboratories can be members only if they have highly trained staff and exceptional facilities, as well as a track record of testing accuracy. A handful of LRN labs qualify as “Level 1,” meaning they can test for chemical poisons such as mustard and nerve agents. (Extra credit was given to cities that have two or more LRN labs within 50 miles.)

Additional reporting by JOHN MITCHELL

Making the Grade

—
Does Not Meet Standard



Partly Meets Standard



Meets Standard



Exceeds Standard

These symbols appear in the chart on the next two pages, and indicate whether—and how fully—the cities met all our criteria. Top to bottom (starting with the black dash), they go from no headway in adopting measures, worth 0 points, all the way to extra steps taken, which earned 3 points. We added up all the points earned by a city, then used a formula to convert this total into a final score on a scale of 0% to 100%.

rd.com Are you ready? Visit rd.com/prepared to find out what you need in an emergency.



City

Emergency Readiness

Has at least 1,000 first responders per 100,000 residents

Has at least one search-and-rescue task force within 50 miles

Meets CDC guidelines to distribute National Stockpile

Website includes clear evacuation information

Website has information for people with special needs

Miami

-



New York

-



Washington, D.C.



-



-

Boston



-



Chicago



-



-



Houston

-

-



Los Angeles

-



-

-



Philadelphia



-

-



Las Vegas



-

-

-

Detroit

-

-

-

-

-

Crisis Communications

Medical Response

SCORE

First responders can talk to one another

Has successfully deployed E911

Offers 24-hour emergency alerts

Has at least 500 hospital beds per 100,000 residents

Local teams are trained to respond quickly and work together

Has labs nearby specializing in biological and chemical threats



81%



-



81



81



77



-



69



-



65



-



62



-



-



58

-



-



-

42

-



-



27

'They Said I Couldn't'

Six stories of people who wouldn't give up

BY GARY SLEDGE REPORTING BY LISA MILLER FIELDS

Too Short, Can't Sing

The adolescent girl from Tennessee is standing on the stage of a drama summer camp in upstate New York. It's a beautiful day. But the girl doesn't feel beautiful. She's not the leggy, glamorous Hollywood type. In fact, she describes herself as dorky.

Since she was six years old, Reese Witherspoon has wanted to be a country singer. And Dolly Parton is her idol. But this flat-chested wisp of a

girl is no Dolly Parton.

Nevertheless, all of this summer she's been acting, dancing and singing—giving it her best.

Despite three years of lessons, at the end

of camp her coaches tell her to forget about singing. They suggest she

think about another career. If Reese did have talent, it was hiding under her skinny, mousy frame and her Coke-bottle glasses.

Still, she takes their words to

Self-confidence is the best makeup money can buy, Reese Witherspoon discovered.



(LEFT) ©20TH CENTURY FOX/COURTESY EVERETT COLLECTION; JAMES WHITE/CORBIS OUTLINE



heart. After all, why shouldn't she believe the professionals?

But back at home in Nashville, her mother, a pediatric nurse—a funny, happy, upbeat person—wouldn't let her mope. Her father, a physician, encouraged her to achieve in school. So she worked hard at everything and was accepted at Stanford University.

And at age 19, she got a part in a low-budget movie called *Freeway*. That led to a substantial role in the movie *Pleasantville*. But her big break came with *Legally Blonde*.

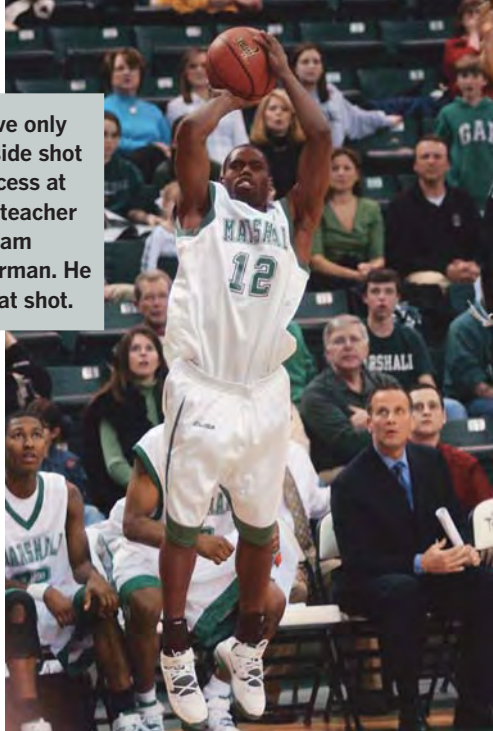
Well, she decided, if you can't sing and you aren't glamorous, "play to your strengths. If you're going to make it in this business, it's not going to be on sexy—that's not who you are. Better focus on what you're good at. Celebrate yourself."

And then came the offer that took her back to her Nashville roots—playing the wife of tormented country star Johnny Cash. A singing role.

All of a sudden the old fears were back. She was so nervous on the set, a reporter wrote, she "kept a sick bucket" nearby and admitted she "would go backstage after a singing scene and shake." But she didn't give up on the movie or herself.

The humor and drive she learned at home overcame the self-doubt learned on that summer stage. She spent six months taking singing lessons again. She learned to play the Autoharp. And the hard work built up her confidence.

You have only an outside shot for success at best, a teacher told Adam Zimmerman. He took that shot.



Last March, Reese Witherspoon walked up on another stage, the Kodak Theatre in Hollywood, and accepted the Oscar as Best Actress for her heartbreaking, heartwarming singing role as June Carter Cash in *Walk the Line*.

Dumb Kids Can't Jump

"Too dumb. You'll never graduate from high school," his elementary school teacher told seven-year-old Adam Zimmerman. Sure enough, he "failed" and was held back a grade.

Being left behind by friends made him feel like "trash." But his teacher's cutting comment changed his life. It

transformed a kid with dyslexia into a person driven to succeed.

"Just because one person says something, don't take their word," his mother told him. "Go out and prove them wrong. It's not about the disability; it's what you do about it."

Zimmerman did graduate from high school, and at 5'7" he excelled in two sports he was considered too small for: basketball and volleyball. He was MVP and All Conference in both.

That still wasn't enough to earn him a big-time college scholarship. So he went to a Division II school and worked on his game. And though a coach told him he'd never be a Division I basketball player, in his sophomore year he transferred to Marshall University in West Virginia, a Division I

school. And he practiced and practiced. The following year he made the team as a walk-on player.

This May, the dumb kid who was too short graduated with a degree in sports management and marketing.

When he thinks back to that grade school teacher, he says, "I thank her for saying that. It's unbelievable how a person's words can stick in the back of your mind and push you to be more than what they say you can be."

"There's Gotta Be a Better Way"

Joy Mangano was 33 and divorced, had three kids under age 7, and was

barely keeping up payments on her small two-bedroom home by working extra weekend hours as a waitress.

"There were times when I would lie in bed and think, I don't know how I'm going to pay that bill," Mangano says.

But she had a knack for seeing the obvious. She knew firsthand how hard it was to mop the floor. "I was tired of bending down, putting my hands in dirty water, wringing out a mop," Mangano says. "So, I said, 'There's gotta be a better way.'"

How about a "self-wringing" mop? She designed a distinctive tool you could twist in two directions at once, and still keep your hands clean and dry. She set out to sell it, first a few at flea markets.

Then Mangano met with the media. But would couch potatoes buy a mop?

Joy Mangano made it big with simple solutions to everyday problems.

HSN



The experts on shopping TV were less than certain. They gave it a try, and it failed. Mangano was sure it would sell if they'd let her do the on-camera demonstration. "Brave little me. I said, 'Get me on that stage, and I will sell this mop because it's a great item.'"

So QVC took a chance on her. "I got onstage and the phones went crazy. We sold every mop in minutes."

Today she's president of Ingenious Designs, a multimillion-dollar company, and one of the stars of HSN, the Home Shopping Network. Talking about her household inventions is "as natural for me as it is for a parent to talk about their child," Mangano says.

Today one of her favorite products is Huggable Hangers. The thin, space-saving implements are the most successful gadget ever sold on HSN, with 100 million hanging out there in closets across the country. Of course, you couldn't possibly sell hangers on TV.

If You're Not Dead, You Can Get Better

Randy Kraus was paralyzed. His left side was useless. But his right hand was good enough to lift the barrel of a .38 to his temple.

Once, he'd been a police officer in Fresno, California, and owned a private-eye agency. Once, he'd been strong and able. Now, he felt he was nothing.

His trouble started with Parkinson's disease, but it didn't end there. In July 2002, the 60-year-old Kraus went

into the hospital for an operation that implanted electrodes in his brain to control the shaking. But during the operation, he had a stroke. He was paralyzed. The cop, the tough guy, the man who loved golf, "could think, but couldn't move."

Transferred to a rehab hospital, Kraus wanted the therapists to give it to him straight. "You may never walk again," they told him. "Maybe you won't even be able to talk."

Once home, he found he couldn't lift a fork or take a drink by himself. Physical therapy was so painful and slow. What did he have to live for?

So now Kraus held the gun against his head. Feeling the cold metal on his skin, he began to consider not his pain,

Randy Kraus discovered that all journeys start with one step, even if it's a small one.





JENS SCHLUETER/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

but the pain he would cause his wife, daughters and grandchildren. He didn't pull the trigger.

And his exercise physiologist, Andrew Garud, didn't pull any punches with him. You are where you are, he told him. The pace would be slow; the pain would be real. "But as long as you are alive, you have the ability to get better."

After three months of working with Garud, Kraus wanted to see if he could stand.

He could. Then he took three steps, sat down and cried like a baby.

One step, as they say, led to another. Next he managed a short walk along the edge of a boxing ring in the health club where they worked out. It was the hardest fight of Kraus's life.

People at the gym cheered him on.

Garud kept saying he could do more.

Now, Kraus can brush his teeth and shave himself, get around the house with a walker. Little triumphs only the paralyzed can fully understand.

Forget It—Do Something Practical

The 16-year-old schoolgirl dreamed of a profession studying wildlife in Africa, but the school's career counselor was "horrified" at this impractical idea. She thought taking pictures of people's pets would "make a nice little career."

But Jane's mother said, "If you really want something, you work hard enough, you take advantage of oppor-

She could have played it safe in England, but Jane Goodall went off to the wild.

tunities, you never give up and you will find a way.”

Never giving up meant traveling to the other side of the earth. It meant enduring physical hardship in the mountains of Tanzania. And it meant surviving a raid in which rebels captured people who worked with her and held them for ransom. All survived, and so did Jane Goodall’s dream.

Her research documented the complex social behavior of chimpanzees—animals that greet one another with a kiss or a hug, and make and use tools. Dr. Jane Goodall became known worldwide, and she changed the way we think about these remarkable creatures, all by doing the impractical.

Try It a Different Way

Bobby Moresco grew up in New York’s Hell’s Kitchen, a tough working-class neighborhood on Manhattan’s West Side. But Hell’s Kitchen lies right next door to Broadway, and the bright lights attracted Bobby from the time he was a teen. Being stagestruck was hardly what a street kid could admit to his buddies. Fearing their ridicule, he told no one, not even his girlfriend, when he started taking acting lessons at age 17. If you were a kid from the neighborhood, you became a cop, construction worker, longshoreman or criminal. Not an actor.

Moresco struggled to make that long walk a few blocks east. He stud-

From blue collar to black tie, Bobby Moresco writes about real life in America.



ied acting, turned out for all the cattle calls—and during the decade of the

1970s made a total of \$2,000. “I wasn’t a good actor, but I had a driving need to do something different with my life,” he says.

He moved to Hollywood, where he drove a cab and worked as a bartender. “My father said, ‘Stop this craziness and get a job; you have a wife and daughter.’” But Moresco kept working at his chosen craft.

Then in 1983 his younger brother Thomas was murdered in a mob-linked killing. Moresco moved back to his old neighborhood and started writing as a way to explore the pain and the patrimony of Hell’s Kitchen. *Half-Deserted Streets*, based on his brother’s killing, opened at a small Off-Broadway theater in 1988. A Hollywood producer saw it and asked him to work on a screenplay.

His reputation grew, and he got enough assignments to move back to Hollywood. By 2003, he was again out of work and out of cash when he got a call from Paul Haggis, a director who had befriended him. Haggis wanted help writing a film about the country after September 11. The two worked on the script, but every studio in town turned it down. They kept pitching it. Studio execs, however, thought no one wanted to see a stark, honest vision of race and fear and lives in collision in modern America.

Moresco believed so strongly in the script that he borrowed money, sold his house. He and Haggis kept pushing. At last the writers found an independ-

ent film producer who would take a chance, but the upfront money was so meager, Moresco deferred his salary.

Crash slipped into the theaters in May 2005, and quietly became both a smash hit and a critical success. It was nominated for six Academy Awards and won three—Best Picture, Best Film Editing and Best Writing (Original Screenplay) by Paul Haggis and the kid from Hell's Kitchen.

At age 54, Bobby Moresco became an overnight success. "If you have something you want to do in life, don't think about the problems," he says, "think about the ways to get it done."

rd.com Do you have a great "They Said I Couldn't" story? Share it at rd.com/nevergiveup.

EYE OF NEWT + EAR OF TOAD ...

The big thing in the auto world is hybrids. But what about the animal world? The Washington Post asked its readers to come up with the offspring of two distinct animals. Here they are:

Camel + Ocelot = Camelot: Flourished for one brief shining moment.

Cicada + Elephant = Cicaphant: Even after 17 years, it never forgets how nice you are.

Cardinal + Shar-Pei = Cardsharpei: One of the dogs playing poker.

Badgers + Gnus = Badgnus: Travels fast, on or underground; often unearthed by pesky hounds.

Scottish Terrier + Tapir = Scotchtapir: Uses sticky traps to ensnare its prey.

Porcupine + Soldier Ant = Porcupinesol: A pet that keeps its own cage sparkling clean and fresh.

SUMMER WEIGHT-LOSS SPECIAL


Take a Bite

(A small one)



10 ways to outwit your weight

BY PAULA DRANOV

A woman with reddish-brown hair, wearing a light pink crop top and blue denim jeans with rolled-up hems, is captured in a dynamic pose on a sandy beach. She is balancing on her right leg, with her left leg extended horizontally to the left. Her arms are raised high, and she has a joyful expression, looking upwards. The background shows a vast beach, the ocean with white-capped waves, and a hazy coastline under a blue sky with light clouds.

TERRI CRECCO BELIEVES she's addicted to sugar. Even as a kid, she had trouble resisting sweets. As an adult, when things aren't going well, cookies and ice cream make her feel better. Once, she downed a whole pound of jellybeans walking back to her office after her lunch break. "I meant to eat just a few, but I couldn't stop until I finished the entire bag," she says. "My cravings can be awful, insatiable. You can't ignore them." As a result, the 55-year-old New York City mortgage bro-

ker has been waging a lifelong battle with her weight.

Karsten Askeland, 56, a Niagara Falls police officer, got hooked on burgers, fries and other fast food when he was 14 and sidelined from sports after breaking his leg. Until then, Askeland had been a trim and athletic kid who played basketball and football, and was the fastest sprinter on the track team. Immobilized by his broken leg, he continued to eat as if he was still burning thousands of calories a week playing sports. Long after his leg healed and in the years beyond high school, he continued to indulge. "It would be nothing for me to eat my supper at home and then go out immediately to McDonald's and order a Quarter Pounder with Cheese, a fish sandwich, a large order of fries and a large Coke. Sometimes I would go to McDonald's two or three times a day!"

Before Askeland knew it, his weight had ballooned to 280 pounds. In 1975 he began a strict low-calorie diet and exercise plan to get down to 190 so he could join the police force. But on his break from the night shift, he would head for the local Chinese restaurant. In time, he regained all the weight and more, reaching a high of 474 pounds. Since then, life for Askeland has been a struggle to lose weight and subdue those hard-to-deny cravings for fast food.

Stress and Comfort Food

What makes people eat like this? On a more modest scale, why do we reach for chocolate or doughnuts or

potato chips when we're stressed, tired or bored? "Under stress, we crave foods that we liked as children, a time in our psychological life when there was little stress," says John Foreyt, PhD, professor of psychiatry at Baylor College of Medicine in Texas. No surprise, then, that when we're under pressure, we don't reach for the steamed broccoli.

Even animals respond to stress by indulging in fattening foods. A study at the University of California, San Francisco, found that chronic stress prompted lab rats to indulge in high-calorie foods (in the rats' case, food containing lard and sucrose).

When cravings start to sabotage health or weight-loss efforts, however, they may become a *source* of stress, and that's a double whammy. Can you lose weight despite yearnings for chocolate or cheeseburgers? Experts say yes, though conquering cravings can take some savvy strategy—as well as insight into the brain and body chemistry that underlies the yen for Rocky Road ice cream or guacamole and chips.

Gotta Have It—Why?

Virtually all women (97 percent) and most men (68 percent) admit to having food cravings, according to one study. For women, chocolate and other sweets top the list, while men often yearn for entrées such as juicy steaks or cheeseburgers with all the trimmings. After menopause, women's cravings may become more like men's. "It's tempting to say that

Women may crave chocolate, while men yearn for a juicy steak.



hormonal changes are to blame. But there also could be a group of older women who grew up during the Depression when more value was placed on meat and protein foods, so who knows?" explains Marcia Pelchat, PhD, a food-cravings researcher at the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia.

Hormonal swings seem to be at least partly responsible for women's cravings. Levels of both estrogen and the feel-good brain chemical serotonin drop when women are premenstrual. And there's a possibility that sweets, pasta and other carbohydrate foods can boost serotonin, making you feel better. Hormonal changes may also explain cravings for pickles and ice cream or other pregnancy-related hankerings, but so far, there's no solid proof.

Could what we crave be something our body needs? Experts are pretty certain that missing nutrients are not to blame for the vast majority of cravings. True, chocolate provides the body with magnesium. But sad to say, if our bodies really were crying out for magnesium, we would be longing for big green salads, which provide a lot more than the small amount found in a chocolate bar.

Cravings have very little to do with

hunger, either. Who is hungry at the end of Thanksgiving dinner when the pumpkin pie is served? And who turns it down? "If you're hungry, you don't really care what you eat. An unflavored bowl of oatmeal will do," says Allen Levine, PhD, director of the Minnesota Obesity Center.

Instead of satisfying hunger, cravings reward us and give us pleasure. Researchers are just beginning to understand the brain

chemistry at work here. They have found that the creamy, rich taste of chocolate can give you a rush that's more subdued but not totally at odds—biochemically speaking—from what happens in the brain when drug addicts inject heroin or sniff cocaine.

Are Drugs the Answer?

At the University of Michigan, researchers found that cravings for sweets can be turned off with naloxone, a powerful intravenous drug ordinarily used to counteract heroin and morphine overdoses. They gave naloxone to 14 women who were binge eaters, 8 of whom were obese, and to 12 normal-weight women. While getting the drugs intravenously, the women were told to eat as much as they wanted of a mouth-watering array of cookies and candy bars. Once

the drug entered their systems, the binge eaters lost interest in the high-cal smorgasbord. (The normal-weight women didn't eat any more or less.) Another Michigan study showed that naloxone squelched the pleasure binge-eating participants got from consuming chocolate and cookies.

This doesn't mean we need a heavy-duty drug like naloxone to curb our appetites, but it does reveal a biochemical relationship between food

cravings and drug addiction. "I don't think we should be too horrified" at the parallels, says Dr. Pelchat. "Drugs are bad because they stimulate reward circuits more strongly and quickly than food, and make us neglect our responsibilities and fail to take care of ourselves."

Naloxone is much too powerful for everyday use, but some see promise in the drug Acomplia, currently awaiting approval by the FDA, which may

10 Ways to Control Your Cravings

YOU CAN LOSE WEIGHT by overcoming your cravings *now*. Here are the latest tricks of the trade from researchers and experts:

Avoid your triggers "You crave what you eat, so if you switch what you're eating, you can weaken your old cravings and strengthen new ones," says Marcia Pelchat, PhD, of the Monell Center. This can happen pretty fast. For five days, her study volunteers drank bland dietary-supplement beverages. During that time, they craved fewer of their trigger foods. By the end of the study, the volunteers actually wanted the supplements instead. The first few days are always the hardest, and you probably can't completely eliminate your old cravings. But the longer you avoid your trigger foods, the less likely you may be to want them. In fact, you'll probably begin to crave the foods you eat, a real bonus if you've switched to fresh fruit.

Destroy temptation If you've succumbed to a craving and bought a box of cookies or some other trigger food

and start to feel bad while eating it, destroy it. "Don't just throw it away; run water over it, *ruin* it. You'll feel a sense of accomplishment that you've licked your binge," says Caroline Apovian, MD, director, Nutrition and Weight Management Center at Boston Medical Center. Don't think about the money you're wasting. If the cookies don't go into the garbage, they're going straight to your hips.

Go nuts Drink two glasses of water and eat an ounce of nuts (6 walnuts, 12 almonds or 20 peanuts). Within 20 minutes, this can extinguish your craving and dampen your appetite by changing your body chemistry, says RD's "Health IQ," columnist Michael F. Roizen, MD.

Jolt yourself with java Try sipping a skim latte instead of reaching for a candy bar. The caffeine it contains won't necessarily satisfy your cravings, but it can save you the calories by quenching your appetite, says Dr. Roizen. And the warm richness and ritual can distract you.

help people lose weight or stop smoking. Still, it's doubtful that any drug will be able to cure our cravings. After all, they're not rational—and they're not all governed by a single brain chemical. "We would have to know what other pleasures we would block," says Dr. Levine. Another problem with designing a drug: Cravings affect more than one area of the brain. When Dr. Pelchat and researchers at the University of Pennsylvania used functional

MRIs to watch responses to cravings, they saw activity in brain areas related to emotion, memory and reward.

Researchers now want to know whether those reward mechanisms in the brain could be satisfied by alternative turn-ons—music, perhaps, or video games or shoe shopping. That study is in the works. Shopaholics everywhere, beware!

rd.com How do you conquer your cravings? Tell us at rd.com/cravings.

Let it go Since stress is a *huge* trigger for cravings, learning to deal with it could potentially save you hundreds of calories a day. This will take some practice. You can try deep breathing or visualizing a serene scene on your own, or you can speed things up by buying one of the many CDs that teach progressive muscle relaxation. A good one is *Relaxation/Affirmation Techniques* by Nancy Hopps (available at rd.com/relax).

Take a power nap Cravings sneak up when we're tired. Focus on the fatigue: Shut the door, close your eyes, re-energize.

Get minty fresh Brush your teeth; gargle with mouthwash. "When you have a fresh, clean mouth, you don't want to mess it up," says Molly Gee, RD, of Baylor College of Medicine in Houston.

Distract yourself If only ice cream will do, it's a craving, not hunger. "Cravings typically last ten minutes," says John

Foreyt, PhD, of Baylor College of Medicine. Recognize that and divert your mind: Call someone, listen to music, run an errand, meditate or exercise.

Indulge yourself—within limits

Once in a while, it's OK to go ahead and have that ice cream (see our cover photo, below). But buy a small cone, not a pint. Try 100-calorie *CocoaVia* chocolate bars and 100-calorie snack packs of cookies, peanuts or pretzel sticks. The trick is to buy only one pack at a time so you won't be tempted to reach for more. And since even 100 extra calories can sabotage

weight loss if you indulge daily, strike a bargain with yourself to work off the excess calories. A brisk 15-minute walk will burn 100 calories or so.

Plan or avoid Vary your usual routine to avoid passing the bakery or pizzeria. If you know you'll be face-to-face with irresistible birthday cake, allocate enough calories to fit it into your diet.

On the Cover



Craving ice cream? A half-cup of the light kind, topped with berries, has only 162 calories.



When It Pays to Play

Remember how much more active we used to be? How to get back in the habit. | BY KATHRYN CASEY

WHO COULD forget the late-'60s sitcom *The Brady Bunch*? When Greg, Marcia, Peter, Jan, Bobby and Cindy weren't all gathered around the table eating pork chops and applesauce while gabbing about the triumphs and mishaps of their day, they were riding their bikes or playing ball in the AstroTurf backyard. Or the family might be camping together, competing in a sack race, riding mules into the Grand Canyon—or even just running down the stairs of their mod split-level house to answer the phone. The groovy TV show that aired from 1969 to 1974 may not have reflected some of the harsher realities of Ameri-

can family life in that era, but it did show we moved around more (and ate better!) in those pre-computer, pre-cell-phone times.

Today, many people wistfully reminisce about how Americans lived before video games usurped sandlot baseball and fast food replaced meals around the table. We can learn from the way America lived then, including how to eat healthier and lose weight.

The Home-Cooked Advantage

The family dinner is disappearing, plummeting 33 percent in the past three decades. The result is obvious: “We’re eating more calories and getting less exercise than previous gen-

erations,” says Lawrence Cheskin, MD, director of the Johns Hopkins Weight Management Center. “Supersizing our food is supersizing us.”

Aside from the emotional benefits of sharing a family meal, the real advantage is control—of the quality, ingredients and portions of food. In 1970, 34 percent of America’s food budget was spent in restaurants. Now it’s

nearly half. “And restaurant portions have ballooned,” says Lisa Young, PhD, RD, an adjunct professor at NYU and author of *The Portion Teller*. In her research, Young found restaurant portions were *two to eight times* that of standard serving sizes.

Eating while driving or watching television has another unhealthy side effect. Distracted, we don’t realize how much we’re putting in our mouths. At family dinners, when we pause to talk, we eat more slowly, allowing our stomachs time to signal our brains that we’re full.

Start Good New Habits

How is it possible to eat dinner together and exercise more when both parents work and kids are overscheduled? It *can* be done, says William Doherty, co-author of *Putting Family First*.

- **Schedule it** Make time for meals together just like you do for soccer practice or dentist appointments. Plan meals in advance, shop for groceries on weekends and freeze what you can.
- **Make it fun** Benefits from a family meal don’t happen just by sitting and eating together; it’s what you do with that time. First, turn off the TV and talk to one another. But avoid stressful subjects like report cards or work, or power struggles over food. Keep conversation light.
- **Go out and play** Remember that swing set in the backyard, the basketball hoop at the end of the driveway, the bikes in the garage? Even 15 minutes of fun together burns calories, reduces stress and promotes family bonding.
- **Take a break** Limit passive computer and TV time. Get up every 20 minutes and do some stretches, tackle a household chore or go out for a walk. It clears your mind and helps burn off lunch!

Little Moves Matter

In addition, so much of what’s been designed for our high-tech age keeps us from moving around. We sit for hours at the computer—working, shopping, reading, researching, playing games, even making friends. Without ever leaving the couch, we can answer the phone, change the channel and send e-mails from our handheld devices. Studies have shown that some kids raised on these gadgets may expend almost no extra physical energy in the course of a day.

But here’s how it used to be: We got up to change the channel. We walked to the corner mailbox to send a letter. We ran around the backyard to play a game. We got up to answer the phone. We went to the library to do research. We made new friends in the park or at the bowling alley. Parents went for a walk after dinner. Kids went outside and just *played*. And those little expenditures of calories really added up.

Then and ...

Now

CALORIES IN

	Calories & Fat		Calories & Fat
DINNER Salad with dressing, roll with butter, roasted chicken, baked potato and green beans	618 calories, 21g fat	DINNER Hardee's Monster Thickburger	1,410 calories, 107g fat
SNACK 16-oz. soda and small plain popcorn	423 calories, 11g fat	SNACK 44-oz. soda, large popcorn with butter topping, 3-oz. box Milk Duds	1,989 calories, 87g fat

CALORIES OUT

Calorie expenditures vary by age, gender and weight. These examples are for a 140-pound woman.

	Calories burned		Calories burned
Wash and wax car by hand	200	Drive through car wash	9.5
Walk two blocks to mail letter	22	Type e-mail and hit send	9.5
Play tag for 45 minutes in backyard	225	Play video game on couch for 45 minutes	85
Walk a block or two to nearest pay phone, dial and walk back	57	Pull cell phone from pocket and hit speed dial	10
Drive to mall, walk to store, try on clothes, pay, walk back to car and drive home	133	Sit at computer, visit store's website, choose item, type in credit card info and get item from mailbox	17
Walk to co-worker's office and hand him documents	19	Stay at desk, attach documents to e-mail and hit send	4
Drive to photo developer, drop off film and return next day	178	Sit at computer and upload photos	29

SOURCE: FABIO COMANA, exercise physiologist, American Council on Exercise

Today, kids must be productive and prepare for success. From 1981 to 1997, children's free time dropped by 12 hours a week and unstructured activities by 50 percent. "We're so worried about our kids being able to compete that we've created stress for the entire family," says William Doherty, PhD,

professor of family social science at the University of Minnesota. And, as we know, stress can lead to overeating and obesity—something we never saw in the lives of that Brady gang.

Additional reporting by LISA MILLER FIELDS

rd.com For more ideas on healthy weight-loss habits, visit rd.com/healthyhabits.



One night, Heather Rudnick says, her grief turned into a fierce determination to “beat this monster.”

Why Me?

Heather was only 33 and had never smoked. How could she have lung cancer?

BY LISA COLLIER COOL

HEATHER RUDNICK STEPPED INTO her boss's office and shut the door. Outside, a winter chill hung over the glass towers of downtown Philadelphia. "I just got a call: My doctor wants me to come in to discuss my test results," she said, choking on the words as she started to cry. "He won't tell me on the phone." Her boss didn't ask any questions but said, "Let's go. You're too upset to drive."

As they sped to the doctor's office on that cold January day in 2003, Heather, the divorced mom of a six-year-old son, was terrified. Twelve days earlier, she'd developed heart palpitations during a treadmill workout. She blamed stress, since she'd been putting in a lot of overtime at her job as a business development coordinator at a Philadelphia law firm.



Heather (with Brad and Tyler) says, “We just try to appreciate the time we have.”

After the palpitations persisted for several hours, she went to the ER, where tests showed that her heart was okay. Then a young resident pointed to a cloudy spot on her chest x-ray, in the right lung, which he thought might be pneumonia. That didn't make sense to Heather. She felt fine except for her pounding heartbeat, which returned to normal the next morning. Still, she consulted a lung specialist and had more tests, including a needle biopsy. Then she just had to wait for the results.

Now, on the way to the doctor's office, she jumped when her boss touched her arm and suggested they pray together, asking for the strength to handle the results, whatever they might be. That made Heather even more anxious. “My mind was scream-

ing, No! What are you doing? You need to pray that the results are *nothing!* You need to pray that I am *fine!*”

She had called her boyfriend, Brad Saler, before leaving work. To her relief, he was there in the waiting room. He wrapped her in his arms to try to console her; then they went into the exam room together.

“I felt like I was having an out-of-body experience when I heard the diagnosis,” says Heather. “Tears were pouring down my face. How could I have lung cancer? I was only 33, and I'd never smoked even one cigarette. The doctor had no answers, but he kept stressing that the cancer had been caught early, so surgery should take care of it. I felt trapped in the middle of a tornado, with the funnel closing in on me.”

She left in a daze, wondering how to break the news to her parents. She called her mom at work, and they cried together. Then it was time to pick up her son, Tyler, at school. “I must have looked like I’d been hit by a truck, and my face was swollen from crying, but he didn’t notice anything wrong.” Instead, the little boy was excited they were going to visit his grandparents.

Heather thought she had her emotions under control when she arrived at her parents’ home in Marlton, New Jersey, the same suburb where she and Tyler lived. But when her dad gave her a wink and a sad smile, she lost it, and had to rush to another room. Her father followed her and gave her a long hug. “Dad looked into my eyes, and said I was going to get through this,” she says. “I believed him.”

The next few days were a blur of phone calls and medical visits. “One night, I fell into a black hole of self-pity, and said, ‘Why me?’ Nothing Brad said made me feel any better. He told me I’d be fine, and I screamed, ‘You don’t know that!’ When I asked, ‘What about Tyler?’ he promised to take care of him. Instead of being reassured by this, I found myself yelling, ‘You think I’m going to die!’ I was so scared that I was beyond all comfort.” And she had another fear that she was afraid to voice: “Brad and I had only been dating for eleven months. I wondered if he’d bail. I had a lot of baggage, with having a ready-made family—and a cancer diagnosis.”

But Brad was by her side on Febru-

ary 17, 2003, the day of her surgery. A blizzard had struck New Jersey the day before, and Heather was worried her operation would be canceled. Before dawn, Brad shoveled through four-foot snowdrifts to the car, while she called to make sure the surgeon would be there at 5:45, as scheduled. At the hospital, there was only time to say, “I love you” and “See you later” to her boyfriend and her parents before she was wheeled to the OR.

D OCTORS REMOVED almost half her lung, along with surrounding lymph nodes, through an incision under her arm. After a three-day hospital stay, Heather returned to her parents’ home, where she spent a month recuperating. At first, she was in such pain that all she could do was lie on the couch. “The doctor gave me a machine to blow into, and exercises so my shoulder wouldn’t freeze up, but after two minutes I was in absolute agony. It even hurt to sneeze. I felt like somebody had shoved a hard shoe box where my lung was supposed to be.”

By her one-month checkup, she was much better. “I told the surgeon that I’d wear my four-inch scar like a badge of honor—even in my bikini.” The doctor grinned, but the light moment didn’t last. He turned somber as he explained that the lab had found cancer in five of her lymph nodes. “I felt blindsided,” says Heather. “Instead of having early cancer, it was advanced.”

I was afraid to ask how much time I had left because I didn't want that number in my head. It would have sucked all the hope out of me."

A panel of cancer specialists reviewed her case and advised six weeks of daily radiation, plus weekly chemotherapy. They explained that because she was young, they could hit her with everything at once, to get the best shot at a cure. Heather took a deep breath, then said, "Okay, do it."

By the middle of April 2003, Heather

Lung Cancer and Nonsmokers

DANA REEVE'S recent death highlights an alarming fact: Women who don't smoke are at far greater risk for the disease than their male counterparts.

Among men, only 10 percent of lung cancers occur in nonsmokers, compared with as much as 30 percent for women. Doctors are still probing this deadly gender gap, but hormones may play a role, says

Dr. James Stevenson of the Cancer Institute of New Jersey. "There is some evidence that estrogen is involved in the development of lung cancer in both smoking and nonsmoking women." Other risk factors for both sexes include exposure to tobacco fumes, asbestos, radon gas in soil, air pollution and workplace toxins, or a family history of lung cancer.

In 2006, about 20,000 nonsmokers are expected to develop lung cancer, along with about 155,000 past and current smokers.

felt well enough to return to work part-time at the law firm, and started her treatment later that month. She and Brad also went to a lung cancer support group. Heather was by far the youngest patient. She found it heartening to meet ten friendly survivors, and hear their stories of victory and determination.

Meanwhile, Brad made a decision: He was going to propose. "For a few months, I'd known in my heart that I wanted to marry Heather, but I'd thought it was too soon to ask," says the 36-year-old financial planner. "I wanted to be with her whether she had cancer or not, because I loved her." On the Friday night before her treatment was to begin, during a Scrabble game he spelled out the words "marry me" on the board, then showed her a sparkling diamond ring. Thrilled, she flung her arms in the air and, laughing and crying, said, "Yes, yes, yes!"

Her happiness helped her get through the first few days of radiation. "I was on cloud nine, showing my ring to anyone who would listen," says Heather. When she lay on a green hospital recliner for her first chemo session, and watched the drugs drip into her arm, she was filled with dread, not just of the side effects, but also the possibility that it wouldn't work. According to her doctor, James Stevenson, MD, co-director of the Comprehensive



Dana Reeve died of lung cancer in March at age 44.

Should You Be Screened?

BY THE TIME lung cancer symptoms strike (these include persistent cough, unexplained fever, weight loss, hoarseness, bloody phlegm and shortness of breath), the disease is usually so advanced that 85 percent of patients die within five years of diagnosis. But now it can be detected early, according to a February 2006 multicenter study. Of 28,689 symptom-free men and women screened with a spiral CT lung scan, most of those diagnosed with lung cancer (464 patients) had small, highly treatable tumors that hadn't spread outside the lung.

"The only question that needs an-

swering is exactly how many lives will be saved," says Claudia Henschke, MD, the study's lead author. "Perhaps it might be as much as 50 percent."

However, lung scans, which cost about \$300 each, can also pick up harmless abnormalities, causing healthy people needless alarm.

So who should get tested? "Consider screening if you're 50 or older, and have smoked a pack a day for at least ten years, or two packs a day for at least five years—even if you have now quit," says Dr. Henschke. For more information, go to ielcap.org, the site of the International Early Lung Cancer Action Program.

Lung Cancer Program at the Cancer Institute of New Jersey at Cooper University Hospital, "only 15 to 20 percent of people with her stage of cancer are cured, even with chemotherapy and radiation. Most don't live more than two years. But if anyone could beat those odds, it's Heather. She's young and healthy, and has every reason to be optimistic."

During the treatment, however, she got sicker and more discouraged every day. She vomited blood, developed blistering burns on her chest and back, and smelled a constant charred scent that left her too nauseated to eat. The 5' 7" mom's weight dropped from 140 pounds to 113, and her strawberry-blond curls fell out in clumps. Brad moved in to take care of her. As she got sicker, her thoughts grew increasingly gloomy. "When Brad talked about our wedding, a voice in my head

asked if I'd still be around then. I had visions of Tyler sobbing because I'd died. I'd watch him as he slept, and wonder if he'd remember me."

But one night, as she sat by Tyler's bed, her sadness shifted to fierce determination. "It was as if a switch clicked on inside me," she says. "I had to make it through the treatment so I could beat this monster. My little boy needed me—and I needed him!" She battled side effects for months, but little by little her strength returned. To track her progress, she had lung scans every three months, and was elated when test after test found no sign of cancer. On January 15, 2004, she wore a strapless ivory gown as she married Brad on a cruise ship, with Tyler as the best man.

In November 2004, however, she got terrible news: A scan showed 25 or more specks scattered through both

lungs. Because the nodules were so tiny, it was impossible to biopsy them, says Dr. Stevenson. He determined it could be a microscopic spread of her cancer, or inflammation from her treatment. He advised scans every three months to see if the spots grew significantly. If so, he'd do a biopsy. And if cancer was found, the only treatment was chemotherapy. But until there was a clear diagnosis, they could only watch and wait.

Each subsequent scan showed that the specks had grown slightly, but not enough for a biopsy. Faced with constant anxiety, and no immediate medical options, Heather looked for other ways to protect her health. Since she was already slim, exercised as much as possible and avoided exposure to secondhand smoke, she only had one bad habit to kick: her terrible diet.

"I'd have a soft pretzel with mustard for breakfast, fast food burgers for lunch, and nachos glopped with cheese for dinner." In May 2005 she began a special macrobiotic diet. Dr. Stevenson okayed the plan. "Some

of my patients with advanced lung cancer have tried a macrobiotic diet. For someone like Heather, it may have an impact, but there's not much research on that." She says she's never felt healthier, and on her most recent scan, the spots remain tiny, leading Dr. Stevenson to conclude that if they are cancer, it's a very slow-growing form. "There's still reason for optimism," he says.

To celebrate, in March 2006 Heather and Brad went on a seven-day cruise. Leaving winter behind, they visited Dunns River Falls in Jamaica. As rushing water splashed their legs, they began to climb the 600-foot waterfall. While many people stopped at a platform partway up, Heather pushed on, despite her radiation-damaged lungs, until she made it to the top. That victorious moment, she says, sums up her cancer journey: "It's a series of slippery rocks I've had to climb for the past three years. I don't know where I'll end up, but whatever the obstacles are, I'm determined to take that next step."

BUT I LIKE TO HEAR MYSELF TALK

Some people live by the credo "Why use one word to describe something when I can use 47?" But in some cultures, that's frowned upon. Here are some succinct examples and their English translations.

Tingo (Easter Island): "To take all the objects one desires from the house of a friend, one at a time, by borrowing them"

Nakkele (Tulu, India): "A man who licks whatever the food has been served on"

Bakku-shan (Japanese): "A girl who appears pretty from behind but not from the front"

The Meaning of *Tingo* by ADAM JACOT DE BOINOD (Penguin)

When you jump in the ocean, you swim
at your own risk. Right?

YOU

Be the Judge

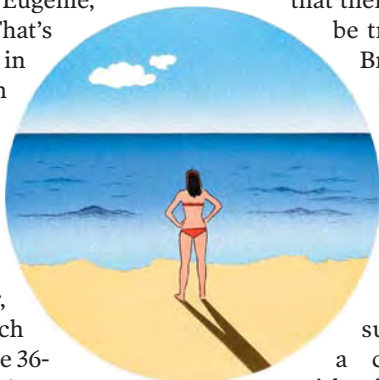
BY ROBIN GERBER

RABBI ISRAEL POLEYEFF, a high school teacher in Cedarhurst, New York, didn't have much time for vacations. Neither did his wife, Eugenie, a school secretary. That's why the couple, both in their 60s, had been looking forward to a trip to Miami Beach during the break between school terms in February 1997.

Zachary Breaux, another New Yorker, headed to Miami Beach that week as well. The 36-year-old jazz guitarist was there with his wife, Frederica, and their young daughters, Alexis, Mia and Nina. Breaux's latest album, *Uptown Groove*, had just reached No. 14 on *Billboard's* contemporary jazz chart,

and the family had gone to Miami Beach to celebrate.

Neither family could have known that their lives were about to be tragically linked. The Breauxs were staying at the Seville Hotel, on the water at 29th Street. On their last day of vacation, they strolled out to join other beachgoers already enjoying the sand, sun and surf. The beach had a city-run bathhouse with showers and picnic tables, and a tiki hut that housed Hurricane Beach Rentals, with beach chairs, umbrellas and watersport equipment. What the beach did not have was a lifeguard.



That same day, the Poleyeffs made their way down to the 29th Street beach. Eugenie Poleyeff loved to swim. So, as her husband enjoyed the sunny day, Eugenie joined a number of others already in the water.

But no one at the 29th Street beach knew that a rip tide was rushing with deadly force under the surface. A rip tide is a narrow slice of rapidly coursing water that moves away from the shore—and Eugenie had the extreme bad luck of swimming right into this perilous current. The powerful rip tide immediately pulled her out to sea.

As Eugenie cried out for help, it was Zachary Breaux, building sand castles with his daughters, who heard her screams. The young father shot into the water, while his wife ran toward the boardwalk to find a lifeguard. Zachary's daring leap into the sea made perfect sense to his family: In 1988, the excellent swimmer and former Eagle Scout had saved a drowning man off the coast of Italy.

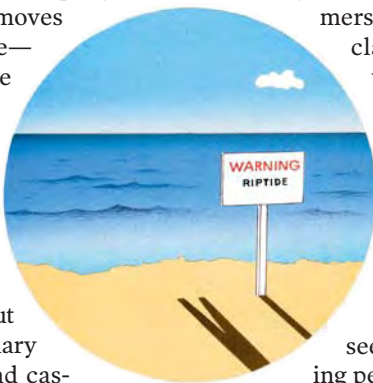
But the rip tide proved too strong even for him: Zachary was also overcome by the ocean's force. Horrified bystanders gathered at the surf's edge and watched the two swimmers thrash in the ocean. Incredibly, a group of

men were able to snatch the pair and bring them to shore. A few of the men were still administering CPR when a lifeguard ran up from a beach eight blocks away. But it was too late. Eugenie and Zachary both died.

The Poleyeff and Breaux families sued Miami Beach, arguing that the city had control over the area. The city should have warned swimmers of rip currents, they claimed. And why weren't lifeguards on duty? Anyone could see people were swimming. Didn't Miami Beach have a duty to provide ocean-lovers with a safe place to swim?

After all, the city seemed to be encouraging people to swim by supplying public showers and watersport rentals. At every other beach where the city offered these amenities, there were also lifeguards. The day of the drowning, the lifeguard at the 21st Street beach, just eight blocks away, had even posted rip tide warning flags. This tragedy could have been avoided if Miami Beach had shown reasonable care.

The city saw its responsibilities differently. Miami Beach's lawyers certainly did not think licensing beach-equipment rentals increased the city's responsibility for swimmers. And the attorneys were adamant that the city couldn't protect against riptides, events that occur suddenly, randomly,



Robin Gerber is a lawyer in Washington, D.C., and author of *Katharine Graham: The Leadership Journey of an American Icon*.

and in oceans all over the world. How could the city protect people from the natural force of the sea? Keep in mind that Florida has over 2,000 miles of shoreline. It would be impossible to protect the public at all times.

Besides, the city council had decided which beaches along the vast shoreline to specify as swimming areas. These beaches had posted signs informing the public that swimming was allowed. The 29th Street beach had not been designated a swimming area, and had no sign indicating that swimming was—or was not—allowed.

For Miami Beach to be held liable for the deaths, a city attorney argued, “you’d have to say that the Atlantic Ocean itself is a hazardous condition that must be guarded and protected against.” People have a right to swim wherever they want, the city said, but Miami Beach didn’t have a duty to protect them wherever and whenever they chose to swim.

Did the city of Miami Beach have a duty to warn swimmers of danger, or did Poleyeff and Breaux swim at their own risk? You Be the Judge!

Verdict The Case of the Raging Riptide

LAST YEAR, the Florida Supreme Court made clear that Miami Beach was running the beach on 29th Street as a public swimming area. The city was responsible for the beach and water activities.

The court added that by supplying amenities, especially beach rentals, the city influenced people’s selection of that area for swimming. The public was led to believe that swimming was allowed—signs or no signs. The court even went so far as to say that Miami Beach knew people were swimming there and as a result had provided access from the boardwalk as well as beach facilities, such as showers. The city, whether it admitted it or not, was running a swimming area at the 29th Street beach, and had a duty to warn swimmers of the possible dangers.

Nine years have passed since Israel Poleyeff and Frederica Breaux lost their spouses, and a settlement from Miami Beach seems likely. Lifeguards are now posted at the 29th Street beach, and the city’s website provides information on rip currents. Two more Poleyeff grandchildren have been born, one named for Eugenie. And Zachary Breaux’s album, the one that put him on the *Billboard* chart, is still for sale. The last song on the CD is called “I Love This Life.”



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star struck

When I finally bought a fancy telescope, I saw the universe in a whole new light | BY PETER LESCHAK

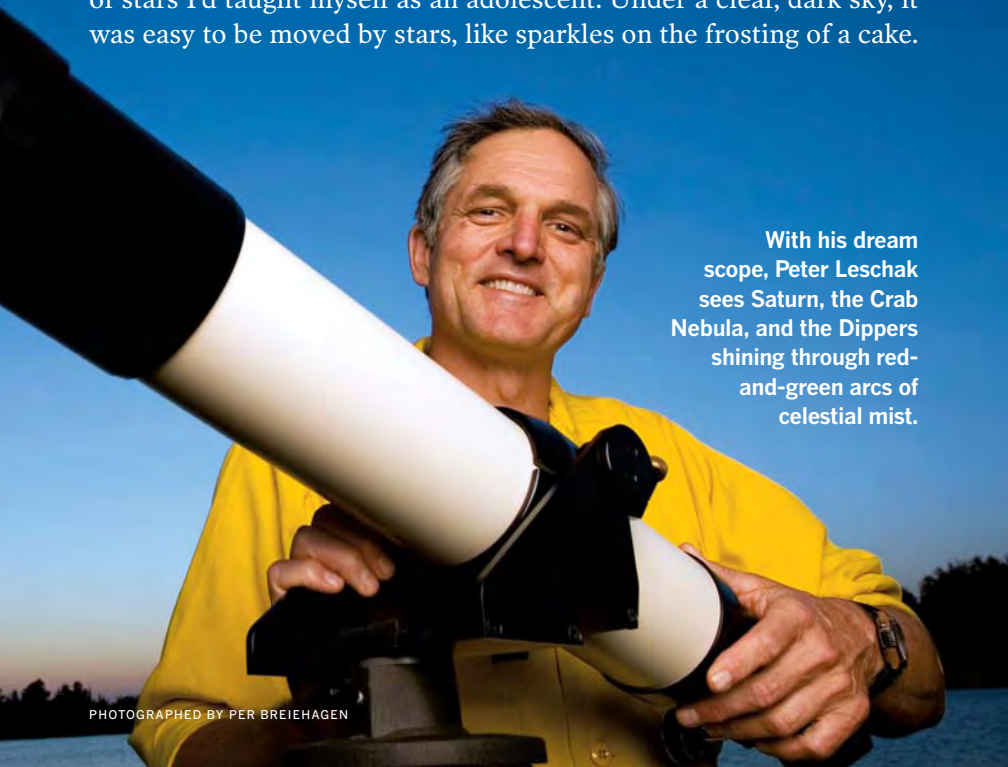
FROM NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ADVENTURE

I CONTRACTED CELESTIAL FEVER trying, in a way, to reach outer space and get to heaven. In early 1998, my friends Chris and Catherine purchased a serious telescope, a six-inch Maksutov-Cassegrain. They knew I was a lapsed high school nerd astronomer, so they were eager to share their new toy with me.

One cold winter night, Chris and I hiked onto a frozen lake near their house in northeastern Minnesota, packing a tripod and the new Mak. Chris focused on the Double Cluster, a pair of dense shoals of stars more than 7,000 light-years away. He slipped in a wide-angle eyepiece and grinned. “Check that out,” he said.

I looked. The field was packed with stars from center to edge and was so finely resolved that I felt as if I could climb in there and float around.

This unexpected revival of my astronomy obsession after 30 years had started almost accidentally. A few months earlier, I had impulsively pointed to Orion and recited to Chris and Catherine the names of stars I'd taught myself as an adolescent. Under a clear, dark sky, it was easy to be moved by stars, like sparkles on the frosting of a cake.

A photograph of a man with grey hair, wearing a bright yellow long-sleeved shirt, smiling as he looks through a large white telescope. The telescope is mounted on a black base. The background is a clear blue sky with a hint of a sunset or sunrise on the horizon. The man's hands are visible, adjusting the telescope. The overall mood is one of joy and discovery.

With his dream scope, Peter Leschak sees Saturn, the Crab Nebula, and the Dippers shining through red-and-green arcs of celestial mist.

"There's Rigel," I said, "and there's Betelgeuse and Bellatrix." My companions were genuinely starstruck, and their enthusiasm was contagious.

But the only telescope I owned was a cheap 60-millimeter refractor, little better than the instrument used by Galileo in 1610 to discover the four largest moons of Jupiter. A Christmas gift when I was 14, it had seen "first light," the term describing the initiation of a new scope, in January 1965. Since then I'd occasionally daydreamed about owning a quality telescope, as my small refractor didn't so much reveal the cosmos as veil it.

As a teenager in the late 1960s, I calculated that if I saved every dime I earned from my newspaper route, I'd be able to purchase my fantasy telescope in 71 years. But even when I began to earn adult-size paychecks as a peripatetic wildland firefighter, the fantasy faded into a wishing well of perceived frivolity.

After that night on the lake, I wondered, Why not get a good telescope? But the impulse to possess smelled of heresy, so I squelched it. What I desired would cost about \$4,000.

Then came El Niño. Assuming a busy wildfire year in northeastern Minnesota where I live, it would be conceivable to pay the bills, sock away some loot as a grubstake against hard times, and still buy an excellent instrument. I mulled it over for six weeks.

I mentioned it to my wife, Pam (also a firefighter), then felt guilty for even verbalizing the desire. We'd had so

many lean years. She fixed me with a penetrating eye. "It's not just the money, is it?" she asked.

"Well," I replied, "it is the money, but I suppose it's also a feeling that I don't deserve such a fine object." Now I felt a little pathetic as well as guilty.

"Get over it." She then explained—turning one of my fatalistic notions back on me—that I could be dead tomorrow, rendering all financial prudence irrelevant. "Get the telescope," she said. "Life is short."

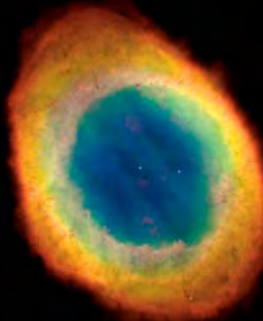
That clinched it. Within five weeks, my fire buddies, who preferred beer and burgers, were tired of hearing about my choices in optics. But I had my starship.

The 540-millimeter TV-101 is a stunning instrument. The flat black mount is so smooth and finely machined that just aiming the scope is a pleasure, like spinning the steering wheel of a Lexus.

In his practical yet poetic *Celestial Handbook*, Robert Burnham, Jr., wrote that amateur astronomers enjoy a benefit dabblers in other fields lack. For example, rock hounds must be content with second- or third-rate specimens—they will not own the Hope diamond or the complete skeleton of a triceratops. But the part-time astronomer "has access at all times to the original objects of his study; the masterworks of the heavens belong to him as much as to the great observatories of the world."

I greedily wanted to begin a total-immersion baptism of light with the new scope. A stretch of foul weather

How to get started



The Ring Nebula, captured by the Hubble Telescope

A GOOD BEGINNER'S STAR CHART is Wil Tirion's DeepMap 600 (oriontelescopes.com). How much you spend on a telescope depends on what you want to see, but expect to pay at least \$300. Opt for a quality scope with a 3-inch refractor (low maintenance, with a lens) or a 6-inch reflector (a brighter image, but the trade-off is bulk, weight and frequent realigning of the optical mirror). Catadioptric telescopes are a good compromise between weight, size and performance. For expert guidance, join an astronomy club. P.L.

HUBBLE HERITAGE TEAM (AURA/STSC/NASA)

intervened, and with the summer solstice approaching, the backwoods sky above our cabin wasn't fully dark until after 10 p.m. I took "astronomy naps" in the afternoons so I could be alert at the eyepiece until long after midnight if the clouds were to part.

At 10:30 one June evening, I set up the TV-101. It was a clear night. A waning gibbous moon was due to rise close to 11 o'clock, washing out the sky, so there wasn't much time to hunt for dim, deep-sky objects like galaxies, star clusters or nebulae.

I swung the scope to the constellation of Lyra, homing in on the famous Ring Nebula. The Ring is a planetary nebula, an expanding shell of gas surrounding an exceptionally hot star. Such structures are often doughnut-shaped—a bright band with a dark core—the star sometimes visible in the center, like a cosmic bull's-eye. I'd seen the Ring as a fuzzy dot in the old 60-millimeter three decades before.

Now, when I zeroed in with the TV-101, my breathing stopped. I could see the Ring, distinct and magnificent!

I laughed aloud, delighted. I'd seen photographs, practically drooled on them, but this was real, an "original." In a moment I was dancing around the tripod, demented with excitement, overcome by an abrupt feeling of déjà vu, not over the Ring itself, but over the sense of awe and wonder.

It was a vivid flashback to the summer of 1965: I'm 14 years old. I'm thrilled, inspired. That old 60-millimeter, with all its shortcomings, had altered my worldview, literally changed my life. It offered the incandescent joy of small-town adolescent exploration and discovery. Now I felt that brand of joy and release again. Back then, despite some fast-forward growing up I was shoved into by circumstance—family rupture, religious confusion, the prospect of the draft—there was a quality I held in abundance: hope. I considered the future open-ended, not unlike the vista seen through a telescope.

And that June night, in the glow of the Ring and the rising moon, at age 47, I was again revived and reborn. ■

Uncommon Courtesy

We keep hearing about the death of civility—but it's alive and well in a place you'd least expect

BY NEENA SAMUEL AND JOSEPH K. VETTER

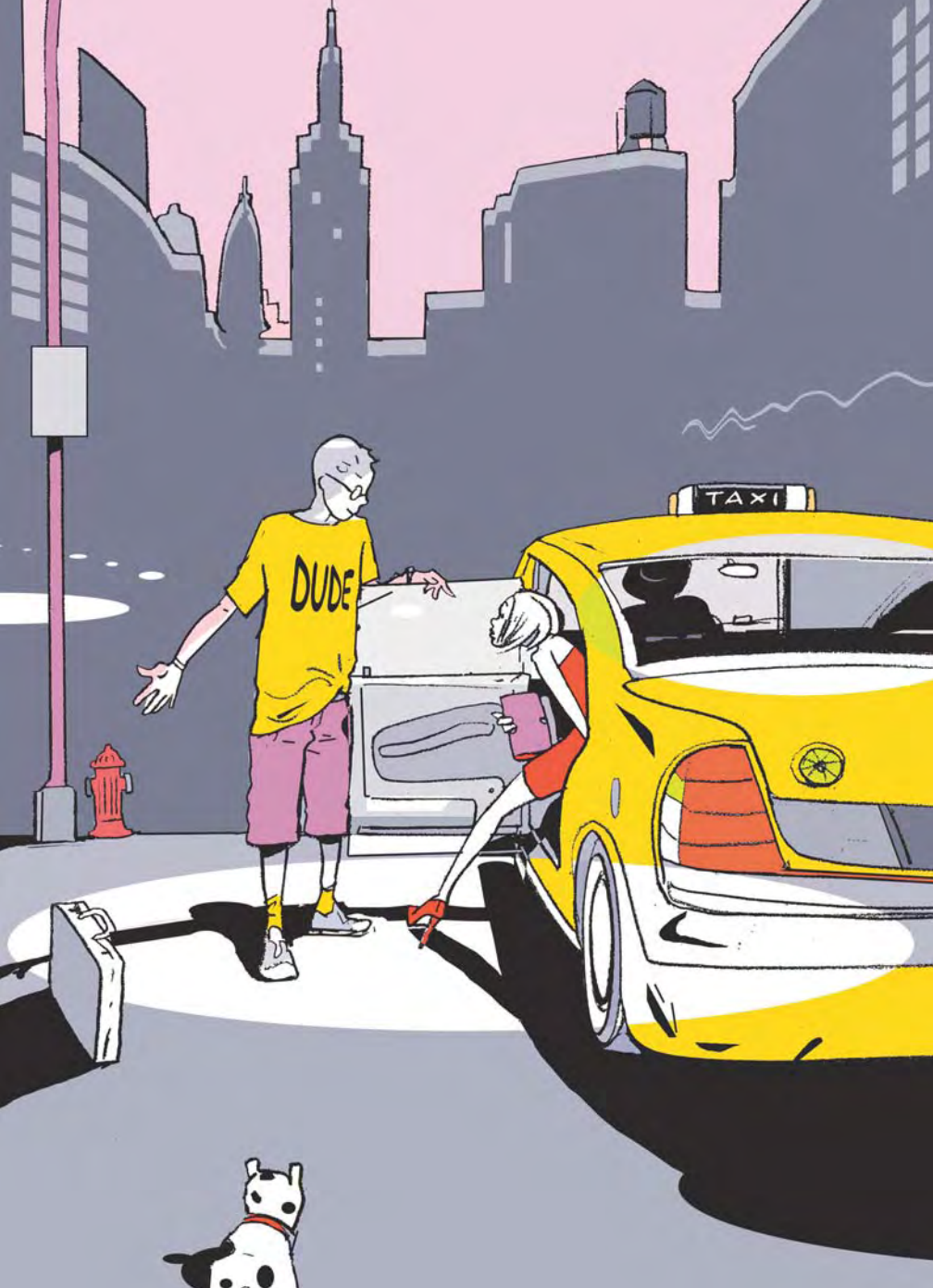
A WOMAN HEADS into a popular New York City coffee shop on a chilly winter morning. Just ahead of her, a man drops a file full of documents. The woman pauses, and stoops to help gather the papers.

Six blocks away, a different man enters another shop, but not before politely holding the door for the person behind him. A clerk at another busy store thanks a customer who's just made a purchase. "Enjoy," the young woman says, smiling widely. "Have a nice day." She sounds like she really means it.

Whoa. Common courtesy on the mean streets of a city known for its in-your-face style? Have New Yorkers suddenly gone soft?

IN HER INTERNATIONAL bestselling death-of-manners manifesto *Talk to the Hand*, author Lynne Truss argues that common courtesies such as saying "Excuse me" are practically extinct. There are certainly plenty who would agree with her. Consider that in one recent survey, 70 percent of U.S. adults said people are ruder now than they were 20 years ago.

Is it really true? *Reader's Digest* decided to find out if courtesy truly is



kaput. RD sent reporters to major cities in 35 countries where the magazine is published—from Auckland, New Zealand, to Zagreb, Croatia. In the United States, that meant targeting New York, where looking out for No. 1—the heck with the other guy—has always been a basic survival skill.

The routine in New York was similar to the one followed elsewhere: Two reporters—one woman and one man—fanned out across the city, homing in on neighborhoods where street life and retail shops thrive. They performed three experiments: “door tests” (would anyone hold one open for them?); “document drops” (who would help them retrieve a pile of “accidentally” dropped papers?); and “service tests” (which salesclerks would thank them for a purchase?). For consistency, the New York tests were conducted at Starbucks coffee shops, by now almost as common in the Big Apple as streetlights. In all, 60 tests (20 of each type) were done.

Along the way, the reporters encountered all types: men and women of different races, ages, professions, and income levels. They met an aspiring actress, a high school student, a hedge-fund analyst and

two New York City police officers. And guess what? In the end, four out of every five people they encountered passed RD’s courtesy test—*making New York the most courteous city in the world*. Imagine that.

A for Effort

While 90 percent of New Yorkers passed the door test, only 55 percent aced the document drop. Are people less likely to help others when doing so takes extra effort or time? Not always, the reporters found. Take the pregnant woman who thought nothing of bending down to help us with our papers. Or the Queens woman named Liz who precariously balanced two coffees, her keys and her wallet on a takeout tray with one hand, while picking up papers off the wet pavement with the other. Her reason for helping? “I was there,” she said matter-of-factly.

Part of the Job

Nineteen of the 20 clerks who were subjected to service tests passed. Roger Benjamin, the manager and coffee master at a Man-



hattan Starbucks, acknowledged that the chain trains its employees to be courteous. And some baristas the RD reporters encountered went beyond basic niceties. “You have to feed off people’s vibes,” said one clerk. “You go out of your way to show customers they did us a favor by coming here.” At another store, a green-apron-clad attendant said that while courtesy was part of his job, he sought respect in return: “It’s contagious.”

Chivalry: **Not Dead Yet**

Overall, men were the most willing to help, especially when it came to document drops. In those, men offered aid 63 percent of the time, compared to 47 percent among women. Of course, men weren’t entirely democratic about whom they’d help. All of them held the door for RD’s female reporter, and were more than twice as likely to help her pick up fallen papers than they were to help our male reporter. “I’ll hold the door for whoever’s behind me,” said Pete Muller, 27, an account executive from Brooklyn. “But I’m definitely more conscious of women!” he added with a smile.

Mother **Knows Best**

By far, the most common reason people cited for being willing to go out of their way to help others was

*The chart at right ranks—from most courteous to least courteous—the 35 major cities included in RD’s Global Courtesy Test. Figures reflect the percentage of people who passed in each city. When multiple cities had identical scores, they are listed in alphabetical order.



World of **Courtesy***

New York	USA	80%
Zurich	Switzerland	77
Toronto	Canada	70
Berlin	Germany	68
São Paulo	Brazil	68
Zagreb	Croatia	68
Auckland	New Zealand	67
Warsaw	Poland	67
Mexico City	Mexico	65
Stockholm	Sweden	63
Budapest	Hungary	60
Madrid	Spain	60
Prague	Czech Republic	60
Vienna	Austria	60
Buenos Aires	Argentina	57
Johannesburg	South Africa	57
Lisbon	Portugal	57
London	United Kingdom	57
Paris	France	57
Amsterdam	Netherlands	52
Helsinki	Finland	48
Manila	Philippines	48
Milan	Italy	47
Sydney	Australia	47
Bangkok	Thailand	45
Hong Kong		45
Ljubljana	Slovenia	45
Jakarta	Indonesia	43
Taipei	Taiwan	43
Moscow	Russia	42
Singapore		42
Seoul	South Korea	40
Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia	37
Bucharest	Romania	35
Mumbai	India	32

No, You First: Test Your Manners

At Work

1. An associate starts to tell you something embarrassing about an unpopular co-worker. You ...

- Stop him short. You're not interested in other people's business.
- Pipe up with a bit of your own gossip.
- Pay attention. It might be useful when playing office politics.

2. Approaching a colleague's desk, you notice she's on the phone. You ...

- Flash an index finger. You just need a minute.
- Leave her a Post-it saying you'd like to speak with her when she's free.
- Hover until she finally hangs up.

In Public Places

3. Your cell phone rings on a crowded bus. You ...

- Answer and talk as you would anywhere else.
- Answer and quietly say you'll call back.
- Simply shut it off until you're off the bus.

4. You've got 14 items in your cart, and the supermarket is packed. You ...

- Race to the 10-item express lane.
- Hit the express lane, and group your items as two purchases.
- Grab a magazine and use the regular checkout.

At Home

5. At the dinner table, your son reaches past you

for the meat loaf. You ...

- Reach past him to get to the broccoli.
- Suggest that in the future he ask you to pass him the dish.
- Comment on how long his arms are getting.

With Strangers

6. You run into a man you've met once, but forget his name. You ...

- Keep the conversation short so as not to embarrass yourself.
- Simply pretend you know his name.
- Admit and apologize for your memory lapse.

Answers: 1. a; 2. b; 3. b; 4. c; 5. b; 6. c

HOW YOU RATE

- 0-2 Courtesy Clod
3-4 Socially So-So
5-6 Manners Maven

rd.com Ready for part two of this mind-your-manners quiz? Go to rd.com/courtesy.

their upbringing. "It's the way I was raised," said one young woman who held a door open despite struggling with her umbrella on a frigid, sleety day in Brooklyn.

Her sentiment was echoed by Christine DuBois, a 49-year-old sales manager from Bayside, Queens. DuBois was headed to the gym when she stopped to retrieve a pile of scattered papers. "It's something that's taught to you when you're young," she said.

A few people, including Frederick Martin, 29, credited their mothers' in-

fluence specifically. "My mom brought me up like that," Martin said. "It's pure manners."

What Goes Around ...

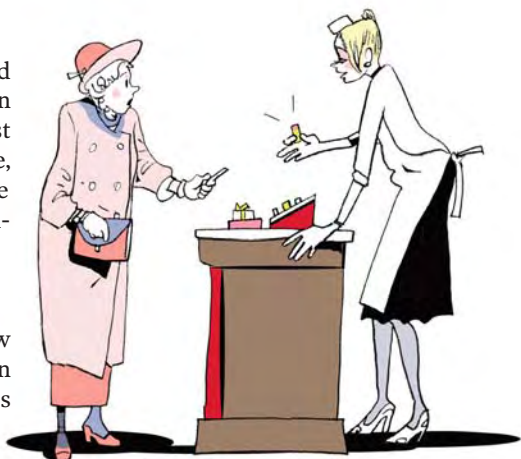
Another reason people are quick to be courteous: "You do what you'd want other people to do if it happened to you," said Christine Rossi, who pitched in on an early-morning document drop. Dennis Kleinman, a 57-year-old doctor and writer, used one word to sum up what drove his impulse to help: "Empathy." He came to the aid of

an RD reporter when a middle-aged woman ignored a pile of papers in front of a shop on Manhattan's East Side. "The same thing happens to me, and I appreciate it when someone takes 10 to 15 seconds of their valuable time to help," he said.

Excuses, Excuses

The reporters did run into a few courtesy clods. In one case, while an RD staffer was inside a Starbucks interviewing a woman who'd passed the door test, a dozen oblivious people stepped over a second staffer's fallen papers. Another time, a wise guy offered only a snarky comment on our clumsiness: "That guy had too much coffee!" he cracked.

And just when we thought we'd heard every excuse in the book for not helping, along came Margot Zimmerman. The 44-year-old computer saleswoman was on her way into a Queens Starbucks when a reporter dropped his folder of papers right at her feet. Looking down, Zimmerman stepped gingerly around the papers, then entered the shop. "I'm probably one of the most courteous people," she insisted later. "I pick up every other person's dog poop. I help old ladies across



the street. But when he dropped his papers, he made such a face."

Thankfully, such responses were the exception, not the rule. Which makes New York City a pretty darn polite place—the *most polite major city in the entire world*, in case you missed it before. We realize this isn't a rigorous scientific study, but we believe it is a reasonable real-world test of good manners around the globe. And it's comforting to know that in a place where millions of people jostle one another each day in a relentless push to get ahead, they're able to do it with a smile and a thank-you. Hey, if they can make nice here, they can make nice anywhere.

FREUDIAN YIP



The FDA approved a Prozac-type drug for dogs who are depressed. This is good, because it's hard for dogs to get therapy, since they're never allowed on the couch.

COLIN QUINN on Saturday Night Live (NBC)

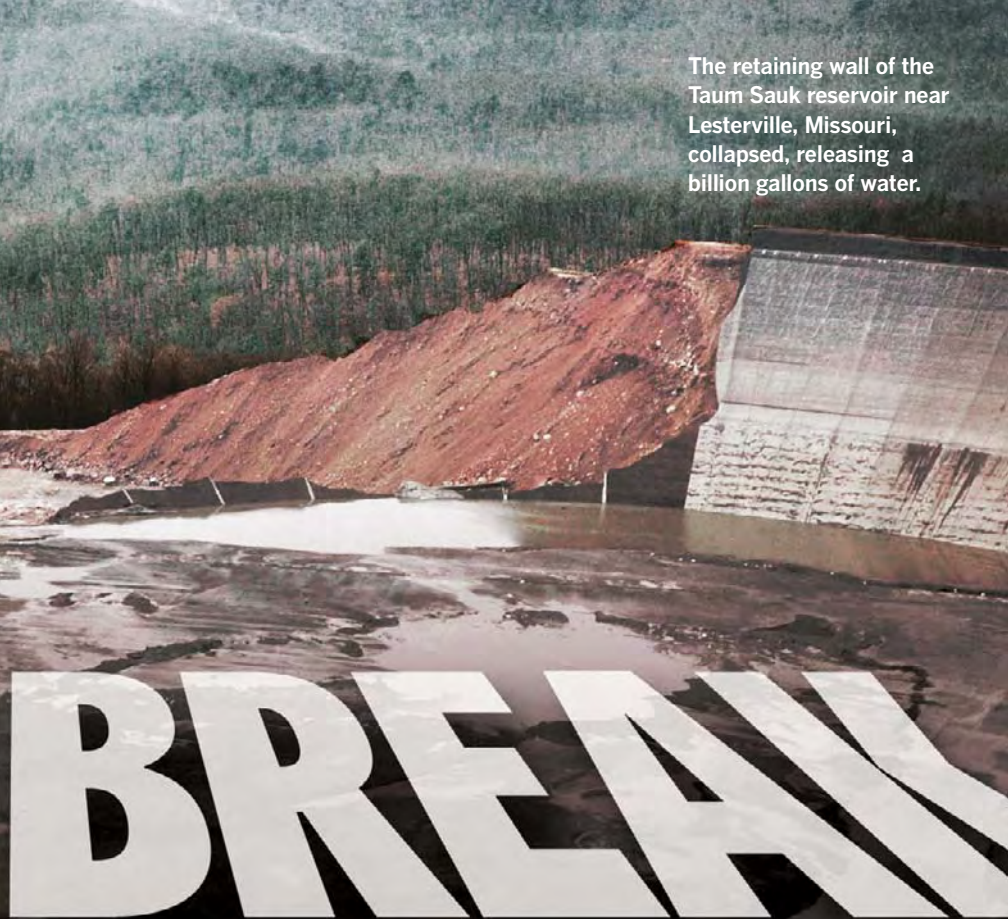


The family was fast asleep—the next

BY WILLIAM M. HENDRYX

A WAVE OF WATER 30 feet high spun Jerry Toops like a tornado. Debris battered and cut him. He fought to keep his head up, using all the strength in his legs and upper body to swim, angling across the ripping current toward

a line of cedar trees. The night was as black as the water, the trees vague shadows against an ebony sky. As he was swept toward the cedars, Toops grabbed a limb and held on. Wood, pieces of plaster and litter slammed him, accumulating around his waist like flotsam against a pole in a



The retaining wall of the Taum Sauk reservoir near Lesterville, Missouri, collapsed, releasing a billion gallons of water.

BREAK

moment they were fighting for their lives

breakwater. The rubble weighed him down. He was an outdoorsman with strong, callused hands, but inch by inch, the weight and force of the water pulled his hand down the tree limb, stripping the leaves.

Just when he could hold on no longer, the debris gave way, and

Toops pulled himself into the swaying treetop. Clinging there, exhausted, wearing only his undershorts in the spitting snow and 32-degree chill, he was limp with fatigue. He was alive, but as he surveyed the rampaging water, he was certain his wife and babies were dead.

Lisa looked up and saw the roof of the

BEDTIME CAME EARLY for the Toops family at their three-bedroom brick ranch house nestled in a forested valley in Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park. At 8 p.m. Lisa Toops put the three kids to bed. She and Jerry, superintendent of the park, followed soon after. Self-reliant and religious, they were used to a work cycle that more closely followed the sun than the flow of commuter traffic. Jerry was a real "ranger type," rugged, fit, good with his hands. His outdoorsman's beard was just beginning to gray at the edges.

The 42-year-old naturalist loved the park, with its strange formations of igneous rock called shut-ins. A billion years ago volcanic activity caused a granite upheaval and confined, or "shut-in," the Black River in southeast Missouri. Over the ages, the trapped water carved spectacular gorges, natural water slides and potholes in the hard rock. In the summertime, the park was a magnet for swimming, camping and hiking, but now, in the weeks before Christmas, all was quiet.

At 4 a.m. that December 14, 2005, the baby awoke, softly crying to be fed. Lisa brushed her sandy hair away from sleepy green eyes, plucked Tucker from his crib near their bedroom and retreated down the hall to the living room sofa to nurse him. Normally, after feeding she'd put him back in his crib, but this night they both fell asleep on the couch.

An hour later, Lisa bolted awake. There was a booming roar—loud, then

soft, then loud again—a huge tornado, she thought. She tucked the infant under one arm and jumped up. "Jerry, get the kids!" She figured the basement was their only hope. She ran to Tanner's room. The five-year-old was climbing from his bed, awakened by the bedlam. She yelled to him to come, extending her hand, but before she could grasp him, a barrage of water rushed into the house.

It coursed around her ankles, her knees. In seconds the water level was above her chest. Lisa held the baby over her head as the surge filled the room. She didn't know what was happening, but tried to stay calm for her kids. "Hang on to the bed!" she called to Tanner, fighting to stay upright in the flood. The water kept rising, relentlessly. "Hold your breath, baby!" she called over the din. In the next moment, they were in liquid darkness.

"JERRY—!" That was all Jerry Toops had heard of Lisa's cry to "get the kids." The sharp urgency in her voice sliced through his sleep a moment before the roar cut off the rest of her sentence. The noise. It sounded like a squadron of jet aircraft flying through the house. Jerry's feet hit the floor, and in that same instant, the back wall of the bedroom exploded, slamming him back. A second later, the opposite wall blew out, heaving him and the bed in reverse. He was deep underwater.

Intuitively, he swam upward—10

house crack open like an eggshell.

feet, 20, 30, before surfacing in a sea of uprooted trees, Sheetrock, furniture, and granite boulders the size of SUVs. It looked like the Biblical Flood, everything destroyed. He swam to a portion of rooftop that floated nearby and climbed on. “Lisa! Tanner! Tara! Tucker!” he called, but couldn’t hear his own voice above the rushing water. Praying to see just one head bob to the surface, he knew the odds were all wrong. He was strong and agile, and it had taken all he had to escape. What chance did they have?

IT SEEMED FOREVER. Underwater, Lisa Toops fought for her life and the lives of Tucker and Tanner. She had no idea where Tara, her three-year-old, was. The thought was terrible. She pushed it aside and focused.

As suddenly as it had crested, the water began to recede. Lisa’s head came into air. Gasping, she looked up to see the roof splinter and crack open like an eggshell. A way out where there had been none. She hugged the infant with one arm and swam toward the opening with the other. Where was Tanner? She’d lost her firstborn child amid the chaos. Kick your feet, baby, she thought, hoping he would remember the swimming lessons he’d had that summer. Kick your feet.

Within moments, she and the infant washed free of the crumbling house, riding what amounted to a tsunami in the wintry pitch of night.

The Toops house before and after the reservoir ruptured. Their home was the only one destroyed.



In the silence and predawn darkness

THIRTY SECONDS EARLIER, he'd been sound asleep. Now Jerry Toops was in a battle for his life. The section of rooftop he'd stood on buckled beneath him, and he dropped back into the swirling waves. Finally, he managed to grab onto the cedar tree and climb from the water. His body was battered and numbed by the freezing chill.

Toops strained his eyes in the dark night. He knew what had happened. He'd foreseen the possibility. He'd even prepared, devising an evacuation plan in case a natural disaster ruptured the dam on the mountaintop less than two miles from their home. His job required it, but his choice to live there had put his family at risk. He blamed himself for their deaths.

Toops was only half-correct about the flood. The dam had ruptured, cascading 1.5 billion gallons—6 million tons—of water into a narrow valley, leveling everything in its path, including an entire hardwood forest. But it was not a natural disaster that released the monster. It was a man-made flaw.

Completed in 1963, the dam had concrete walls 90 feet tall. It was part of the Taum Sauk hydroelectric generating facility owned by the local utility. A fail-safe mechanism had gone awry, allowing the reservoir to over-

Back on dry land, the Toops (from top) Jerry, Lisa, Tara, Tucker and Tanner.



Wadlow heard a faint cry for help.

fill. Runoff eroded the soil beneath one edge of the basin, and it crumbled, washing the Toops family away.

CAPTAIN RYAN WADLOW of the volunteer fire department in Lesterville was just leaving for his job as a heavy-equipment operator when the emergency pager sounded around 5:50 a.m. Wadlow stood 6'7" and weighed 327 pounds. To strangers he looked threatening; friends and neighbors knew him for his soft heart.

Living close by, Wadlow was first on the scene. He didn't know it, but roughly 45 minutes had elapsed since the Toops family had been swept from their home. He parked his truck and slogged through knee-deep mud and water, tracing the reflected ruin with his flashlight.

Everything in this valley, usually so familiar to him, was unrecognizable. Divested. Scraped away. A stretch of the elevated road was covered in six inches of sludge. A towering wall of uprooted trees had been deposited near the edge of a bridge spanning the Black River. On the opposite side of the roadway from where the family's home had been, several vehicles littered a sodden field as if they'd been dropped from the sky.

Just then, in the silence of predawn, came a faint cry for help. A man's voice, desperate and shaking with cold. "Where are you?" Wadlow called back.

"Help," was the only reply, repeated again and again.

Shining a path with his flashlight, Wadlow trudged a quarter-mile through light rain and spitting snow into the field, stumbling up to his calves in muck, listening for the voice.

Seven minutes later, he found himself under a tree. The voice was coming from above. A man, deathly ashen, wearing only undershorts, was clinging to the upper limbs. He was bleeding and covered with silt and leaves, and appeared to be in shock.

Wadlow stretched to his full height, helped Jerry Toops to the ground, and gave him his coat. "Are you the park superintendent?" he asked.

"Yes," said Toops.

"Anybody with you?" asked Wadlow. Toops mumbled something unintelligible as Wadlow's two-way radio crackled. Other members of the volunteer department were now on the scene, including Chief Ben Meredith and veteran Gary Maize, looking for survivors.

Wadlow escorted Toops to the edge of the flood-scoured field and had another volunteer take him to an ambulance. Then Wadlow returned to search. Meanwhile, Gary Maize and two others had begun hunting about a half-mile north of Wadlow and the command post.

With one weak flashlight between them, Maize's group inched through a minefield of slimy waste and barbed-wire fences. "Anybody out there?" Maize shouted. Then he said to the others, "Shhh! I heard something." He



PHOTOGRAPHED BY TAMARA REYNOLDS

Rescuers Gary Maize, Ryan Wadlow and Ben Meredith in the field where they found Tara, Tucker and Tanner.

killed his radio and listened intently. Slowly, deliberately, he scanned the field with the light. Just ahead there was something in the rubble.

Wearing only a nightshirt, Lisa Toops sat limp and incoherent on the soggy ground near the far perimeter of the field about a half-mile from where her home once stood. She held the gurgling infant tightly to her chest, while five-year-old Tanner lay apparently lifeless across her legs. Neither stirred nor spoke. They had been stranded there in the rain and snow for an hour and ten minutes.

“Ma’am, are you all right?” Maize asked. Clearly she was not. He took the baby and cleared its air passages of mud and leaves. Another firefighter

wrapped Tanner in his coat and felt for a pulse. He couldn’t find one.

Ryan Wadlow had by now joined the others. He lifted Lisa into his arms and carried her toward rescue vehicles at the edge of the field.

One of the volunteers asked her, “Ma’am, how many children do you have?” Lisa was unresponsive, refusing to let go of Wadlow’s neck. “How many children, ma’am?”

Lisa seemed to come awake. “I have three ...” she said, and then her voice trailed off into silence.

Somehow, in all the tumult, she’d managed to hold on to her baby. And, miraculously, she’d snagged Tanner as he washed by her, crying for help. But she had not seen or heard anything of Tara, her sweet little girl.

AFTER TURNING LISA over to volunteers, Wadlow slogged back to the spot where she’d been found. He stood

in the stillness for a moment. Then he heard a weak whimper. A child! He followed the sound. Sloshing through mud, some 30 feet away, he came to a cedar tree. There beneath the boughs, almost invisible under silt and rubbish, lay a little girl in muddy brown pajamas. He came closer and shone his light. Her blue eyes were wide open; her breath came in shallow rasps. Wadlow swept her up and hurried to the ambulance.

BACK DOWN THE ROAD near the command post, an anguished Jerry Toops was being tended in the other ambulance when word filtered in that they'd "found the baby and little girl." Toops thought that meant their bodies had been found. Dreading the answer, he asked, "Are they alive?"

"Yes," came the reply.

For the first time that night, Jerry Toops wept.

The sun rose behind the mountains. Ten minutes later, he learned that Lisa and Tanner were also alive.

THE FAMILY MEMBERS were gathered like pieces of driftwood and taken to the local medical center. From there, they were transferred to Cardinal Glennon Hospital in St. Louis. All were suffering from hypothermia and were covered with cuts and bruises—except Tara, who survived without a scratch. Tanner was in the worst shape. An EMT described his condition as "not compatible with life." But the medical team kept working and after almost two hours of CPR, he was revived. Tucker and Tara were hospitalized for six days, Tanner two weeks. Everyone recovered.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has investigated the incident. A report is due out this summer.

The Shut-Ins park was devastated, but is being restored and will open again for swimming and camping in 2007. Jerry Toops has been promoted to assistant field supervisor for the Ozarks District. He's building a home near Lebanon, Missouri—on a hill nowhere near a dam.

THE CHURCH OF THE FUNNY ANECDOTE

It was a case of the old world running headlong into the new. I was on the Internet paying a bill to a hospital, Our Lady of the Lake. The bank's practice of shortening the payee's name and combining it with the type of debit produced an interesting entry: "Our Lady of the Online Payment."

JOEY HAGMAN

Pride trumps everything, according to this bumper sticker on a car that passed me by: "Proud Parent of an Our Lady of Humility Honor Student."

YOUNGIN CHOI





RD Face to Face with
Uma Thurman

mama!

BY LAURA YORKE

VERY FEW OF US get to fulfill the when-I-grow-up fantasies of our childhood. Astronaut, pilot, cowgirl, firefighter—those baby ambitions usually pass away. Uma Thurman is one of the lucky ones. As a girl, she wanted to be an actress. Her mother, who knew a thing or two about show business, told her to pick something more realistic. But Uma held on—and held out. And by age 16, she'd landed her first big-screen role.

Thirty films and 20 years later, Thurman, 36, has realized her career dream—and then some. In movies like *Gattaca*, *Pulp Fiction* and *The Avengers*, Thurman

has wielded her talent and icy good looks to great effect. But her personal life of late has hardly been smooth. She's still nursing the wounds from her 2004 divorce from second husband, Ethan Hawke, who is rumored to have been unfaithful while he was away on a film project. The couple have two young children, Maya, 8, and Levon, 4. Thurman says her priority is her daughter and son now, so for the past few years she has only chosen roles that allow her to shoot in New York, where the family lives.

RD spent a late-day lunch talking to Thurman on the eve of the release of her upcoming comedy, *My Super Ex-Girlfriend*. She talks to us about her life, her work and her future.

RD: How's it going since the divorce?

Thurman: Why am I still feeling this? Because it leaches out of you slowly. One always wishes it would be faster. Wouldn't we all like to just have one big, stupid cry like they do in the movies, and then it's over?

RD: What ways do you make your kids feel safe in the wake of the divorce?

Thurman: First, do no harm. And then try to build a positive outlook and a sense of wholeness. They're doing well. They're remarkable little people. Of course I think they're stunning, extraordinary human beings.

RD: Are you close to your parents and your three brothers?

Thurman: Oh, yeah. Very. They're great. It's really wonderful. There are

so many ebbs and flows in life, but when you're raising small children, your family means everything.

RD: You have an interesting family.

Thurman: But I had a very traditional background as well. My parents are neat people. I'm lucky to have been raised in the most beautiful place—Amherst, Massachusetts, state of my heart. I'm more patriotic to Massachusetts than to almost any place.

RD: Your mother was a model. Your father, a former Tibetan Buddhist monk, teaches at Columbia University.

Thurman: Because of him, I often get asked if I'm a Buddhist. I always say no, because I have such respect for the rigor of being a practicing religious person. I'm an actress and mom, and I probably don't have enough of an active spiritual life. And I don't know why people run around calling themselves by the names of religions when they don't actually practice them.

RD: How did your mom influence you?

Thurman: She's a very strongly independent person. She went off to make her future at a really young age. At around 15, she went from Stockholm to England. Imagine that in about 1950.

RD: She's now a psychotherapist, right?

Thurman: She never actually formally practiced. She was a stay-at-home mom who raised four children with no help, which is a lot of work. But she went back to school in her early 40s and got a degree.

RD: You're the beautiful daughter of a model. Yet you've said many times that you were uncomfortable with your looks when you were younger.

Thurman: My mother always made it very clear to me that, whatever you look like now, you're going to look worse later. Don't get too attached to your beauty because it's not yours to keep. Don't go around thinking that it's some big bonus and that you can count on it. And I was not classically attractive. I've always been sort of an acquired taste.

RD: Are you surprised that you stuck with your plan to become an actress?

Thurman: It is a surprise. I remember being, like, 10, and my mother asking me what I wanted to do. When I said I want to be an actress, she said, "Everybody does. Say something else. You've been watching too much TV." Today, it's sort of disturbing when a teenager says she wants to be an actress. It is such an unlikely thing to be able to do—not because you can't be good at it, but just because of what it takes to survive: luck, talent, holding your head in a certain way, endurance. You have to be able to take insults really well. And how obnoxious will you become if you are treated nicely and receive flattery?



Thurman celebrated with her parents, Nena and Robert, at *The Producers* premiere in 2005.

RD: What's it like being a single mother, given your career?

Thurman: I don't get to stay home sick. My job is very unforgiving in that regard. And I haven't entirely figured out how to deal with it. I've avoided conflict by limiting my options. And I'm really grateful that I found things I could do that were here in New York.

RD: Tell us about your role in *My Super Ex-Girlfriend*.

Thurman: I play a woman who found a meteor as a child and gained superpowers. But all she wants to do is find a nice guy and settle down. Unfortunately, her own neuroses are so immense that she suffocates anyone who comes close to her—men run for the



Thurman plays a woman scorned in *My Super Ex-Girlfriend*, and pairs with John Travolta in *Pulp Fiction* and Matthew Broderick in *The Producers*.

hills. Then she feels the loss and rejection that anybody naturally feels, but in her case she expresses it with out-of-control rage. Super-age.

RD: Was it a fun role to play?

Thurman: It was really fun to play a character who actually vents. So many women don't vent. We are trained to be gracious and hold our tongues. But this character flips out and has full-on



tantrums. Think of a humiliating experience you've had, when all you did was sit there quietly and suck it up. For years, every time you'd think of it, you'd flinch. You ask, Why didn't I just go bananas and take a baseball bat and smash that person over the head?

RD: You've taken on some very physical roles. On the set of *The Producers*, I saw you slide across this desk ...

Thurman: Over and over. One day I hit my hip on the desk so hard I fell to the ground. Once you hurt yourself, you begin to kind of preemptively prepare. Your judgment starts to go wild because your body's afraid.

RD: Just like in life.

Thurman: Right. But we came back another day, and I did one perfect move. And that's in the movie.

RD: In one very memorable scene in *Kill Bill: Vol. 2*, you were buried alive.

Thurman: That was awful. It went on for weeks. Many different sets were built to create different moments of it. Part of it was shot at night on location. Part of it was shot in studio.

RD: How do you psych yourself up for that kind of thing?

Thurman: The purest relationship I have ever had, aside from with my children, is with my work. Whatever you give it, it gives you back double. That's an unusual kind of relationship. It's thrilling to act. It's thrilling to reach for things and risk humiliation. It's taken me a long time to learn to accept the risks and just be willing to try it over and over again.

RD: You once said you don't take risks, that risks take you.

Thurman: Life sweeps you up. Some people resist a lot. I probably haven't resisted very much.

RD: You've been at this for 20 years. Do you ever get tired of it?

Thurman: I've always approached work as a worker. Whatever it takes—endurance, discipline, practice, repetition, courage, working through it—I just have always been willing to pull myself up and try again. I've never taken success for granted.

RD: That's a great outlook.

Thurman: Well, at the same time, the price you pay for that attitude is that you don't get to enjoy the highs. There will be some incredibly spectacular moment and you wish to God you could just celebrate it. But you can't, because some other thing has just ground you right down to the core.

RD: You have said, "You play, you pay," regarding celebrities and the press. So if you're famous, you're fair game?

Thurman: I think that you are game. There are many incredible privileges that go with being famous. Being beat up by the media is nothing compared to, say, being beat up by your union if you're a coal miner.

RD: What kinds of things would you do if you had a lot of spare time?

Thurman: I love, love, love to travel, to explore the world, but I never can. I'd like to see more theater, go to more shows. I'd try to get my French back. My list is literally as long as my leg.

RD: Which is very, very long.

Thurman: Uh-huh. And it's written in small print. ■

 Listen to more of the interview with Uma Thurman at rd.com/uma.

Mark and Karen Cissel were already down on their luck. That's when their troubles *really* started.



CHEATED

OUT OF HOUSE AND HOME

Don't let these scams happen to you

BY MAX ALEXANDER

MARK AND KAREN CISSEL were afraid they were going to lose their Wheaton, Maryland, home after Karen lost her job. The couple missed four or five mortgage payments in late 2003, and their bank had started foreclosure proceedings, a legal process that is public to anyone who cares to look up the records.

Soon, according to a civil complaint, two employees from Fresh Start Solutions, a Baltimore-based mortgage company, contacted the Cissels: They offered to help refinance their home, settle the back payments and even throw in a \$5,000 bonus check. “They seemed very nice,” says Karen.

The Cissels signed all of the documents, and the men promised they'd mail their copies to them later. The Cissels never got those copies. Instead, they allegedly received a batch

of very different legal documents—this time listing them as tenants in the home they thought they still owned.

The “landlord” was Vincent Abell, the leader of the real estate scheme, says the complaint, and he was seeking to evict the Cissels and their three children for nonpayment of rent. The Cissels are suing Abell and others, claiming the documents were forged, but a resolution could be a year away.

“We were devastated,” says Karen. “We had over \$80,000 equity in the house, and this guy took it away.”

PROFILE OF AN EPIDEMIC

The term *mortgage fraud* encompasses a grab bag of cons and tricks, perpetrated on victims ranging from average homeowners to novice real estate investors to savvy bankers and the banks they represent. It is, accord-

ing to FBI Special Agent Ronda Heilig, “one of the fastest-growing white-collar crimes in the United States.”

The scams are often complicated, but in essence, mortgage fraud involves deception to obtain either real estate loan money or the real estate itself, which is then typically sold quickly, or “flipped,” at substantial profit. Often the con artists are mortgage brokers, with title companies and appraisers in on the scam.

Crooked real estate deals have forced homeowners into bankruptcy and foreclosure. And lenders have lost billions, costs they pass on to law-abiding customers. A study estimated that mortgage fraud in Utah accounts for a quarter-point increase in mortgage rates across the board.

SCAMS MADE EASY

Mortgage fraud has been around as long as home loans, but recent trends have made it easier—and far more lucrative—to game the system. Here’s what’s driving the crime spree:

Money Inflated housing prices are luring the bad guys.

Technological Advances Inexpensive scanners and color printers make forgery and identity theft a cinch.

A Depersonalized Application Process Time was when mortgages were approved by a local bank officer who met with homeowners in person, applying common sense and professional judgment to loan decisions. Crooks stood out like a purple house. Today, lending companies approve loans using computer systems; as long

as the paperwork seems in order, it’s hard to notice the bad apples.

Inundated Loan Officers Mortgage applications have surged in recent years, forcing lending institutions to hire hordes of new loan officers to handle the workload. Consumer advocates charge that some lenders have cut corners on due diligence to hasten approvals.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

In a typical scenario, a scammer—let’s call him Joe—assumes a false or stolen identity to buy a \$100,000 property. He puts 20 percent down and assumes an \$80,000 mortgage. Joe then forges documents to make it look as though he’s taken out a building loan for \$50,000 to make renovations. Next, his appraiser, also a crook, values the property at \$200,000, pointing to “comparable” sales in a nicer neighborhood just up the road. Now Joe can use the home as collateral for a \$150,000 consolidation loan; he pays off the original \$80,000 mortgage, keeps the remaining \$70,000 and skips town—defaulting on the loan and abandoning the house.

Though mortgage-fraud abuses are countless in variety, experts cite a few basic versions:

The Rescue You Don’t Need As alleged by the Cissels’ attorney in court papers, Vincent Abell, a convicted con artist, and his associates were operating a “foreclosure rescue” scam. (Abell declined comment.) In rescue scams, crooks prey on vulnerable homeowners facing foreclosure. They are usually



Cathy Makley uncovered mortgage fraud in her Atlanta neighborhood.

longtime residents who have built up substantial home equity, but who now can't make their mortgage payment.

"People facing foreclosure are desperate for any way to avoid being kicked out of their home," says Manuel Duran, a Los Angeles attorney who has represented 25 rescue fraud victims. Rescue scammers promise a way to avoid foreclosure and never pack a moving box. Some say they'll help the homeowners catch up on their mortgage by refinancing. Others offer to pay off the mortgage and take possession of the house until the original owners can buy it back. But those promises are a house of cards.

The scammers convince the desperate homeowners to sign documents that look like refinancing applications

or lease-to-buy agreements. But the forms actually grant the crooks title to the house. (The criminals may also forge deeds to seize the title.) The scammers, who now own the property, sell it and pocket the original homeowners' equity.

Rescue fraud is on the rise. In Minnesota, Assistant Attorney General Prentiss Cox says about one-fourth of the state's 2,500 foreclosed households every year are victimized by rescue scammers. Some offer seminars in the technique—often pitched as get-rich-quick schemes, or no-money-down

investment strategies. Two Nevada seminars didn't mince words, advertising "everything you need to know to rip off homeowners."

A Deal You Can Refuse Charlotte Hutchens, a Kansas City, Missouri, widow, and her daughter, Jamie, wanted to earn extra income to supplement Charlotte's Social Security payments and Jamie's modest salary as an airport bus driver. A friend introduced them to Jim Coleman, a CPA, who seemed eminently respectable: He handled accounting for the public school system and a church ministered by his friend, Kansas City's ex-mayor.

According to a federal indictment, Coleman told the women they could make money investing in low-income, government-subsidized Section 8 properties. For a small fee, he would manage and maintain the properties; the rent checks would cover the

monthly mortgage payments plus a small profit. Rent was dependable, he said, because the government provided the approved tenants and covered most of the rent.

Without advice of counsel (Missouri law doesn't require it), Charlotte and Jamie bought 11 properties—all with no money down—totaling over \$770,000 in loans. Their mortgage payments at their peak were about \$10,000 a month.

But the properties soon began failing inspections, which meant they could no longer be rented to Section 8 recipients. For a while, Coleman convinced the women that the city's nit-picking inspectors were to blame.

Then the Hutchenses got a call from FBI Agent Julia Jensen, who was investigating a mortgage-fraud ring in Kansas City. Jensen explained that the

Hutchenses had apparently bought the properties at inflated prices that were based on fraudulent appraisals. She showed the women their mortgage applications. They were shocked to see documents that blatantly misrepresented their finances. Charlotte recalled signing mortgage papers with a number of blanks; according to the indictment, Coleman and his accomplice had falsified those documents, as well as W-2 forms, and profited to the tune of \$178,000.

One by one, the homes went into foreclosure. "I can't even begin to describe the emotions, the stress," says Jamie. "The mortgage companies were calling us six or eight times a day trying to collect."

Most of the properties were sold on the courthouse steps for much less than the value of the mortgages.

AVOID BEING SCAMMED

When buying or selling

Know the area's average home prices. Don't just read the listings. Drive around; look at properties; attend open houses.

Hire a licensed home inspector. Avoid anyone affiliated with your Realtor or mortgage broker. Go to nahi.org (National Association of Home Inspectors) for leads.

Compare lenders' mortgage costs. Check with local banks and websites

like bankrate.com.

Review the ownership history. If a home's been bought and sold frequently in the last few years, be suspicious. Even if it hasn't been targeted by scammers, there might be something wrong with it.

Steer clear of mortgage brokers or Realtors who try to persuade you to fudge your loan application. And be wary of unsolicited contacts and high-pressure sales tactics.

At the closing

Don't sign a blank document, or one with blank spaces. If something doesn't apply, it should be marked "N/A."

Make sure the name on your paperwork matches the name on your ID.

Don't sign a document until you've read and understood it.

Never sign away the deed to your property without consulting a lawyer.

Once victims, Ann Fulmer (left) and Alicia Sheppard (below) helped arrest more than 150 mortgage-fraud crooks.



As a result, the mortgage companies may file suit against the women to recoup the difference.

The pair sued Coleman in civil court and, on the advice of an attorney, reached an out-of-court settlement for \$25,000; Coleman pays them \$500 a month.

Though indicted in criminal court in April 2006, Coleman denies any culpability. Says Charlotte, “My husband worked forty years to save for retirement, and now I’m on the verge of bankruptcy. It makes me angry that I let myself be duped.”

Your Neighborhood Goes Bust

Cathy Makley and her family were delighted with a new home they bought in 2003 in the Wolf Creek development, a middle-class suburb near Atlanta. But Makley soon noticed that something strange was happening. For-sale signs came and went, but the homes remained vacant or occupied by a series of unfriendly transients.



Fed up, Makley and her neighbors organized a homeowners’ meeting in May 2004. The night before, she received an anonymous phone call; the caller explained mortgage fraudsters had targeted Wolf Creek. “I didn’t know what mortgage fraud was,” she says. “But as the caller explained it to me, I started to feel nauseated.”

Makley checked the sale prices of the 30 or so homes in question. Each had sold for far more than her own—in some cases as much as \$100,000 more. “I started to understand why our property tax valuations had shot up even as our neighborhood had deteriorated,” she says.

The scam was simple: Home sellers would get a visit from a “real estate broker.” He’d tell them he had a buyer ready to pay more than their asking price, on the condition that they return the extra money at the closing.

The inflated sales prices pumped up the “comps” throughout Wolf Creek. This created a snowball effect that allowed scammers to borrow more than \$300,000 on houses worth little more than \$200,000. The crooks fled with the profits, and the bank foreclosed on the abandoned properties.

FIGHTING BACK

Victims usually have little legal recourse. States have limited resources to prosecute complicated, white-collar crime that is hard to prove. Many cases are too small for the FBI but too intricate and costly to be worth a private lawyer’s time. “One of the worst things as a law enforcement official,” says Jensen of the FBI, “is to sit in people’s homes and see that they’re definitely the victims of fraud and tell them that the odds of the bad guy being held accountable are slim.”

Cathy Makley was shocked by law enforcement’s ho-hum response to the fraud that was ruining her neighborhood. So she and two neighbors investigated the scam on their own. Their search led to attorney Ann Ful-

mer and her neighbor Alicia Shepard, former mortgage-fraud victims and co-founders of GREFPAC, the Georgia Real Estate Fraud Prevention & Awareness Coalition (grefpac.org). They have helped arrest more than 150 mortgage-fraud perpetrators.

Fulmer worked with Makley to compile evidence against the Wolf Creek con artists. In June 2005, state and local authorities stormed 14 houses in Wolf Creek and arrested two men, Anthony Flood and Hardy Chukwu, on racketeering charges. Both deny any guilt, but indictments are pending.

The grass-roots antifraud effort is gaining momentum, notching victories around the country and persuading lawmakers and law-enforcement agencies to join the fight. GREFPAC led the battle for Georgia’s anti-mortgage-fraud law. With that law’s passage in May 2005, the state became the first to make any misrepresentation on a mortgage application a prosecutable crime. Congress is considering a federal anti-mortgage-fraud measure.

Advocates applaud those steps, but say much more needs to be done. “And it’s going to take everybody,” says Fulmer, “from lenders to law enforcement to consumers, doing everything they can to attack this problem. There’s no magic bullet, but we’re moving in the right direction.”

Additional reporting by NATE HARDCASTLE

AND WHO DID YOU SAY YOU WERE?

The great thing about family life is that it introduces you to people you would otherwise never meet.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS in *The Guardian*



Stray From the HEART

Jordie the cat came into our lives
at just the right time | BY ALANNA NASH

THERE ARE MOMENTS IN LIFE when you realize, without a doubt, that someone, somewhere, has a master plan. I was reminded of that recently by Jordie, a cat, formerly my cat.

In November 2004, while headed with a friend to Nashville, I pulled off I-65 to get a Coke in the tiny town of Munfordville, Kentucky. My friend, who has an eye for collectibles, spotted an old general store on the way back to the freeway. She hopped out,

but before going in the shop, crouched down to look at something. Next thing you know, she was standing by my driver's-side open window and had dropped a squirming blur of fur onto my lap.

It was a kitten, solid white, with gray-black eyes and a pink nose. She was irresistible, but she wasn't mine. I opened the car door. "Okay, out," I said in a loud voice. She didn't budge. "Shoo!" I said, louder. No deal. Finally,

I picked her up and put her on the ground, at which point she meandered under my car and sat just behind the left rear tire.

I scooped her up and took her into the store, where I figured she belonged. I put her down and, in a flash, realized I'd made a terrible mistake. The kitten was not the shop cat, but a big, angry tom was, and it immediately cornered the intruder with high-pitched wails of territorial rank. Suddenly the tom was on top of the newcomer, and the two rolled around

Frankenstein. Then it hit me. I didn't really want a cat. I travel too much. All my furniture is leather. I didn't want hair all over my clothes. But my mother, who is getting along in years, could certainly use a pet. Her beloved cat of 16 years had died the previous Christmas. She grieved so on the day he was laid in the frozen earth that I feared my father and I would have to bury them together.

To my surprise, Mom refused my offer to replace him. "I don't want the heartache of losing another one."

It was too late when it hit me. I didn't really want a cat.

in a brutal assault. When it was over, hunks of white fur lay on the floor, and the kitten, mewing pitifully, was ripped from the top of her head to her tail. Her wounds lay open in jagged rows.

"Oh, my God," I said. "We've got to find a vet."

At the Riverside Animal Clinic down the road, country doctor Donald Green shook his head upon examining the critter we'd brought to him in a cardboard box. "He pretty much skinned it alive," he said, and my heart sank. Would she live? I asked, to which Dr. Green replied, Yes, with surgery to close up those wounds. But, he added, "*she* is all boy."

A boy!

When I picked up my two-month-old kitten later that week, I could hardly believe how pathetic he looked, shaved and stitched up like a feline

And so Jordie, named after the shiny white Jordan Almonds I used to find in my Easter basket as a child, came to live with me. He got stronger, his fur grew back in, and we began an uneasy alliance. Though he would fetch a rubber ball—not just roll it with his paw, but actually bring it back to me like a dog—he easily grew bored in my condo. He'd stand at the door and cry. He clawed the furniture, broke a lamp.

That summer, needing to take an extended trip, I asked my parents if I could leave Jordie with them. My father, an 88-year-old property appraiser who'd been suffering from colon cancer, was all for it, but Mom hesitated. "Okay, then," she finally said, more than a little annoyed. "Bring him on."

When I returned, I was saddened to see that my hard-working dad had lost some strength in his legs, the first

tangible symptom of the cancer, which had spread to his bones. He was now walking with a cane, sometimes two. I cringed when I watched him climb the stairs and saw Jordie nip at his ankles with every step. “Pop,” I cried, “he’s going to trip you!”

“No, he’s not,” my father said, a laugh in his voice. “We’ve got our little routine worked out. He’s fine.” I said I’d take Jordie back that evening, but Pop’s face grew stern. “Your mother needs him,” he said. “He’s good company for her. And she believes he’s the smartest cat that ever lived.” His eyes twinkled the way they hadn’t since he learned about the cancer. He looked over at Jordie. “He’s a little prize, I think.”

So Jordie changed addresses that very night. The next evening, I stopped by and found him lying on the kitchen table next to Pop’s cane. My father stroked the top of his head with his index finger, then moved him to his lap, where Jordie seemed as content as a clam. “Look at his eyelashes,” Pop said, “how long they are.”

No matter how sick my father was, he would always cuddle Jordie if he wanted to be held. But who was comforting whom?

I WAS WITH POP at the hospital the night he died in July 2005, but I waited until dawn to drive to my parents’ house to tell Mom. She crumpled in my arms, then went to the kitchen. “Jordie,” I heard her say through wrenching sobs, “Papa’s never coming home again.”

My parents, both Tennesseans, had

been married for nearly 60 years. In the weeks after my father’s passing, my mother sank into an inevitable depression, refusing offers of lunch and conversation. These days, she still doesn’t socialize much, but she is coming around, largely because of Jordie. He gets her up and dressed early, and she goes outside to look for him when he stays out too late. The neighbors see her and come over to talk. And she never misses taking him for his vet appointments, and delights in buying him gourmet cat food.

Nearly two years old now, Jordie has grown into a handsome young adult. His eyes have changed color to peridot green, and his snowy coat, which shows no signs of his early trauma, gives him a sleek, masculine look.

Mom dotes on Jordie’s every move and brags about his newest trick. When he’s outside and wants to come in, she says, he stands on a bench, up on his hind legs, and pecks on the kitchen window with one paw. “He’s like a little person,” she insists. “He jumps up on my lap and kisses me, and says ‘Mama’ just plain as day.” Jordie sleeps on the footstool near her bed, and Mom says she doesn’t know what she’d do without him.

Just as humans come into your life for a reason, animals often do the same. Jordie arrived as an ambassador, not for me, but for my parents. He gave my father joy in his last days, and he continues to offer emotional comfort to my mother. Sometimes the least expected gifts count most among our blessings. ■



SECRETS AND LIES

To claim his inheritance, he'd have
to reveal his true identity

BY LAWRENCE OTIS GRAHAM

ADAPTED FROM "THE SENATOR AND THE SOCIALITE"

W"MY GRANDFATHER was no darkie!" said the light-complexioned T. John McKee from his hospital bed as he recuperated from a kidney ailment.

It was spring 1948, and Theophilus John McKee, 67, felt desperate. He'd practiced law on Wall Street for 40 years. He'd sent his two sons to Yale and Trinity College. His best friends were influential people of the day—lawyers, judges. But the men in trench coats kept grilling him. "Are you a Negro?" asked one of them.

McKee glanced out the second-floor window of Lenox Hill Hospital in Manhattan. Hadn't he lived an up-

standing life? Hadn't he endured enough pain when, years ago, he made one of the most difficult decisions a man might ever have to make?

Again: "Are you a Negro?"

McKee blurted out, "I will not deny or affirm that." But he was thinking, How can I answer honestly?

For 45 years McKee had, in fact, been passing as a white man.

ON THE SURFACE it was easy, with his olive skin tone and the black hair he kept short and straightened with a hot comb. What was harder was the heartache. In 1902, when he was 22

years old, he'd had to tell his closest black friend from Exeter, Roscoe Bruce, son of a U.S. Senator, that he could no longer associate with him. The boys had been best friends for five years, sharing everything, even the humiliation of not being able to live in the same dorms as white kids.

But fate had forced his hand, he felt. In April 1902, McKee—known then as Theophilus John Syphax, or Sie to his friends—lost his wealthy maternal grandfather. He learned he'd inherited almost nothing. In an America just four decades past the Civil War—a country where discrimination was still sanctioned—he knew he'd go no further than elevator operator or train porter, even with his college education. He would be barred from shops, theaters, restaurants.

So he'd decided to live as white.

Now, lying in the hospital in 1948, he knew that if he admitted his real background, he'd lose everything. But ah, the complications! Even at age 67, McKee was afraid of being outed by black relatives who'd been insulted by his life choice. And for all his stature, McKee wasn't wealthy. Here's why this mattered: McKee stood a chance of inheriting the remainder of his grandfather's million-dollar estate.

MCKEE'S PARENTS, Douglas Syphax and Abbie McKee Syphax, were from well-known black families that were respected by people of both races.

Douglas had been one of the few black Civil War sergeants, a member of an illustrious Virginia clan who had owned acres of land in Arlington (later donated to the National Cemetery). And Abbie was the daughter of Col. John McKee, a black Civil War hero and one of America's first black millionaires. He'd made his fortune in real estate and in catering businesses in the 1870s and 1880s.

THE COLONEL had drawn up a will for an estate worth approximately \$1 million in 1902. At least half was cash; the rest was in real estate. When he died in April of that year, \$200,000-plus was earmarked for various relatives, with Syphax receiving only a pittance. Deciding to pass for white, Syphax had joined Trinity College's all-white Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity. He began dating white girls. He asked his family (who knew of his decision) to stop visiting him. A talented athlete in football, baseball, basketball and track, Syphax, as white, was embraced by his teammates.

After graduation, he entered Berkeley Divinity School in Middletown, Connecticut. But when a minister recognized him as one of the black Syphaxes from Philadelphia, he withdrew. In June 1904, Syphax legally changed his name. As the white John McKee, he applied to Columbia University's law school, starting in the fall of 1905. For the next 40 years, only oc-



Who was this mystery man? At Phillips Exeter Academy, 17-year-old John McKee (a.k.a. T. John Syphax) sits in the front row (circled), with fellow football players.

asionally did he meet with one of his four brothers in out-of-the-way spots.

After law school, McKee began working as a commercial attorney on Wall Street. He married Anna Lois Dixon, a white woman from upstate New York. They settled in New York City and had two sons—T. John McKee, Jr., and Douglas Dixon McKee, in 1910 and 1911. McKee joined the Bensonhurst Yacht Club, the Kings County Tennis Club and became men's league president at the Church of St. Mark.

Then his marriage began falling apart. His wife, knowing nothing of his real background, noticed that he was unusually fastidious about grooming his hair. And after their second son was born, he began visiting a new client up in Harlem, a place where few whites traveled then. (In actuality, McKee was meeting one of his brothers.) When the couple separated,

McKee stayed in Manhattan, while Anna and the two boys moved to her hometown.

When McKee's mother, Abbie Syphax, passed away and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery in 1923—a rare honor for a black then—McKee avoided the funeral. He also avoided the funerals of his brothers, who all predeceased him. He carefully steered clear of his black cousin in Philadelphia who founded the city's first black hospital, and his prominent relatives in Washington and Virginia who later gave land to the government when President Franklin Roosevelt wanted to expand Arlington Cemetery. McKee diligently clung to the white upper-middle-class life he'd created.

Eventually McKee remarried, again to a white woman, Aimee Bennett. She, too, knew nothing of his background. By now McKee lived in an

apartment building on Manhattan's East Side. When his sons finished college they returned to upstate New York to be near their mother.

In 1946, McKee's first cousin, Dr. Henry McKee Minton, passed away. That meant McKee was now the last surviving grandchild of the Syphax-McKee dynasty from Philadelphia.

Then came the shocker. A few months before he was hospitalized, McKee learned that his grandfather's million-dollar estate had not been fully distributed. The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Philadelphia ran an ad stating that there was a sum of more than \$800,000 available (nearly \$6.3 million today). That money would go to charity unless there was a surviving grandchild of "the great Negro Civil War hero" Col. John McKee.

For weeks McKee struggled. Should he stay silent and turn his back on his inheritance? Or should he come forward? Doing that, of course, would mean admitting he'd been living a lie.

Finally, McKee decided. Few people knew the emotional burdens he'd been carrying for so long. His first wife had left him. His sons seemed uncomfortable around him. His only remaining connection with them was the money he sent. Now money—and the truth—was dangling over him.

"SO ARE YOU, in fact, a Negro?" asked the investigator from the Orphans' Court of Philadelphia as he stood in McKee's hospital room. The story soon broke. A successful white Wall Street lawyer with prestigious creden-

tials was admitting he was, in fact, the black child of black parents. It was a major society news item in 1948.

McKee's wife, Aimee, was so devastated she refused to visit him in the hospital. McKee's sons also stayed away. His law partners and neighbors told the newspapers they had no idea he'd been passing as white.

BUT THE COURT and the will's executor, the Philadelphia archbishop, weren't satisfied with McKee's simple admission of heritage. They wanted proof. "People will say a lot when they want that much money," argued one of McKee's black relatives. From his hospital bed, McKee kept up the fight for his inheritance. He called on the few black relatives he could remember. They refused him.

Finally, one of his mother's cousins, Camille Johnson of Philadelphia, came forward. She acknowledged that, yes, she remembered him when he was a black student in Philadelphia and at Exeter. McKee also convinced a white Trinity classmate to support his statement that he'd changed his name from Syphax to McKee after leaving Trinity. The court decree in support of the name change was also submitted.

The court appointed a commission, which interviewed witnesses who knew both the "black Syphax" and the "white McKee." It was John Syphax-McKee's longtime white friend Edgar Dibble (a fraternity brother), and his black cousin Camille Johnson, who helped prove kinship. At the hearing, Johnson said that McKee had stopped

communicating with her and with another cousin, Henry McKee Minton, while at Trinity. Dibble admitted he and others were uncertain of McKee's race as a college freshman, but assumed he was white.

As reported on March 25, 1948, in the *New York Post*, the commission told McKee it "established beyond a shadow of a doubt" that although he had been accepted as a white man for 45 years, he was indeed the Negro grandson of the Negro Civil War veteran Col. John McKee.

SYPHAX-MCKEE RELATIVES in Philadelphia and Washington registered their objections and their beliefs that they were more deserving of the fortune. At least a dozen schools and charities asked to share in the estate. McKee hoped it would be only a few months before he'd finally claim his grandfather's wealth, so he made no attempt to reach out to anyone. Still recovering from his kidney ailment, he quietly celebrated his victory.

Then came the final twist. As the court approached resolution of the

\$800,000 estate, McKee's health took a turn for the worse. That summer, McKee learned he would likely not live very long. On August 4, 1948, he died of heart failure.

There was no funeral. McKee was cremated.

For the next several years, black relatives battled with McKee's white wife and two white sons. Ultimately, the money was awarded to the Catholic Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Since 1956, the fortune has been used to grant college and vocational scholarships to Philadelphia-area boys of all races who have no living father. In April 2006, the program gave out its scholarship for the 50th year. Its name? The John McKee Scholarship Fund.

It's not named for the John McKee who lived as a white man for 45 years. Instead, the fund is named in honor of his grandfather, the John McKee who was a black Civil War hero.



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DON'T WORRY, I'M IN CONTROL

Before he left on a business trip, my brother-in-law Lex took his young son Cameron aside.

"Cam," he said, "I'm trusting you to take care of the family. You'll be the man of the house."

Comprehending the gravity of the situation, Cameron said, "In that case, I'm going to need the remote." **AMY CANTERBERRY**



IF A GOLFER gets hurt and can't play, is his replacement called a designated driver? **GREGG SIEGEL**

Quack Me Up

Funny

A rabbit and a duck went out to dinner. Who paid? The duck—he had the bill.

Funnier

A duck walks into a bar. “We don’t serve ducks, here,” says the bartender. “That’s okay. I just want a drink.”

Funniest

What’s the difference between a duck with one wing and a duck with two wings? Why, that’s a difference of a pinion.

Why is Cinderella bad at sports?

Because she has a pumpkin for a coach, and she runs away from the ball.

Submitted by **SEAN MCELWEE**

LOST IN the desert for three days, a man suddenly hears, “Mush!”

Looking up, he sees what he thinks is a mirage: an Eskimo on a sled, driving a team of huskies. To his surprise, the sled comes to a stop

at his feet seconds later.

“I don’t know why you’re here, but thank goodness,” the man says. “I’ve been lost for days.”

Panting, the Eskimo replies, “You think *you’re* lost?”

Submitted by **ROBERT LUTZ**

I USED TO DRIVE AN ECLIPSE. I think it was a nice car, but I couldn’t look directly at it.

BUZZ NUTLEY

THE gunslinger swaggered into the saloon. He looked to his left. "Everybody on that side of the room is a lily-livered, yellow-bellied coward," he shouted.

He looked to his right. "Everybody on this side is a flabby, dimwitted saddle tramp." No one dared challenge him.

Satisfied, he was ordering his drink at the bar when he heard the sound of hurried footsteps.

"Where do you think you're going?" he yelled at the little guy who'd stopped in his tracks.

"Sorry," the man said. "I was on the wrong side of the room."

Submitted by **GEORGE MORRIS**

THE KOREAN scientist who admitted to faking his cloning-research results is now saying that it wasn't his fault. He blames his evil twin.

JAY LENO on
The Tonight Show (NBC)

Looking for more laughs? XM Satellite Radio's Laugh USA channel features clean comedy 24/7—all screened for family listening. Wanna hear? Tune in to xmradio.com.

Alabama state troopers were closing in on a speeding car when it crossed into Georgia. Suddenly the officer behind the wheel slowed to a stop.

"What are you doing?" his partner asked. "We almost had him!"

"He just crossed over into the Eastern Standard Time zone," he said. "Now he's a full hour ahead of us."

Submitted by **SCOTTIE BARRON**

"A HAMBURGER AND FRIES," a man orders.

"Me too," says the ostrich sitting beside him.

"That's \$9.40," the waitress says. The man reaches into his pocket and hands her the exact change.

They return the next day. Both order a steak and potato, and again the man pays with exact change.

"How do you do that?" the waitress asks.

"A genie granted me two wishes," explains the man. "My first was that I'd always have the right amount of money to pay for anything."

"Brilliant! But what's with the ostrich?"

"My second wish was for an exotic chick with long legs who agrees with everything I say."

Submitted by **EDWARD M. JEAN**

Finish This Joke

A woman is in an upscale pet-supply store, searching for the perfect red sweater for her dog.

"Why don't you bring him in so you can get the right fit?" the clerk suggests.

"I can't do that!" the woman says ...

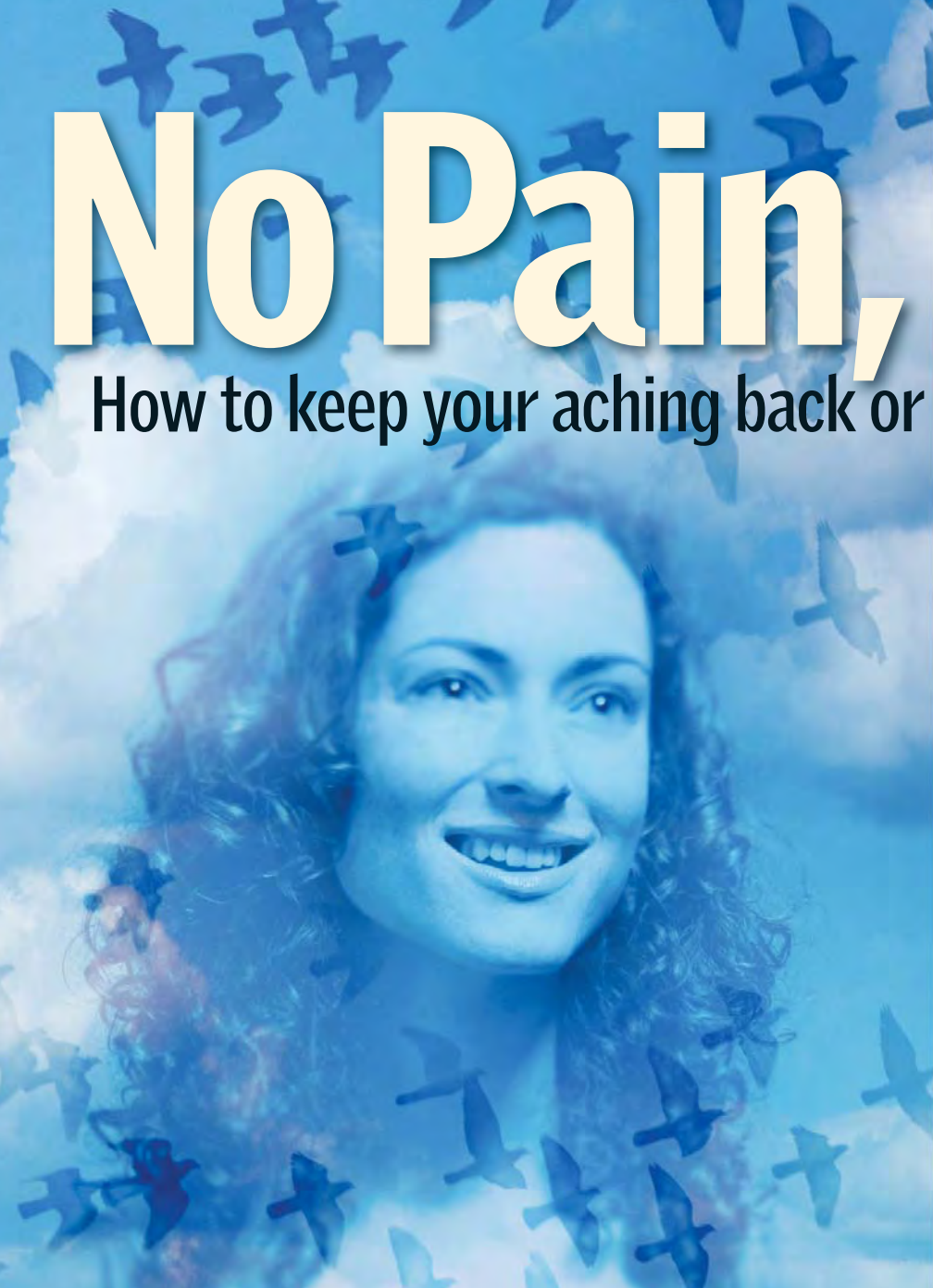
Don't leave us hanging—what did she say?

E-mail your funniest original punch line to us at comedy@rd.com, subject: July, and if it's the best (and the first of its kind), you'll win fame and riches. Well, not really, but you'll get a cool \$100.

So what did the cop have to say to his stomach? May's winning punch line is from A.J. Giordano of Riverview, Florida: Nothing. He's always been one to *listen* to his gut.

No Pain,

How to keep your aching back or



No Pills

trick knee from ruining your life

ADAPTED FROM "MAYO CLINIC ON CHRONIC PAIN," SECOND EDITION

WHEN Darcie Voigt was 6 years old, a lawn mower accident took all the toes on her left foot, along with the fatty cushion on the bottom of the forefoot, which normally acts as a shock absorber. The young girl from Mantorville, Minnesota, learned to walk again—but pain was a constant presence in her life.

By her early 20s, Voigt noted that the damaged nerves in her foot hurt all the time, even while she slept. Injections of anesthetics and corticosteroids numbed the pain temporarily, so she tried other medications, including opioids, but she wasn't satisfied with the effects. "The drugs brought the pain down from the over-the-top, pulling-your-hair-out level, but they made me feel cloudy, and I was wor-

ried about becoming dependent on them." So in January 2000, when she was 23, doctors tried a different type of injection, meant to destroy the nerves that caused her discomfort. But it backfired. She hurt worse than ever.

Millions of Americans live with chronic pain. And while some are helped with medication and other treatments, many continue to suffer.

Doctors told Voigt that her pain wouldn't go away and she must learn how to control it. "I was shocked, and very angry. I didn't understand why they couldn't fix a simple pain from an amputation." Later that year, she signed up for a pain rehabilitation program at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. "Right away they said they weren't going to give me a drug to make it go away, but they would teach me how to manage the chronic pain."

And they did. She learned to con-

trol her pain by using stress reduction, time management and biofeedback. She identified traits, such as her perfectionism, that made her condition more difficult to handle.

She learned the importance of a healthy diet for increasing energy, and she began using biofeedback and breathing exercises to reduce stress. It's

had a huge effect: "I used to clench my jaw a lot, and I could feel the tension throughout my body. Now I close my eyes, concentrate on relaxing my muscles, and breathe in and out deeply." Voigt does this often, at least four to six times an hour, every day.

Before, Voigt rated her pain as a 10 on a 1-10 scale. These days, it's a 4. The



Today, Darcie Voigt has her pain under control.

only drug she takes is Tylenol. "I realized that the pain wasn't going to go away, so I've figured out what I need to do to make my life as full as I can. It's about listening to how my body reacts and slowing myself down." Now 29 years old, she's married and an avid rodeo competitor.

Changing her reactions to stress helped Voigt conquer her pain. It could work for you too. Here, more natural ways you can get some much-needed relief.

A Sharp Approach

Acupuncture is one of the most studied unconventional medical practices, and it's gaining acceptance in Western medicine for treatment of

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Can Food Ease the Ache?

Milk and cookies, chicken noodle soup, mashed potatoes with gravy—they're called comfort foods because they make you feel better, at least emotionally. But can food really ease pain? Researchers are chewing on the subject, and their findings may someday make for a tasty prescription. "We're not at the point where you're going to go into a physician's office and be prescribed tofu for your pain," says Jill Tall, PhD, a professor at Youngstown State University in Ohio, who has studied

how food helps relieve discomfort. "But I do believe that as an adjunct to traditional therapies, there are some possibilities." Some promising edible antidotes:

Cherries Anthocyanins, which give tart cherries their deep red color, have anti-inflammatory properties similar to those in aspirin, says Muraleedharan Nair, PhD, a food-safety researcher at Michigan State University. The benefit hasn't yet been studied in humans, so we don't know the optimal doses, but barring any health problems, such as diabetes or

some conditions. Researchers at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) say there is evidence the practice helps relieve postoperative dental pain and it's also useful in treating nausea after surgery and chemotherapy. In addition, acupuncture may help with stroke rehabilitation, headache, addiction, menstrual cramps, tennis elbow, myofascial pain, osteoarthritis, low-back pain, carpal tunnel syndrome and asthma.

Move a Muscle

Exercise is key when it comes to easing pain. Why? It prompts your body to release endorphins, which block pain signals from reaching your brain. These feel-good chemicals also help alleviate depression and anxiety, both of which make chronic pain more difficult to control. Regular exercise promotes weight loss, which in turn can relieve pain by reducing stress on your joints. Similarly, as you improve

flexibility, you'll find that joints extending through their full range of motion are less likely to be plagued with aches and pains. Plus, you'll have more energy, sleep better and decrease your risk of high blood pressure, diabetes and stroke.

High-Tech Relaxation

During a biofeedback session, a therapist applies electrodes and other sensors to various parts of your body. The sensors are hooked up to devices that monitor and give you feedback on body functions, including muscle tension, brain-wave activity, respiration, heart rate, blood pressure and temperature. Once the electrodes are in place, the therapist uses relaxation techniques to calm you, reducing muscle tension and slowing your heart rate and breathing. You then learn how to produce these changes yourself, outside the clinical setting. The goal? To help you enter a relaxed state

acid indigestion, why not pick a few berries this summer? (Raspberries and, to a lesser extent, strawberries also contain pain-fighting anthocyanins.)

Soy It may help relieve some osteoarthritis pain. In a study of 135 men and women, those who took 40 grams of soy protein a day for three months improved their range of motion and reported fewer aches. Men saw the most benefit. It's still not clear exactly how soy helps, but the isoflavones are thought to have anti-inflammatory effects, says Srinivasa N. Raja, MD, a pain-management specialist at Johns Hopkins University School of

Medicine. **Caveat:** You'd have to eat a ridiculous amount of edamame to reach 40 grams a day, so try adding soy protein powder to shakes.

Sugar The sweet stuff can reduce the perception of pain, especially in children. Studies show when we consume sugar—sucrose, better known as table sugar, in particular—we hurt less. It seems to enhance our body's natural pain-relief system. But we all know the unhealthy effects of too much sugar, including an expanding waistline, so make sure you don't overindulge with this tasty sweetener.

PATRICIA CURTIS

in which you can better cope with pain. It seems to be most effective for tension headaches, migraines and pain related to muscle tension.

A Better Back

Chiropractic care is one of the most common complementary therapies in this country. Today, chiropractors often work with medical doctors as part of the treatment team. Though they can't prescribe drugs or perform surgery, they may use some standard medical procedures. And their services are increasingly being covered by insurance. Studies indicate that spinal manipulation can effectively treat uncomplicated low-back pain, especially if the pain has been present for less than a month. Some practitioners say chiropractic manipulation can treat disease other than musculoskeletal problems; however, more research is needed to support this.

Retrain Your Brain

It's been around forever, but recently hypnosis has seen a resurgence among physicians, psychologists and other mental-health professionals. We don't know exactly how it works, but experts believe hypnosis alters your brain-wave patterns in much the same way other relaxation techniques do. A review of studies supported the value of hypnosis for treating cancer pain and nausea, and NIH researchers agree that hypnosis can help with other conditions—such as irritable bowel syndrome and tension headaches—that can lead to pain.

Lessen the Stress

As Voigt learned, reducing stress, however you do it, can make a huge difference in relieving physical discomfort. Try massage, meditation, yoga or whatever works for you. Deep

Before You Try It ...

These approaches appear to reduce pain safely. But many alternative practices haven't been adequately studied. What to consider before trying any potential pain relievers:

Do your research To keep up with the latest treatments online, stick to websites of reputable medical centers, national organizations, universities or government agencies.

Ask for credentials

Look to professional associations, such as the American Academy of Medical Acupuncture, for the names of licensed practitioners in your area.

Consider the cost Many alternative approaches aren't covered by insurance. Find out exactly how much treatment will cost before you start.

Open your mind Steer a

middle course between uncritical acceptance of alternative approaches and outright rejection. Be open to treatments, but evaluate them carefully.

Mix it up Use alternative treatments to relieve some symptoms, but don't give up on conventional medicine. And don't forget to tell your doctor about all the treatments you get.

MAYO CLINIC

breathing from your diaphragm, as opposed to your chest, is a do-anywhere de-stressor. Try to do it for 20 minutes every day. To practice, lie down or sit comfortably with your feet flat on the floor. Rest one hand on your abdomen, one on your chest. Inhale through your nose while pushing your abdomen out. Slowly exhale through your nose while gently relaxing your abdomen. (If you can't breathe through your nose, do it through your mouth.) Make each breath a wavelike motion. And if your mind wanders, bring your attention back to relaxation.

The Sex Solution

When pain invades your life, you can still have a healthy sexual relationship. It begins with communication, so talk to your partner about how you

Virtual Relief

It's easy to tune out the rest of the world when you're playing a video game. Now researchers are discovering that entering such an intense play zone is an effective way to cope with pain.

In a study at Wheeling Jesuit University in West Virginia, 27 people played video games for ten minutes, each keeping one hand and forearm in a container of freezing water. Those playing sports and fighting games kept their hands submerged for a minute and a half longer than those playing puzzle and arcade games.

How does it help? It's all about distraction, says study author Bryan Raudenbush, PhD, a professor of psychology. "The games distract you from the pain. Your brain focuses more attention on the video game, and less on the pain." And sports and fighting games are especially beneficial, since they require a greater level of concentration than slower-paced challenges. CYNTHIA DERMODY

feel and what you need. Be creative, and willing to make changes (buy a new mattress or bed if pain has forced you to sleep apart, and explore new ways to express your sexuality).

rd.com Do people who walk on hot coals really feel no pain? Find out at rd.com/nopills.

PASS THE NO-DOZ

Recently, our pastor fell asleep at the wheel and awoke just as he sideswiped a guardrail. When he got home, his wife peppered him with questions, trying to figure out what had happened.

"Were you sleepy when you started to drive?" she asked.


"No," he answered.

"Then how did you fall asleep?"

"I'm not sure," he said. "There I was, going over my sermon ..."



MARGARET MCGLAUN

A photograph of two men, Ben and John Silverwood, standing on a rocky coastline at sunset. The man on the right, John, is wearing a brown ribbed sweater, khaki shorts, and a prosthetic bionic leg. He is smiling and has his arm around the shoulder of the man on the left, Ben. Ben is wearing a green zip-up jacket and khaki shorts. Both are wearing sandals. John is holding a walking stick. The background shows the ocean with waves and a sunset sky with clouds.

Ben and John
Silverwood, using
his new bionic leg, hike
near their Encinitas,
California, home.

BONUS READ

A family's dream trip
turns into **a nightmare**

SHIP WRECKED

BY KENNETH MILLER

PHOTOGRAPHED BY TIM TADDER

n French Polynesia, winter runs from May through October; the days are balmy, but night falls as abruptly as a trap. Just before 7 p.m. on June 25, 2005, a sailing vessel sliced through the westernmost waters of the archipelago, beneath a black and moonless sky. The *Emerald Jane* had left Raiatea the day before; she was headed for Tonga, 1,400 nautical miles away, guided by autopilot. The 55-foot catamaran was sleek and elegant, with five cabins tucked into twin hulls and a spacious living area suspended in between. In the cockpit, 16-year-old Ben Silverwood was finishing his watch. In the salon, his younger siblings—Amelia, 14, Jack, 9, and Camille, 5—had just popped *Drop Dead Gorgeous* into the DVD player. The children’s parents, John, 53, and Jean, 46, lounged in their stateroom, discussing the next day’s travel plans.

Then they heard it: an insistent scraping, like fingernails along the bottom of a cardboard box. The *Emerald Jane* had carried the family halfway around the world, on a journey that John, a San Diego real estate developer, had dreamed of for two decades. The Silverwoods were well-versed in their craft’s vocabulary of creaks, pings and groans. But this was something different. It was the sound of disaster.

John and Jean were already sprinting up the three steps to the cockpit when Ben cried, “Reef!” An instant later, the hulls rammed into the coral. As water poured through a gash in the starboard bow, house-size waves began crashing down on the pinioned boat. John jammed the engines into reverse, to no avail. He ran to the foredeck, where Ben was trying to loosen the Genoa sail, which was driving the craft farther onto the reef. Ben threw his father a knife so John could slash through the canvas. At that moment, a wave slammed into the *Emerald Jane*’s 14-foot dinghy, ripping it from its stainless-steel hooks and sweeping it away.

The family had practiced emergency procedures, but the emergency they’d imagined was a storm; running aground had seemed unthinkable. Now the unthinkable was upon them.

In the salon, Camille and Jack were sobbing. As their older sister strove to comfort them, Jack kept screaming, “I don’t want to die!” Jean tried the satellite phone but couldn’t get a signal; her hands were shaking so badly that she dropped it on the flooded floor. John grabbed the main radio. “Mayday, Mayday, Mayday,” he shouted. “This is the *Emerald Jane*. We are sinking.” Ben called out more Maydays over the shorter-range VHF rig.



The *Emerald Jane* took the family to French Polynesia in August 2004. At left, Jean takes the wheel as the kids dine in the cockpit.

Finally, John threw the switch on the EPIRB (emergency position-indicating radio beacon)—a device resembling a milk-shake cup, with an antenna for a straw, which is designed to alert emergency crews by bouncing a radio beam off a satellite. The beacon can be picked up only by U.S. facilities, however, and none was near enough to help. The closest search-and-rescue team operated from a French naval base in Papeete, Tahiti, 310 miles away. They weren't responding.

John and Ben raced back to the foredeck and pulled the cord on the inflatable life raft. Then they faced a dilemma: If they threw the raft over the side, it might be shredded by the sharp coral. Instead, they decided to lash it to the deck and wait until they had no other option. Before they finished, the lights shorted out. Ben took a couple of glow sticks that he'd snatched from the supply cabinet, and they went to check on the family. The salon was knee-deep in water. As Jean and Amelia carried the younger children out to the cockpit, John and Ben headed back toward the raft.

By then, both bows were breaking off, and as John reached the foredeck,

the 79-foot mast gave way. Suddenly, he was lying on his back beneath more than a ton of aluminum. A thunderbolt of pain shot up his left leg. When he struggled to a sitting position and peered over the mast, he saw that a metal fitting called a spreader had chopped through his shin like a cleaver; his lower leg was dangling by a tendon. It's gone, he thought, and lay back down. He was pinned to the deck of a disintegrating boat. He could not help his family. If he didn't drown first, he knew, his wound would surely kill him.

John Silverwood was a ninth-grader in suburban Philadelphia when a schoolmate's family took him sailing for the first time. He never recovered. One of four sons of an industrial engineer, John was a smart, headstrong and restless boy, and the sport fulfilled his deepest cravings—for freedom, for independence, for physical and mental challenges. In college at Colgate, he took two years off to sail a battered yawl from Marblehead, Massachusetts, to the Caribbean and back. After graduating, he worked construction; he spent his spare time assembling a trimaran in a barn, then piloted it to the Bahamas. Hired as a project manager for a builder in St. Thomas, he cruised the Virgin Islands in the 30-foot *Dufour Arpège*.

Along the way he met Jean, a striking blonde from Pleasantville, New York, who was crewing in St. Croix. Like John, she'd grown up in a big, upwardly mobile Catholic family, where hard work and strenuous fun were equally prized. She'd spent summers camping in the Adirondacks and sailing in the waters off the Hamptons. She was earthy and unpretentious; her wry reserve made a nice foil for John's excitability. They married in 1986 at a yacht club on Long Island.

The couple settled in San Diego, where John joined a real estate development firm owned by his younger brothers. He set his sights on an ambitious goal: to start a family, save his money and—someday—spend a year or so at sea with the people he loved most. Jean embraced the dream but insisted that they first attend to practicalities. Early on, there was too little cash; then new babies kept arriving. But John eventually started his own business, and as he entered his 50s, the timing seemed right. The housing boom had made him wealthy. Ben would soon be in high school, and if they waited too long, he'd be tied down with college applications. "It's now or never," John told his wife.

In February 2003, they found their dream boat in Miami: the *Emerald*

Wave, a French-built Lagoon 55, offered by its owner at a modest \$400,000 (comparable models cost \$1 million when new). The catamaran seemed ideal in terms of safety as well as comfort. Unlike a single-hulled vessel, it would sail flat and smooth under most conditions; it would be tough to capsize even in the fiercest storm. Its hulls were made of Kevlar, the material used in bulletproof vests. It had a bathroom for each cabin, there was a gourmet kitchen, and the dining table seated eight.

The couple rechristened the boat the *Emerald Jane* after Jean's late mother. Then John began retrofitting it to make it even safer. He installed child-proof netting around the perimeter. He bought a top-of-the-line life raft. He stuffed a cupboard with splints, syringes and medications. And at Jean's urging, he bought a state-of-the-art EPIRB, capable of broadcasting a vessel's position to within 300 feet.

That July, John sailed the *Emerald Jane* from Florida to Long Island. The family flew out to meet him, and spent a month near Jean's sister in Mamaroneck, New York, getting used to life on-board. In September, they headed down the coast, spending a month each moored in Baltimore, Maryland, and Norfolk, Virginia.

John and Jean were looking for more out of the trip than an extended vacation. They wanted to get to know their children in a way few modern parents ever do. They wanted to escape the routines of affluent suburbia: Dad's long workdays; Mom's shuffle between supermarket and tennis club and carpool; the kids' round of school, sports, lessons and play dates; the Saturdays at the mall. They wanted everyone to spend less time focused on video screens—"to be immersed in nature," as John put it, "instead of virtual reality."

The younger kids quickly adjusted to life on the catamaran. For the teenagers, though, the transition was harder. Both missed their social life. Amelia, a serious dancer, pined for her ballet classes. Ben—a big-boned, athletic boy who hoped one day to become a military officer—had inherited his father's lust for freedom and hard challenges, but this outing seemed to offer little of either. His idea of excitement was a Boy Scout survival trek in New Mexico, where he once hauled an 85-pound pack up 10,000-foot peaks. He yearned for his surf team competitions, paintball matches and Xbox tournaments.

Jean had enrolled Jack and Amelia in a homeschooling program run by

the San Diego school system, and Ben in a private program for high school students. Even preschooler Camille had lessons. Every weekday, the pupils were at their desks from 8 a.m. to noon, doing work that was supervised via e-mail by teachers hundreds of miles away. After that, their activities might consist of chores, meals and a James Bond DVD. “I’m bored” was a frequent refrain, especially during days at sea or in a nondescript port. Sometimes the surfeit of togetherness set everyone to squabbling.

As the weeks passed, however, the kids flourished. Helping out with nautical tasks—docking the boat, keeping the log, manning the radios—they developed a growing sense of teamwork. Amelia became an expert baker, Jack a budding marine biologist, eager to identify every creature he saw. Ben read more books than he’d ever thought possible. Their solitude was eased by encounters with peers on other boats, and by occasional visits from relatives and old friends.

And from Bermuda onward, the adventures came thick and fast. The

They surfed Tahiti’s waves, took in native dance, swam with an octopus.

Silverwoods snorkeled each morning before breakfast, amid bright blizzards of tropical fish. At night, John lay on the deck with the kids and showed them the constellations. The family took scuba-diving lessons in St. Thomas. They sailed through the Panama Canal. In Ecuador, they explored Inca ruins and trekked through Andean villages where guinea pigs were a staple food. In the Galápagos, they frolicked with giant tortoises and rode horseback up a volcano.

Eventually, they braved the 3,000-mile passage to the Marquesas and then on to the rest of French Polynesia. There, the generator broke, and they lingered in the islands while awaiting repairs. Ben surfed Tahiti’s legendary waves, Amelia took in native dance performances, and in the Tuamotus Jack swam with a wild octopus on his back. In December 2004, the family flew to New Zealand, where they spent three weeks exploring the rain forests and fjords.

Shortly after New Year’s, they docked the *Emerald Jane* in Raiatea and headed back to San Diego to wait out cyclone season. Everyone was thrilled to return to the luxuries they had left behind, but the novelty soon paled.

The following June, when school was out, they took up where they had left off. The plan was to head for Tonga, Fiji, and finally Australia; in August, they would put the boat up for sale and return home.

The catamaran left Raiatea at 3 p.m. on Friday, June 24. Around 5 p.m. the next day, one of the pins attaching the boom to the mast came loose. John furled the mainsail, and spent an hour and a half trying to solve the problem. As darkness fell, he decided to finish in the morning. He switched on the starboard engine to supplement the Genoa sail at the bow.

About 200 miles west of Raiatea lies a tiny atoll called Manuae, which trails

John alternated between acceptance and denial of his impending death.

a reef like a comet's tail. John had planned to round it by daylight, but now that was impossible. Stopping was not an option; the ocean in these parts is two miles deep, offering no anchorage. Charts of the area are not always reliable, but he had studied the route carefully. He set the autopilot on a course that allowed seven miles of clearance, then headed to the stateroom to talk to Jean, leaving the younger kids in front of the TV and Ben on watch in the cockpit.

Jean was at the stern with the children when the mast toppled onto her husband. She screamed, then stood frozen with terror on the pitching deck. The mast had knocked Ben down as well, leaving a gash on his crew-cut head. Now he stood over his father. "I'm here, Dad," he said, his eyes betraying everything that his calm voice concealed.

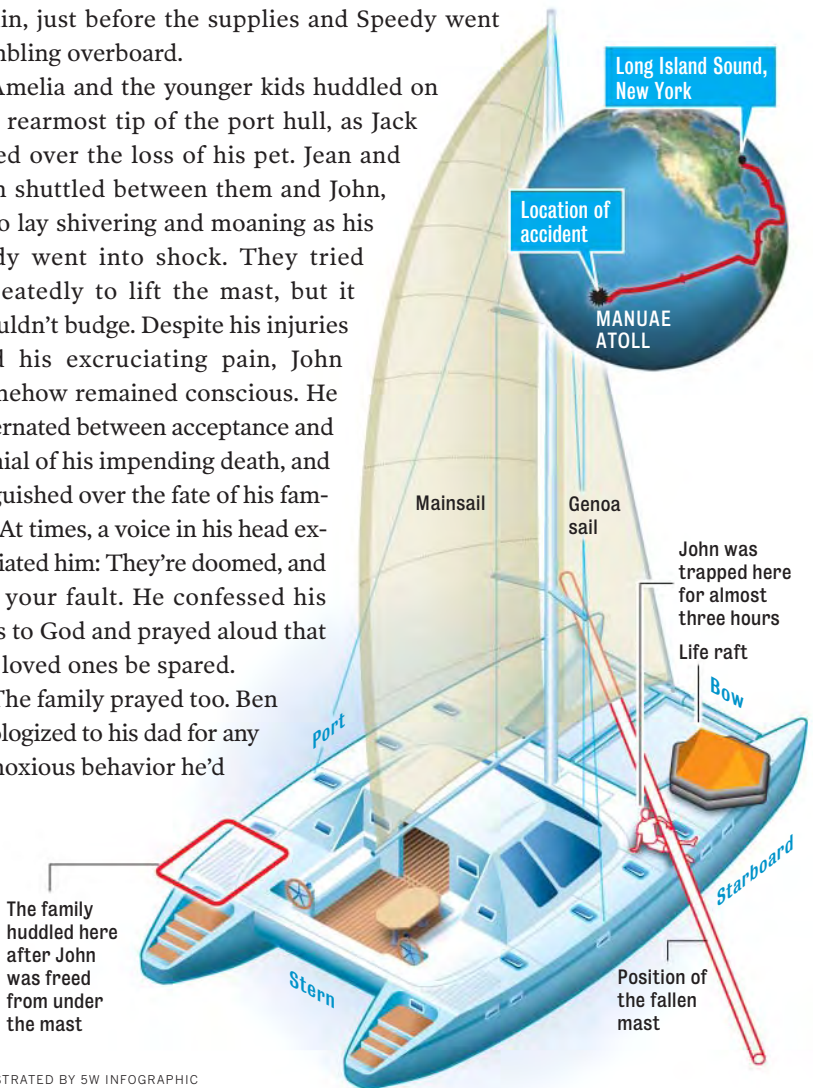
"Bring me some of that $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch utility line," John gasped, and Ben ran to grab it from a cabinet. John wrapped a strand of rope about his knee, twisting the ends to form a crude tourniquet. The foot-wide mast lay across his mangled lower leg, grinding into it with every movement of the boat. The craft had pivoted since hitting the reef, so the foredeck took the brunt of the waves. Each time a breaker crashed over him, he lost his grip—and more blood.

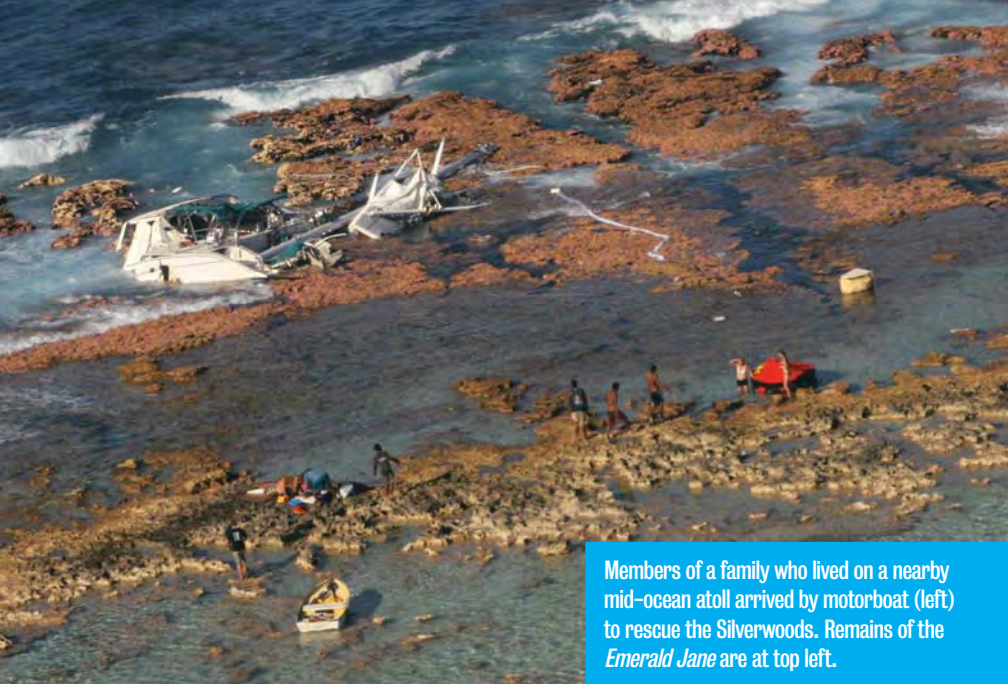
Jean scrambled to his side and knelt there, stroking his face. "It's going to be all right," she repeated softly, as if hoping to hypnotize them both into believing it. Then she gathered herself. The life raft, she knew, could be zipped

closed, and with chunks of debris flying everywhere, it seemed the safest place for Amelia, Jack and Camille. She herded them into it, along with bags of food and jugs of water. She also tossed in Speedy, a small tortoise they had adopted in the Caribbean nearly two years earlier. But soon the hulls began to wobble loose, squeezing the raft between them. Jean hustled the children out again, just before the supplies and Speedy went tumbling overboard.

Amelia and the younger kids huddled on the rearmost tip of the port hull, as Jack cried over the loss of his pet. Jean and Ben shuttled between them and John, who lay shivering and moaning as his body went into shock. They tried repeatedly to lift the mast, but it wouldn't budge. Despite his injuries and his excruciating pain, John somehow remained conscious. He alternated between acceptance and denial of his impending death, and anguished over the fate of his family. At times, a voice in his head excoriated him: They're doomed, and it's your fault. He confessed his sins to God and prayed aloud that his loved ones be spared.

The family prayed too. Ben apologized to his dad for any obnoxious behavior he'd





Members of a family who lived on a nearby mid-ocean atoll arrived by motorboat (left) to rescue the Silverwoods. Remains of the *Emerald Jane* are at top left.

indulged in during the trip. “I’m sorry I’ve complained so much,” he said.

“Forget it,” John responded. But he had a request: “If the boat starts to go under, I’m going to be stuck unless you cut off the rest of my leg. It’ll be like when we cut up chickens for the barbecue. Do you think you can do it?”

Ben recoiled at the thought, but kept his cool. “Let’s cross that bridge when we come to it,” he said.

They didn’t have to. An hour later, the boat was struck by a particularly massive wave, and the mast shifted enough to let John pull free. Ben and Amelia fastened new tourniquets on his leg (one above the knee and one below, since they weren’t sure which was the proper position), and then carried him aft to join the others. Now that they were together, crowded onto a corner of the stern, a kind of peace descended. “I was really scared before, but now I feel like it’s Christmas,” Ben said. Despite the chaos all around them, the others knew what he meant.

Around 1:30 in the morning, there was a glimmering on the horizon. “A ship!” Jean shouted, and Ben shot off a flare. The group’s spirits sank when the light turned out to be the rising moon. But Ben had been tracking another natural phenomenon for several hours: About 150 feet away was a

section of reef that never went underwater, even at high tide. The strip was about five feet wide; it rose three feet above the sea and stretched for perhaps a quarter mile. Compared to their unstable perch, it seemed like a haven. “It’s time,” Ben declared, “to get off the boat.”

He went first. The water on the way to the ridge was only waist-deep, and cushions from the boat were scattered across the coral. Ben gathered them into a comfortable nest, and Amelia helped him carry out Jack and Camille. The life raft was stuck between the hulls and tangled in cables, but after Jean freed it—using a saw that Ben ferreted out of the wreckage—they lifted John in and towed him to the refuge. Jean and Camille joined him in the raft, and Amelia held it in place, sitting neck-deep in the water to stay out of the chilly breeze. Ben and Jack curled up together on the cushions.

And then they waited.

The *Emerald Jane*’s distress calls never reached Papeete. But an orbiting satellite picked up the EPIRB signal and relayed it to a U.S. Coast Guard station near San Francisco that coordinates rescue operations throughout the Pacific. The transmission contained the EPIRB’s serial number, which was registered—along with the Silverwoods’ emergency contact information—with the federal government. The Coast Guard tried contacting the boat by sat-phone and e-mail, but there was no answer.

Although the EPIRB also provided GPS data, it took three passes for the satellite to get a clear reading of its latitude and longitude. In the meantime, Coast Guard officers tried to glean what they could from the people on the contact list. At 11 p.m. California time—8 p.m. in French Polynesia, about an hour after the accident—they called Jean’s father, Albert Boera, in New York’s Westchester County. He told the officer that the boat was somewhere near Bora Bora, en route to Australia. The Coast Guard notified the Rescue Coordination Center in New Zealand, which alerted the French military’s counterpart in Papeete.

Soon afterward, the EPIRB’s precise location came through. But the French couldn’t mount a search until sunrise, which was still far away. As the night wore on, John weakened steadily. The mast had severed his tibial arteries, and despite the tourniquets, he had lost nearly four pints of blood. Unbeknownst to his family, he was also suffering from gangrene—the death of tissue around his wound—and an infection was spreading toward his vital

organs. He'd begun to vomit, and his trembling had grown violent. Jean knew his chances of survival were slimmer if he lost consciousness, so she tried to keep him talking. "Daddy's going to be okay," John told the kids, whenever he could manage it. His silences, however, were growing longer.

As the sky began to lighten, around 6 a.m., the Silverwoods got their first good look at their surroundings. The reef, mostly submerged beneath a few feet of water, snaked to the horizon, where a patch of palm trees was just visible. Nearby, the boat's shattered remains bobbed on the swells. The vast Pacific glittered all around. And high overhead, Jean saw something streaking across the clouds.

"A plane!" she cried. It proved to be a bird. But about 20 minutes later, another dot appeared in the sky—and this time it was a French navy jet. Everyone cheered. Ben shot up a flare, and the plane began circling. Another hour passed, then two. The little kids dozed, while Jean and Ben passed the time collecting useful flotsam; they found bottles of water, cans of Coke and a vial of painkillers, but John could hold nothing down. "Where are they?" he asked, over and over.

Finally, around 9:30, a motorboat approached, carrying seven stout Polynesians. They loaded the life raft—with John still inside—into the boat, and made room for the rest of the family. None of the men spoke English, but the leader made the sign for "helicopter." Jean shouted, "Hurry! He's dying!" and the boat set off for Manuae, eight miles away.

The island, it turned out, was inhabited by a single family—an elderly couple and 14 of their children and grandchildren, who lived in a collection of tin-roofed shacks. The islanders made an urgent call on their radio to the rescue center in Papeete, then offered the family dry T-shirts and warm hugs, and presented Jean and Amelia with black-pearl necklaces. They laid out a feast, with crepes, raw fish and coconuts, and kept Camille and Jack distracted with kittens and turtles.

Once the French realized there was a medical emergency, they mobilized as quickly as possible. Still, distances are long and resources scarce in Polynesia, and it took until noon for the copter to arrive. The medics quickly stabilized John, then flew him and the family to Bora Bora; from there, a jet rushed John to Tahiti. By 5:30, he was on an operating table, gazing up at a team of surgeons. "I was so deliriously happy," he says. "I knew my wife and kids were safe. And I knew the pain was about to be gone."



The family (from left, Ben, Jack, Jean, Camille, John and Amelia) sail on a friend's boat back home in San Diego Bay.

The doctors amputated John's leg below the knee. If he'd arrived 40 minutes later, they told him, it might have been too late. It took six days of dialysis before his kidneys, damaged by the infection, could function on their own, and another five days of recuperation before he was strong enough to return to the States.

The family flew back to LAX on July 7, and John was transferred directly by ambulance to Scripps Memorial Hospital in La Jolla. There, doctors determined that his knee was damaged beyond repair. To heal properly, he would need a more radical amputation. Four days later, a surgeon sawed through the bone just above the knee. Another infection soon set in, with fevers that left him delirious and despairing. He didn't leave the hospital until July 27.

That night, unable to climb stairs, he slept in the living room of his sprawling house near Rancho Santa Fe. The next morning, he woke to find Jean snuggled on one side of him, Camille on the other. Outside the windows,

sunlight was sparkling on the dozens of citrus trees he'd planted in the yard. "My improvement," he says, "began right then."

John started a course of rehabilitation, and by late September, his leg had healed enough to be fitted with a state-of-the-art prosthesis. It has a micro-processor in the knee joint that adjusts the hydraulics to match his gait. Such a contraption requires long practice to master, and a year after the ordeal, John, who has not yet returned to work, figures he's about halfway there.

To this day, he wonders what went wrong off Manuae, whether the charts were off, the autopilot was buggy, or his own calculations were flawed. He still has some "phantom limb" pain—the mysterious discomfort that many amputees feel in their missing part. But he is learning to hold his other phantoms at bay. For a time, he couldn't stand to look at the ocean; on a seaside camping trip, he awoke in a panic at the sound of waves. In February, however, he manned the tiller on a half-day jaunt sponsored by a handicapped sailing group. "I had a ball," he says. He's already planning to buy a new boat.

Remarkably, the other Silverwoods are open to the idea. Although Jean still suffers from anxiety attacks, she managed a Carnival Cruise to Mexico last winter. The kids report no nightmares or flashbacks—quite the contrary. "I learned that, under pressure, you can do anything," Amelia says.

"Since the accident," observes Ben, "we're all a little nicer to each other." His father continues to marvel over Ben's actions during the crisis, which recently earned him the Boy Scouts' top medal for heroism.

For John, the rewards are unmistakable. Over lunch, he gestures around the table at his family. "Sure, I lost a leg," he says. "But look what I've still got."

TO BE CONTINUED...



I was waiting at a busy intersection when two shopping-bag-laden women got off a bus chatting animatedly.

They had said their good-byes and were heading in opposite directions when one called over her shoulder to the other, "I'll phone you when I get home."

A minute later she stopped. "Better yet," she shouted, "you call me. You'll get home before I will."

M. J. WEBER

RDLIVING

HEALTH ■ FOOD ■ HOME ■ CARS ■ YOU ■ PETS

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Stay Cool— and Thin

KEEPING hydrated this summer will ease the heat, but drinkable calories can add up. Say you guzzle a glass of OJ with breakfast, then stop for an iced latte. For a mid-morning refresher, you have a flavored iced tea, then a soda with lunch, another at 3 p.m., and two beers after work. A typical day, and you've chugged as many as 1,068 calories, or half a



day's worth, in liquid alone.

"Ideally, you should receive *no* calories from beverages," says Cynthia

Sass of the American Dietetic Association. (Milk and 100% fruit juice count as food

servings.) That advice may be hard to swallow when you're parched. So limit your drinks to 10% of total calories (about 200), says Sass. Opt for unsweetened iced tea, diet soda or water with a splash of lemon, lime or orange juice.

JAZELLE HUNT

Q Should I be alarmed about dangerous fluoride levels in water?

A Despite scary headlines, most people can keep sipping from the tap. The EPA says water with 0.7 to 1.2 mg of fluoride per liter is safe, and most public water supplies are

well within that range.

Moderate amounts of fluoride strengthen tooth enamel, preventing decay, but a recent National Academy of Sciences report found that high levels (4 mg/L) can weaken bones and give kids mottled, pitted teeth. Excess fluoride may also cause other health problems, but only a small

percentage of water supplies have levels this high.

It's a good idea to know how much is in your water, since fluoride also comes from other sources (toothpaste, some bottled waters). Ask your water utility for a copy of the Consumer Confidence Report to find out fluoride levels in your H₂O.

CYNTHIA DERMODY

Turbo-Charged Tennis



TENNIS is a terrific workout: You can burn major calories sprinting to

return a killer shot, and tone your arms while volleying and serving. But if you want more intense exercise, try cardio tennis. Never picked up a racket? No problem. This is a fast-paced, action-packed workout, and it doesn't matter if you get the ball over the net. What does: getting your heart rate up by doing sprints and drills with 6 to 10 other players per court. Some clubs even pipe in funky music to keep you going. Most classes run 60 minutes. Why try it? You'll burn 300 to 600 calories an hour, learn skills to improve your game and, oh yeah, you'll have a great time!

You can try cardio tennis indoors or out, at one of more than 1,000 tennis centers across the country; classes are about \$10 each. Find a location near you at cardiotennis.com. PATRICIA CURTIS

FAST FACT >> 60% of adults don't use insect repellents, but mosquito bites are the top summer skin-care concern in the United States. SOURCE: Spectrum Brands

ROOM TO GROW HEALTHY

You're in the hospital, feeling bad, and you've got a loud, cranky roommate. Relief is on the way. Patients who stay in private rooms recover faster, so the American Institute of Architects' Academy of Architecture for Health now recommends that all new hospitals be built with private rooms only.

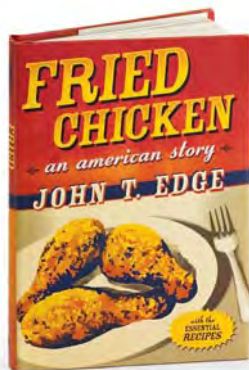
"Single rooms are more efficient," says Dr. Dennis O'Leary of the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. "They reduce medical errors and infections, and patients will probably get out of the hospital faster."

LISA MILLER
FIELDS



LET'S EAT!

WITH MOLLY O'NEILL



FRED CONRAD

A Fourth of July Favorite

JOHAN T. EDGE looks forward to the Fourth of July with the fervor of a Founding Father. After all, it's the only day that picnics are a patriotic duty, says the man who has spent a decade studying American identity through food. Each spring, John T., director of the Southern Foodways Alliance at the Center for the Study of Southern Culture in Oxford, Mississippi, begins planning his annual American picnic. On the menu: food icons such as fried chicken, burgers, coleslaw, potato salad and pie. He's written 13 books so far, including *Fried Chicken: An American Story*.

The center of any picnic? Cold fried chicken. And this recipe from John Fleer, chef at Blackberry Farm in Walland, Tennessee, beats all. **MOLLY O'NEILL**

John Fleer's Sweet Tea Brined Fried Chicken

8 chicken leg quarters

BRINE:

1 qt. brewed tea, double strength

1 lemon, zested, quartered

1 cup sugar

½ cup kosher salt

CRUST:

2 cups all-purpose flour

2 cups masa harina

(fine cornmeal)

2 tbs. Old Bay

Seasoning

1 tbs. chili powder

Salt and pepper, to taste

2 cups buttermilk

1 qt. vegetable oil



1. Mix brine ingredients. Simmer 5 minutes, until sugar and salt dissolve. Add 1 quart ice water. Submerge chicken for 48 hours, refrigerated. Drain.
2. Mix flour, masa harina, Old Bay, chili powder, salt and pepper in large bowl. Soak chicken in buttermilk in medium bowl, 2 minutes. Remove, draining off excess liquid. Coat chicken in masa harina mixture. Let sit 30 minutes before frying.
3. Heat oil to 325°. Fry chicken, fully covered in

oil, 15 minutes (big pieces may need more time; small pieces, less). Cool; refrigerate overnight. Serves 4. Get more recipes at rd.com/picnic.

ELIZABETH WATT/STOCKFOOD CREATIVE/GETTY IMAGES

LET'S EAT!

Tea-rrific Tastes

Q I love iced tea, but many bottled ones are too sweet. Got any recommendations?

A After tasting several brands, we've found a few favorites. But before you start sipping, keep in mind that liquid calories quickly add up. White tea is the trend of the moment, and Inko's Original is refreshingly good. With just 56 calories a bottle, it's slightly sweet, and comes in 9 yummy flavors. And yes, white tea is as healthy as black and green. POM Wonderful's flavored teas are just sweet enough to please. Lastly, for tea purists, Honest Tea's unsweetened organic Just Green and Just Black, and Coca-Cola's new unsweetened Gold Peak, offer a simple, bold taste, while Adagio's Anteadote delivers a seriously strong punch.



FAST FACT >> 46% of men and 31% of women admit to **double-dipping chips** at parties.

SOURCE: American Dietetic Association



Friends, Through Good Food and Bad

The hardest thing, says Barbara Moseley, "is having something in your mouth that tastes awful and still having a smile on your face."

Moseley's had considerable experience here. She and her best friend, Gwen McKee, are editors of the *Best of the Best* state cookbook series, the *crème de la crème* of published recipes from 35 states and 4 regions.

McKee, 66, and Moseley, 69, had been itching to find something of their own to do. The two women knew their way around the kitchen. Finding their way around the country was a different story. They got lost in the Everglades and were mooned in Des Moines. In the name of research, they've eaten fried pork brain in Indiana, rattlesnake in Texas, alligator in Louisiana and possum in Kentucky.

"We vowed that if business ever threatened our friendship, we'd dissolve the partnership," says McKee. Thirty years later, they're still going strong.

JOANNE KAUFMAN

Before and AFTER

Renovate a whole house for \$50K? The secrets ...

FOR NINE MONTHS, Terry and Nancy Fike and their four kids lived in a two-room shed while they gutted the 1910 farmhouse on a pear and apple orchard in Cashmere, Washington, that they bought for \$70,000. Then all it took was one handy guy (Terry), lots of friends, an eye for tag-sale treasures, and giving up many weekends. “Finding something discarded and bringing it back to life was a lot of fun for us,” Terry says.

Hardest job Removing, numbering, stripping and then refitting all of the original vertical grain fir trim around doors, windows and baseboards.

Splurges Living room carpet and dining room rug, \$2,250; Bosch dishwasher, \$650; Jenn-Air wall oven, \$900.

Lesson learned Don't try to salvage badly pockmarked plaster walls; just sheetrock right over them.

Do you have a room redo or out-door project you'd like to show off? Send the before-and-after photos to makeover@rd.com. Online submissions only. To see more home-makeover projects, go to rd.com/makeover.



before

after



The New Gotta-Have Games

GET OFF the patio furniture and into some serious calorie-burning fun with innovative backyard games:

Qolf A cross between golf and croquet played with a lightweight ball and your sand or pitching wedge (sharperimage.com; \$60).

Soft Shoes Soft but solid rubber horseshoes that can easily be carried to parks or barbecues with a nylon strap (fungripper.com; \$25).

OgoSport Use

one of these trampoline-looking disks (right) as a Frisbee; get two, and volley any ball back and forth (ogosport.com; \$40 for two-pack).

Monster Badminton This version has super-sized rackets and shuttlecocks so even tiny tykes can join in (Target stores; \$20).

Skylighter Two LEDs illuminate this flying disk's rim, so you can play well into the night (aerobie.com; \$15).



CYNTHIA DERMODY

TRY THIS! Wait, don't toss that banana peel. You can rub its inside on your leather shoes to clean and polish them! Find uses for 203 other common items from around your home, or search by the specific household problem you'd like to solve, by logging on to rd.com/extraordinaryuses.

Don't Be Mowed Over

Lawn mower mishaps are on the rise, leading to 74,000 ER visits a year, mostly by people under age 15 and over 60. The most common wounds? Those from sticks spit out from the blades. Doctors also treat burns, injured extremities and falls that result from mowing wet grass. "People need to protect their feet and legs, and wear goggles and gloves," says David Bishai, author of a lawn mower study at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore. Kids under 15 shouldn't operate or be near a mower at all. C.D.



Dragging With My Laptop

JEANNINE JOHNSON, 16, is poised in her drag-racing car, eyes locked on the lights overhead. Three yellow ones flash, and she takes off at 85 mph. Eight seconds later, the race is over and a green light at the finish line tells Johnson she's won.

She can thank her computer for part of her success. Junior dragsters guess how long it will take them to go from start to finish, and try to come as close to that time as possible. And if her car is not running well, the Puyallup, Washington, teen explains, it won't perform as she predicts. So after each race, she connects her PC to a data collector near her car's en-

Car Paint Goes High Tech

Picking the color of your new car is hard enough. New high-tech paint will make it even harder:

- Is it charcoal gray or cool violet? ChromaFlair is a hue-shifting pigment currently used on some GM and Nissan cars. More carmakers plan to use it.
- Mood-ring-style paint, where the car's color changes according to the weather, is being developed by German researchers.
- Scratch Guard Coat is not a color but a self-repairing elastic resin that repels scratches and makes slight ones fade. It will be on Nissan cars in this country soon.



gine. It records rpm, jackshaft speed and motor temperature. The downloaded info appears as a line graph, which she overlays on graphs from prior races. If they don't match, it's tune-up time.

Microsoft gave Johnson the grand prize in its Start Something Amazing Awards, for best use of a PC in a sport.

Due to a childhood surgery that damaged growth plates, Johnson's right leg is shorter than her left. "A lot of kids play baseball and soccer, but I can't because of my disability," she says. "Drag racing lets me participate in a unique sport not a lot of people do."



New Ways to WASH YOUR FACE

STILL USING PLAIN soap and water on your face in these high-tech times? Even the cleansing cloths introduced a few years ago have had makeovers. The new products clean and rejuvenate skin in ways you never imagined. We tried a bunch and loved them all. They're pricier than most bars or liquid cleansers (and may seem wasteful), but you might decide they're worth it—especially when traveling. Our favorites:



CATEGORY

PRODUCTS

WHY WE LOVED THEM

Dual-sided cleansing pads

Clean & Clear Daily Pore (\$7); Dove Energy Glow (\$4.50); Neutrogena PureGlow (\$9)

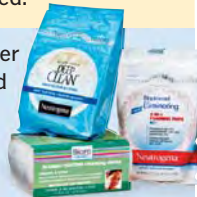


All have one side to clean and exfoliate, another that moisturizes, although they still tend to leave skin a bit dry. They couldn't be easier to use: Just wet one and start washing. Said one tester, "They work especially well when I'm tired and want to wash my face quickly before bed."

Pre-moistened cloths

Bioré Pore Perfect (\$7); Neutrogena Blackhead Eliminating 2-in-1 (\$8); Neutrogena Deep Clean Invigorating (\$7.50)

One tester said the Bioré left her face feeling clean and not dried out, but it didn't remove all of her waterproof mascara. The Neutrogena worked well on sensitive skin, even for one tester who can't normally use an exfoliator without irritation. "They're great for use after a workout, so I plan to keep them in my gym locker."



Pre-moistened makeup removers



Mark from Avon (\$7); Olay Daily Facials (\$6)

"Olay's slightly floral smell made my skin feel cleaner than my usual facial wash and also did a good job of removing waterproof mascara." The Mark "lathered up well, had a fresh clean scent, and didn't sting my eyes." **CYNTHIA DERMODY**



Happier Travels

TRAVELING WITH a four-legged friend can be, well, hairy. Chris Kingsley of petswelcome.com, a directory of pet-friendly lodging, offers tips for a safe trip:

By air Reserve early, and ask the airline about weight limits and other details. Small pets can often go in the cabin in a carrier that fits under

the seat, but larger dogs must ride in crates in the cargo hold. Make sure she's healthy and vaccinations are up-to-date. If your pet is nervous, your vet may prescribe anti-anxiety medication, but never sedate your pooch. High altitudes and barbiturates are a bad mix for animals.

By car If Fifi gets carsick, ask the vet about drugs that might help. Keep her in a carrier or pet seat belt (harness); a loose animal can get hurt or injure a passenger during a quick stop or crash. Take breaks every few hours, and never leave your pet alone in the car—especially in extremely hot or cold weather.

Finally, if you can't spend much time with her on a trip, consider leaving your pet home with a sitter. Just think of the welcome you'll get when you return!

LUCIA RAATMA

Will Work for Food

Pets left home alone all day are more likely to develop behavior problems, such as incessant barking, chewing or scratching furniture, says Marty Becker, a veterinarian in Bonners Ferry, Idaho. "They need to be stimulated mentally." With new innovative "food puzzles," your dog or cat can work for food in a fun, challenging way. To start, fill a puzzle with kibble, and she'll paw, roll or push the toy to make the food fall out. Once she can master it, put up to a day's worth of food in a few puzzles to keep your pet moving and busy. Becker's dogs, Quixote and Shakira, love their toys. "The puzzles keep them engaged and active. Their eyes are bright; their tails are helicopter rotors." Give dogs the Molecuball, Buster Food Cube or Kong Stuff-A-Ball; cats love the Play-N-Treat (ourpets.com, petsmart.com).

NEENA SAMUEL



MY WIFE and I were having a very hypothetical discussion: In the unlikely event that Hollywood made a movie based on our lives, we wondered what stars would play us.

“Who would you pick to portray you?” she asked me.

I thought about it for a minute, then answered, “Dennis Quaid.”

“In that case,” she said, “I’ll play myself.”

MARK SUGGS,
Boone, North Carolina

I was shopping in the pet section of my local supermarket when I overheard a woman singing the praises of a particular water bowl to her husband.

“Look, it even has a water filter!” she concluded, holding the doggie dish out for her husband’s inspection.

He had a slightly different take on things: “Dear, he drinks out of the toilet.”

JAMES JENKINS, Jacksonville, Florida

CAUGHT UP RUNNING ERRANDS, my mom’s friend forgot where she’d parked. A police officer, noticing her agitation, asked, “Is something wrong?”

“I can’t find my car,” she explained.

“What kind is it?”

She gave him a quizzical look. “Name some.”

LILA DRYER, Lowndesboro, Alabama



**“Let’s not have a good time.
You know I can’t stand these people.”**

ILLUSTRATED BY PC VEY

HEADING DOWN the interstate, our car passed through a huge swarm of gnats so dense that their bodies made popping noises as they hit the windshield. “I can’t get over how loud they are,” my wife said.

“Well, we are hitting them at 65 miles an hour,” I pointed out.

Her reply left me speechless. “I didn’t know bugs could fly that fast.”

JOHN SHINDLEBOWER,
Mt. Eden, Kentucky

INSPIRATIONAL speaker Dr. Wayne Dyer still remembers the card his kids gave him for his 64th birthday. The front said, "Inside is a message from God."

Pleased they finally appreciated his work, he opened it to read, "See you soon!" **CHRISTINE KITTO,** Lake Worth, Florida

My husband uses scraps of wood, called "shorts," for carving. In a lumber store, he saw some lovely pieces in a bin behind the counter. But he had a lot of explaining to do after he asked the clerk, "Do you mind if I come around and poke through your shorts?"

CATHY GROVES,
Kearney, Nebraska

You could earn up to \$300 for your own funny story. Go to rd.com/joke or see page 12 for details.

I suppose it speaks volumes about the state of my marriage when I admit to nodding knowingly at a remark made by a colleague.

She was telling me about the death of another co-worker's spouse, when she commented, "How sad. They'd been married only five years, so I imagine she still loved him."

JANET IVES, Federal Way, Washington

TEEING OFF on the 12th hole at a golf resort, we stopped to buy cold drinks from the young woman driving the beverage cart. As my buddy reached for his wallet, he said to her, "You're in great shape. You must work out a lot." Flattered, she gave him

a big smile. "Thank you."

The next day a different young woman was driving the cart. "Watch this," I whispered. I walked up to her and said, "Wow, you must work out a lot."

"Yeah," she replied. "You should try it."

THOMAS OSBORNE,
Elmira, New York

ON THE WAY BACK from a Cub Scout meeting, my grandson asked my son *the* question. "Dad, I know that babies come from mommies' tummies, but how do they get there in the first place?" he asked innocently. After my son hemmed and hawed awhile, my grandson finally spoke up in disgust.

"You don't have to make something up, Dad. It's OK if you don't know the answer."

HARRY NEIDIG, Pennsauken, New Jersey

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Three of a kind is the winning deal in this month's Challenge. Figure out what the trio in each set have in common, and you've solved the puzzle—as long as each answer is a six-letter plural word, ending in -s! Got it? Now show your hand ...

Ex. Railroad, wild animal, music CD: **TRACKS**



1. Trombone
Children's playground
Laboratory microscope

2. Parade
Malt shop
Tackle box

3. Weight
British bank
ASPCA

4. Dentist
Dry run
Army camp

5. Hunting dog
Compass
Scoreboard

6. Dungeon
Jewelry store
Sequence

7. Fish
Sheet music
Dieters

8. Municipal parking lot
Electric utility
Rhythm in verse

9. Golf course
Salad
Environmentalists

10. Boxing match
Doctor
Children's song

11. Beach
Rifle
Pasta

12. Rupture
School year
Good fortune

Answers: 1. Slides; 2. Florets; 3. Pounds; 4. Drills; 5. Points; 6. Chains; 7. Scales; 8. Meters; 9. Greens; 10. Rounds; 11. Shells; 12. Breaks.

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