

Well Bless Your Heart

A steel magnolia dishes on true Southern style

Through the Looking Glass

When vanity meets cancer, who wins?

Ahoy Alaska!

A comfortable excursion outside the comfort zone

WISDOM

“The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook.”

— William James



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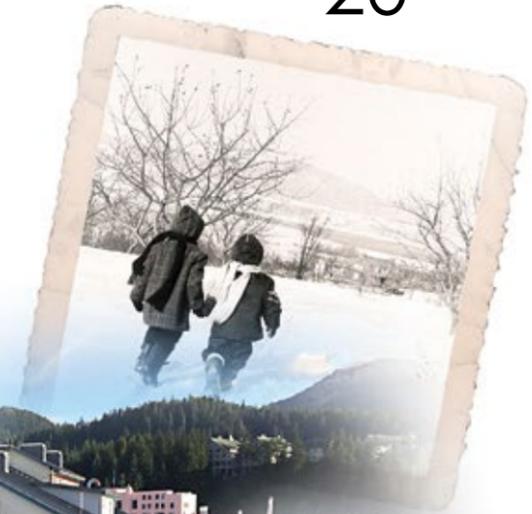
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Dan Madsen
Chairman & CEO, Leisure Care

Letter From the Chairman & CEO

Finding Our Voice and Making an Impact

by Dan Madsen

On the cover of this issue of LIV FUN is a quote from American philosopher William James, who said "The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook." It's difficult to turn on the television, open a newspaper, or scan one's social media feeds without being overwhelmed with stories and opinions on the state of our nation and the world. From natural disasters to economic troubles and political upheaval, it is easy to feel small and voiceless. By filtering through the noise and focusing on the truly important, each of us can find our voice, make a positive impact, and affect change. While we may not change the world overnight, we can certainly make a positive impact on the local communities in which we serve.

With the holiday season just around the corner, we're reminded at every turn to be thankful, be generous, and help those in need. It's a time filled with joy but can also be a challenging time of year for many of us. It is more important than ever that we embrace the second third of the *Three-Thirds Lifestyle* and do what we can to give back to our local communities. I challenge you all to go out of your way to make someone's day today. A gesture as simple as holding the door for someone or offering your seat on the bus can have an impact far greater than you might imagine.

At Leisure Care we make it our mission to give back to our community year round, and the events we host allow us to have a bit of fun in the process. This past September we proudly hosted the 20th Annual KIRO 7 Kids Classic Golf Tournament & Auction, and it was our best year yet. More than \$143,000 was raised over the course of the day (a record!), benefiting organizations such as Treehouse, YouthCare, and Seattle's Union Gospel Mission. On November 14 we will host another of our signature events — the Treehouse Pajama Party. For the 12th year, residents, employees, vendors and business partners will all come together to collect new pajamas — a simple luxury that many of us take for granted — to distribute to the nearly 7,500 foster children served by Treehouse. (I'm predicting a record year for this event as well!)

As always, I'd like to close by thanking everyone who has chosen to live and work with us. I'd also like to take a moment to officially welcome the residents and staff of The Ackerly at Timberland, Leisure Care's newest community in Portland, Oregon, as well as any of you who are new to our family. Here's to a great finish to a great year.

Dan Madsen

Chairman & CEO, Leisure Care



Style Wise

Expressing Your Unique Self

Skye Moody, our usual Style Wise contributor, has contributed the feature essay on page 22 of this issue. Look for Skye's column in Style Wise in our next issue.



The wisdom is passed from generation to generation, like a strand of well-loved pearls.

by Beverly Ingle

San Antonio-based freelance writer and lifelong Southern Belle

There is something uniquely perfect about the wisdom passed down from mother to daughter in the South.

Sure, mothers share their wisdom with their daughters in all parts of our country and have been doing so for generations. But if that wisdom doesn't include when and where to wear pearls — real pearls — and how old you must be for those pearls to be an appropriate choice, all that can be said really is, “You poor thing.”

The South follows its own rhythm, and it's the women of the South that set the cadence.

To keep in time with that cadence and ensure that the Southern lifestyle flows along smoothly, they share bits of knowledge and invaluable insights among themselves. While that knowledge may have originated as anecdotal tales from previous experience, the lessons within them seeped deep into the Southern psyche and became codified.

As an eighth-generation Southerner, it is my honor to provide you with a primer to Southern wisdom so that you, too, may adopt the hospitality, impeccable manners, and perfectly sugared snark of today's modern belle.

“If you have pearls, wear them.”

—Janice, a true steel magnolia

Family

In the South, family is everything. They are also likely to be the same people who drive you crazy. You might fight like cats and dogs among yourselves, but you'll always close ranks when faced with an outside threat. Whether you're 9 or 93, Mama and Daddy are and always will be “Mama and Daddy,” and you likely can recite your lineage back at least three generations.

Perhaps most importantly among Southern families, the definition of “family” is quite broad. Aunts and uncles aren't always blood relatives or in-laws; every good friend of your parents with whom you grew up earns the title too.

Friendship

Friendship among Southern women is a remarkable case study in resilience. These friendships withstand the trials and tribulations of life, and the more commonplace stressors of marriage, kids, jobs, church and volunteer commitments; among all of this, time with friends gets lost.

Southern women know that the friends they love and who love them back can and do pick up just where they left off — no matter how much time has passed. They also know if they truly need help or support, those friends are just a phone call or text away. As with families, Southern friends may bicker or play a little one-upsmanship, but heaven help the soul who tries to come between them.

Manners

Southern women in particular have a well-earned reputation for the warm, welcoming way they interact with others. Ma'ams and Sirs pepper conversations with elders, smiles are always sweet, and handwritten thank-you notes are fundamental.

Even if a Southern woman cannot abide your presence, you likely will not know as she will never let her manners falter. Mamas teach their daughters to “kill 'em with kindness” and “slop sugar” more than usual on those whom one cannot stand. After all, anything less would be tacky, and there's nothing tackier than being tacky.

Public Persona

Fashionable taste abounds in the South, but one's public persona extends well beyond knowing the rules for wearing white and the seasonality of straw versus felt Stetsons — although that knowledge is considered critical in many places.

There's been many a mama who has tutored her children on speaking in low, even tones, using proper grammar and engaging in topics that are interesting yet uncontroversial. For all intents and purposes, that Southern persona is completely ingrained and unshakable, until alcohol is involved. Then, all bets are off.

Cocktails and Cake

Southerners are trained from a young age to be the epitome of hospitality. While unannounced visits are still considered in poor form in the South, the modern reality is that they happen more often than not. Even prior to the pervasiveness of the “drop-in” visit, every proper Southern home was well equipped to welcome guests.

Iced tea is always at the ready as are fresh cookies or cake that will be served on the nice china. After 5 p.m., the perfect cocktail can be whipped up in less than two minutes.

Southern Snark

The best, most useful Southern wisdom I've saved for last: Southern Snark. To many, there's no more valuable knowledge that can be added to one's arsenal. A perfectly timed, perfectly delivered, “Bless her heart” speaks volumes in just three little words. Quite simply, it is the best thinly veiled insult in all of the English-speaking world.

Yet, it is not to be confused with, “Bless his baby heart,” which is meant as an expression of sympathy. Other notable Southern snarkisms include, “How nice,” “My word” and “Oh, honey ...”

Whether understood through explicit instruction or simply learned by observation, this Southern wisdom is the premise on which a happy, good life is lived. To live any other way would not only betray our Southern style, but would also be, well, tacky.

Oh, and P.S. — pearls are appropriate if they're worn before 6 p.m. and if you're over 18 years of age. You're welcome, sugar. ♦

Entertain Your Brain

Books | Movies | Music

Immerse yourself in something new, something foreign, something that takes you to a new place.

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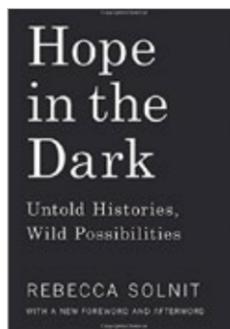


BOOK REVIEWS

by Misha Stone / Readers' advisory librarian & Booklist Magazine blogger

"Love is the motive, but justice is the instrument."

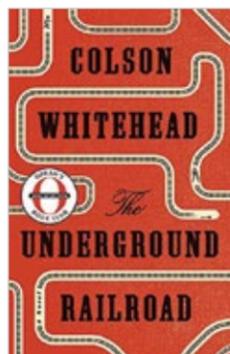
— Reinhold Neibuhr



Hope in the Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities

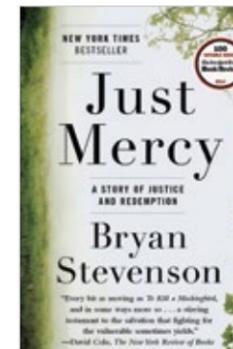
by Rebecca Solnit (Haymarket Books, \$15.99)

The state of the world's problems can, at times, seem insurmountable. Solnit's reprinted essay collection provides balm for those feeling hopeless in these challenging times. These essays remind us of the incremental nature of change, how progress has been wrought by sophisticated non-violent activism, and the transformation that goes on in human imagination. "We inhabit, in ordinary daylight, a future that was unimaginably dark a few decades ago, when people found the end of the world easier to envision than the impending changes in everyday roles, thoughts, practices that not even the wildest science fiction anticipated." Solnit's prose is cool yet impassioned as she provides examples of change throughout history and makes the case for a hope that is not naïve but informed, a hope that is borne by the knowledge that things do get better when they are collectively imagined and worked for.



The Underground Railroad by Colson Whitehead (Doubleday, \$26.95)

Whitehead's new historically inspired novel of slavery's impact on America's past and present character is so extraordinary that Oprah Winfrey had it published a month early for her book club. The critically acclaimed author of *The Intuitionist* and *John Henry Days* returns with the compelling, beautifully crafted yet harrowing story of Cora, an enslaved woman who surprises herself by taking a risk when offered a way out of her violent, isolated life. She finds a new life in a free settlement but soon discovers that rot and desperation belie the bucolic veneer. Cora's voice and her clear-eyed perspective is a revelation even as the cruel images of our past come in contrast with the sumptuous pleasures of freedom. While Whitehead reimagines the Underground Railroad metaphorically and diverges greatly from historic record, he throws a plumb line down into America's psyche, illuminating its nightmares and its dreams in equal measure.



Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption

by Bryan Stevenson (Spiegel & Grau, \$16.00)

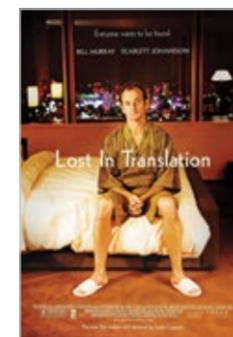
Stevenson was a 23-year-old Harvard law student on an internship when he first met a man on death row in 1983. That encounter changed his life and led him to found the Equal Justice Initiative, where Stevenson fought for the wrongly incarcerated: youth tried as adults and criminals without due process or sentences not commensurate to their crimes. The stories shared in this book are heart-wrenching as the injustices of our society and justice system are laid bare. What Stevenson does most effectively is humanize the people in our jails. We see the scared, young boys and men, the poverty and abuse that afflict them, and the gratefulness they feel for being, for once, seen and given another chance. Upon reflection on a life of service to the people we lock away, he writes: "I do what I do because I'm broken, too." This extraordinary memoir, which John Grisham called an "inspiring and powerful story," asks us to exercise compassion for ourselves and the most broken among us.

MOVIE REVIEWS

by Robert Horton / Film critic for *Seattle Weekly*

"We are the movies and the movies are us."

— David Ansen



Lost in Translation (2003)

Two strangers, both Americans, are marooned in the same Tokyo hotel for a few days. One is a movie star (Bill Murray) in town to shoot lucrative commercials that will only be shown on Japanese TV. The other is a dreamy, young woman (Scarlett Johansson), traveling with her childlike husband; his work schedule leaves her alone for hours. These two winsome souls meet, sharing the kind of moment that outsiders can have when they are feeling displaced. Out of this wisp of a plot, writer-director Sofia Coppola crafts her lovely 2003 study of how a brief, accidental friendship can result in some understated life lessons. Because the movie leaves so much unsaid, it conveys the idea that insight might come not from specific prescriptions, but from the more mysterious business of emotional intimacy and connection. Maybe that's why Coppola doesn't share a climactic moment — Murray whispers something in Johansson's ear — leaving it to us to imagine what was imparted. (DVD available on Netflix and Amazon; streaming available on Amazon Video, YouTube, iTunes, Vudu and Google Play)



Wonder Boys (2000)

Grady Tripp is a fiftyish professor, and he has made a mess of his life. As played by Michael Douglas (in one of his best performances), Grady blearily staggers from one fresh catastrophe to the next: his unfinished novel, his collapsed marriage, and the fact that his pregnant mistress (Frances McDormand) is married to the head of his department. On this particular weekend, he's also playing host to his editor (Robert Downey, Jr.) and mentoring — if that could possibly be the right word — an eccentric student (Tobey Maguire) looking for guidance. Director Curtis Hanson, working from Michael Chabon's novel, sketches these characters with great sympathy and considerable hilarity. This underrated 2000 gem demonstrates that even when things seem to be falling apart, humor can be a great teacher. (DVD available on Amazon; Streaming available on Amazon Video, YouTube, iTunes and Google Play)

Entertain Your Brain: *Continued on page 40*

Out and About
Journeys Completed or Contemplated

Getting it Wrong

When I travel, the truth about a place is my favorite souvenir.

Turns out, Kenyans need to buy groceries and bed sheets too. Why wouldn't they? Why wouldn't they want to drink coffee in hip, air-conditioned cafes while taking advantage of the free Wi-Fi to update their Facebook pages? For some reason, I didn't expect this — bad research, horribly outdated preconceptions, my own unrecognized desire to find that Nairobi was located not just in another country, but another time too.

For some reason? Nope. Because I'm an idiot, that's the reason.

I was wrong about Nairobi. It's a complicated city; for every skinny kid herding goats alongside the main road, there was also a glitzy shopping mall, a

place to buy throw pillows and electronics and freshly pressed juice made by a young man wearing an apron with the name of the supermarket on it. Why wouldn't these things exist? Did I think East Africa would be one great, grassy savannah populated by nomadic people and elephants? What nonsense.

The thing is, I *like* discovering the wrongness of my preconceived notions. I like the discomfort generated by being forced to confront my clichéd ideas about a place and her people. Don't get me wrong; I greatly enjoy being right, but when I travel, the truth about a place is my favorite souvenir.

Honolulu has atrocious traffic. It turns out to be a real city with a Wal-

Mart and a hospital and Jiffy Lubes and a Bob Evans; it is not a strip of sand lined on one side by gracious 1920s hotels and on the other by the sweetly sighing Pacific. Strangely, this does not take away from my experience. Rather, it lifts Hawaii out of the confines of a two-dimensional postcard and makes it a real place, a place where people are tangled in off ramps and supermarket checkout lines.

One of the best meals I've ever had in Hawaii was in an industrial district at an unassuming little place where local mechanics and retail workers and office managers were picking up their takeout before heading back to their offices. Of course, Hawaii isn't a non-

stop vacation for every single person there. Of course not. Who's going to keep the lights on if there's nothing but vacationers in a two-dimensional paradise? What was I thinking?

There are a number of flavors of wrong one can be in this life. I've gone to the airport on the wrong day, taken the subway the wrong direction, blown past my exit on that Italian toll highway, requiring an illegal u-turn and, ouch, double the toll payment. That kind of wrong is inconvenient at best, expensive and destructive at worst. And that wrong turn isn't always bad — who knows what you'll find if time allows you the leisure to make a mistake.

I regretted leaving Florence a day early because I'd read my train ticket wrong, but I didn't regret the extra night in Amsterdam; it gave me a chance to see the Rembrandts I'd missed on the arrival leg of my trip.

But the wrong that rattles preconceived notions is my favorite kind of

wrong. I enjoy the surprises, the way wrongness forces me to adjust my assumptions, my expectations. I'm not saying I've learned to ditch my expectations entirely. I've simply learned that they're likely to be questioned. Being wrong creates the opportunity to truly learn something about a place.

Good travel becomes great when you learn something new about the world, its people, and, ultimately, yourself. Sometimes the lessons are patently obvious — of course there's a Kenyan middle class! Sometimes, the lessons are more subtle, serving to deepen your understanding of a place.

Take the traffic in paradise, for example. The island of Oahu used to have a railway, used mostly by sugar cane workers, but it also carried passengers and the mail. Like many American rail systems, this one was abandoned with the rise of the automobile. At the Bishop Museum, visitors watch movie footage that

includes shots of little streetcars running through the Honolulu of another time. There's a whole *why* to the traffic of this city in the middle of the Pacific — the history of sugar, the people who profited from it, those who did the backbreaking work of growing it, and, ultimately, the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in the 1890s. I learned all of this by exploring a small, erroneous preconception: I didn't expect there to be all this traffic in my vacation paradise; what's up with that?

I don't advocate going to a new place completely blind just to experience the joys of wrongness. That's foolish and dangerous. A little context goes a long way toward being a good global citizen — and toward not feeling like an idiot. I do highly recommend examining your notions about the place you're visiting, then start collecting the things you've got wrong. What you've learned will last long after the ink on the postcards has faded. ♦

by Pam Mandel

Freelance travel writer and photographer

“To travel is to discover that everyone is wrong about other countries.”

— Aldous Huxley

STRENGTH of a Woman

by Jessica McCurdy Crooks
Writer, proofreader and self-proclaimed bibliophile

We look at a woman, and most of us notice her physical attributes: how she dresses, her hairstyle, or how she carries herself. On closer look, we realize that none of these are really her true embodiment. She is so much more than these outward expressions or signs ... yet the wise woman somehow seems to know that the two are inextricably linked.

For example, we see how the elaborate headdresses and colorful wraps of the African woman help to tell her story in a way that words cannot. When matched with her

traditional outfit, they denote pride and a fierce sense of self that compel you to look at her and respect her strength.

The strong, devil-may-care look of the iconic biker chick may scare some people enough to leave extra room on the sidewalk, yet there is no denying that her attitude is strong and fearless, and in this strength we see a certain beauty. She embodies the carefree and bad-ass attitude so many women only dream of, and perhaps are afraid to explore.

When a
woman is
standing in
her full wisdom
and grace,
she is power
personified.



The same can be said for the Rastafarian woman. Whether her locks are flowing or wrapped up above her head, it is easy to understand why she is often referred to as an empress or queen. The regality of her walk and mannerisms is compelling. Well-known Rastafarian women like Rita Marley, widow of reggae icon Bob Marley, who now fights for social change in impoverished parts of the world, and Toni Morrison, beloved author and professor emeritus at Princeton University, both present an outward image that is undeniably a reflection of their inner selves.

“So amazing how this world was made. I wonder if GOD is a woman. The gift of life astounds me till this day – I give it up for the woman”

Lyrics from:
“Strength of a Woman (Single) — Shaggy, 2002

© marocogarmicha



Perhaps when a woman truly knows who she is, only then is she free to adorn herself accordingly and live the fullest expression of herself. It's at this intersection of style and substance that a woman rises to take on her personal power, a force that can change the world.

The Women Who Fought for Human Rights

Since the beginning of time, wise women have exhibited a strength that was unexpected of them, often when facing violence, hatred and oppression. Were they born into it or forced by circumstance? We may never know. We do know that their courage, their wisdom and their truth stood up to oppression in many forms.

In her simple suit jacket and tie-neck blouse, Jeanne Manford looked every bit the typical middle-aged mom when she hit the national spotlight. Manford, blithely unconcerned for her safety or popular opinion chose to

walk with her son Morty in a Gay Rights parade in 1972, a time when homosexuals were widely considered “sick” and frequently met with violence and disgrace. (Morty himself had been hospitalized from a severe beating.)

In the process of supporting her son, she formed the group Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG). Manford's quiet yet public love and support for her gay son helped open the door for families and friends to begin to understand and accept the homosexuals in their own lives.

The SF Gate, in an article published on January 10, 2013, quoted San Francisco's Senator Mark Leno as stating that “for her to step into the street to declare support for her mentally ill, outlaw son — that was no small act ... But it was what a mother's love does.” This schoolteacher-turned-social activist was eventually awarded the Presidential Citizens medal in 2012 for her work.

“With her smile and her style, She'll protect you like a child – That's a woman”

"She'll put a smile upon your face And take you to that higher place So don't you under estimate The strength of a woman"

© Rainer Junker



Manford joined a long tradition of women who stood against injustice despite the risks. Rosa Parks, Dorothy Rogers Tilly and Eleanor Roosevelt join lesser-known names like Doris Derby, Yuri Kochiyama and Septima Clarke as women who pioneered the fight for civil rights.

Susan B. Anthony was just 17 years old when she was named state agent for the American Anti-Slavery Society in New York. She also actively fought for equal rights for women, getting arrested in the process. We've heard the names Harriet

Tubman and Harriet Beecher Stowe, Anne Knight and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, but do we really understand the bravery it took to stand strong in the face of oppression, armed only with words, passion and a woman's sense of what's undeniably right?

Warrior Women Through History

They fought alone or alongside their men for the benefit of their people. They were not afraid to face their foes head on or to use the tactical skills that their femininity gave them. The archetypal warrior woman has been a compelling feature throughout history, in every culture.

Queen Boudicca found herself thrown into conflict after her husband Prasutagus died in 60 AD, leaving a will that left his kingdom in conflict. She suffered flogging, the rape of her daughters, and financial ruin before rising to lead the Celtic Icenii forces in successful revolts against the Roman Empire.

Grace O'Malley, a Gaelic chieftain and seafaring leader, dared to demand and defend what was hers in the decidedly man's world of the late 16th century. Like many strong-willed women of her time, she was reviled for promiscuity that would have been overlooked had she been a man. It is not surprising that she reportedly had red hair to suit her fiery Celtic heritage.

Nanny of the Maroons or "Queen Nanny" — Jamaica's sole national heroine — was a fierce leader and master of guerilla warfare against the British Redcoats and was successful in her fight to keep her people, Africans who had escaped slavery on the island, from a return to oppression.

These historical women embody a certain warrior archetype and, while their stories may be vastly different, there is a familiar thread running through each of protecting one's own and standing for what's right.



"She can take you on a high Be your comfort when you cry But if you look into her eyes You'll see the strength of a woman ... Strength of a woman"

The Modern Day Woman of Style and Strength

Women do not have to be warriors or rulers to harness their strength and bring a nation to its emotional knees. During the Turkish riots in 2013, a powerful image emerged of a young woman being pushed back by the blast of pepper spray from heavily armed riot police. Due to the viral photograph that captured that shocking moment, Ceyda Sungur is now known as "The woman in the red dress," a reluctant yet unforgettable symbol of the Turkish resistance.

More recently, we witnessed the slender and graceful African American female Ieshia Evans, who serenely faced riot police

this summer in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, with a calm that belied her size and captivated our hearts. The simplicity of her flowing summer dress and her peacefully resistant demeanor showed determination and strength that has been captured and shared in that one iconic picture.

And the world will never forget the sweet, childish face of the Afghan teen who was shot in the head simply for wanting an education. Malala Yousafzai has gone through what few adults could have endured and has come out smiling and still wanting to help other women. This teen, in her Islamic dress and hijab, garners our utmost respect and attention in the same way that the female Kurdish fighters do. Like Malala, the Peshmergas fighting ISIS are ordinary young women with a desire to help protect other women, reportedly applying makeup before heading into battle. If they are going to die, they say, they want to die looking pretty.

Strength of a Woman:

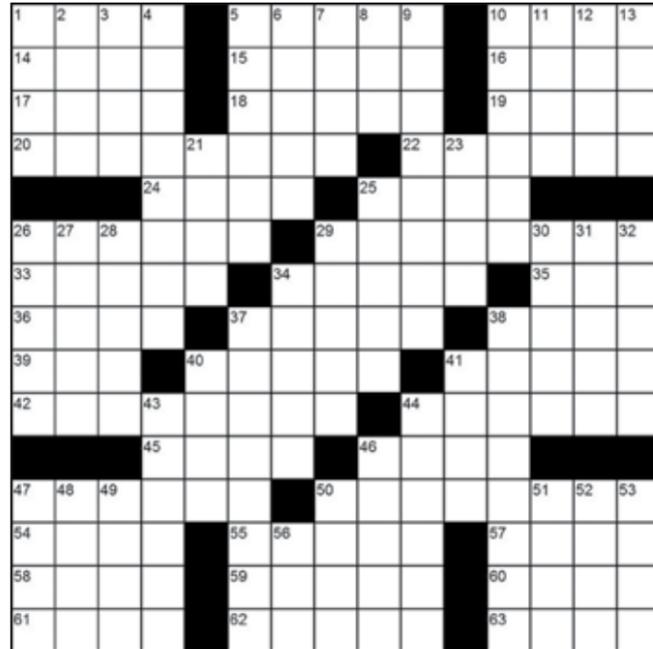
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LivFun Brain Games

Crossword & Sudoku
John Pearson, Puzzle Editor

Crossword Puzzle

Get Smart!



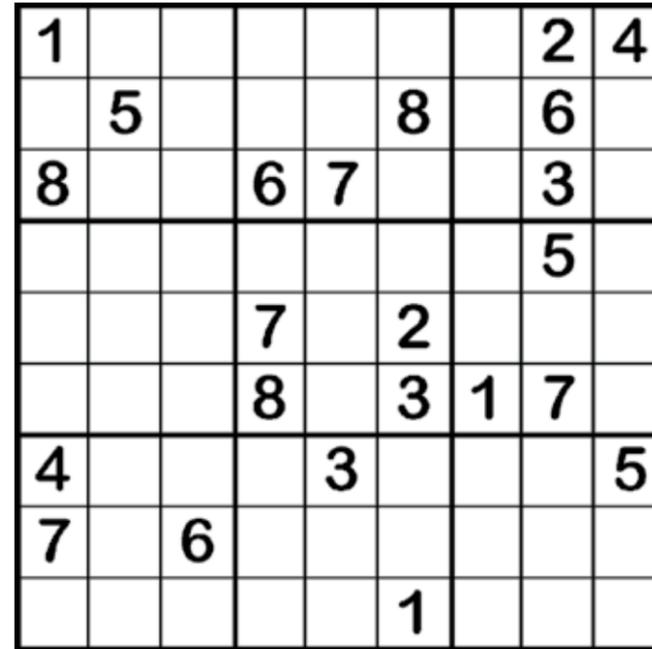
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ACROSS

- 1 WWII group, informally
- 5 Corners
- 10 Bad cut
- 14 Resound
- 15 North African capital
- 16 Orchestral neighbor of the bassoon
- 17 Olympic Heiden
- 18 More than large
- 19 Vale
- 20 Feeble
- 22 First part of this puzzle's theme quote
- 24 Surrounded by
- 25 South-of-the-border fare
- 26 Type of acid
- 29 "Slippin' Into _____"
- 33 Kitchen helper
- 34 Supporting fungal growth
- 35 Its capital is Montgomery, abbr.
- 36 Clark's co-worker
- 37 Fogs
- 38 Sitter's challenge
- 39 Overnight stop, perhaps
- 40 Wise ones
- 41 Saintry devotion
- 42 Second part of quote
- 44 Last part of quote
- 45 Campus org.
- 46 Pull down
- 47 Zambia neighbor
- 50 Not hostile to inhabitants, U.K. var.
- 54 Setting of Camus' "The Plague"
- 55 Omit
- 57 Type of bed
- 58 Interstate sight
- 59 His first group was the Decibels
- 60 Entree choice
- 61 Shoe options
- 62 Becomes weepy, with "up"
- 63 Most spiders have eight

Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.



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DIFFICULTY ★★☆☆☆

DOWN

- 1 After tumble or dill
- 2 One of the lower forty, maybe
- 3 Fashionable
- 4 Source of this puzzle's theme quote
- 5 Equatorial climate
- 6 Hydrophobic
- 7 Materially aid
- 8 Partner of "ne" in Nice
- 9 Managers
- 10 Sponsored child
- 11 Not up
- 12 Go at it alone
- 13 The Band's Levon
- 21 Arabian noble
- 23 Repulsive
- 25 Lore
- 26 Go off-script
- 27 Common folklore character
- 28 Giving the once-over
- 29 Cheaper number?
- 30 Some jugs
- 31 Layered rock
- 32 Companion of Dionysus
- 34 Really special
- 37 The first one to leave
- 38 Ship's compass support
- 40 Type of job
- 41 Stoma
- 43 People frequently in the news
- 44 Those separating
- 46 Downy duck
- 47 Top notch, with "the"
- 48 Domain
- 49 After floor or table
- 50 League in Barcelona
- 51 Hee-haw
- 52 Calcium oxide
- 53 Eases back
- 56 County in North Carolina

BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS ON PAGE 42

Healthy U

Good Health 101 and Beyond



Wisdom, Beautiful and Flawed

"Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers." — Alfred Lord Tennyson

by Stephan J. Smith
Doctor of Chiropractic

Wisdom – it takes many forms, and we often seek it from the people we associate with and rely on. We seek wisdom in our mentors. We look for it in the professionals we use – our doctors, attorneys, accountants and financial planners are (we hope) wise in our eyes due to their experience in their field. Most of us also eventually recognized the wisdom in our parents; funny thing isn't it, how they became so much wiser the older we got?

Yet what exactly is wisdom? The word is bandied about so much that maybe we don't give it a second thought. Is wisdom learned from books we've read? Is it derived from things we've heard? Certainly these sources can be valuable, but they can also be biased and inaccurate. What about the wisdom gained from our own experiences? Raising our families, working

in our professions, losing and gaining money, friends, loves and possessions — all of these things form who we are and how we interpret our world.

The wise heart can listen to a person speak or give advice and find that it either resonates as wisdom and truth, or it doesn't. Yet this is a subtle process. There is a kernel of truth in most opinions, no matter how different from our own; that's why it's so important to keep an open mind and listen to opposing viewpoints. From those bits of truth we can build common ground.

Wisdom, of course, takes many forms. Your mother's wisdom may have been the ultimate in truth to you, but may fall flat for someone much older or younger than you or someone who comes from a different part of the country. Our personal body of wisdom – that which we know is right – is

affected by cultural, political, social, economic and religious influences.

If that's the case, then who really is wise? We all are, to the extent that we seek to understand the larger meaning behind our experiences.

Each of us has wisdom to offer in our own way, in our own place, and for our own reasons. Is it perfect? Nope. But life isn't perfect and people aren't perfect, so wisdom isn't flawless either. Wisdom, rather, is the culmination of a person's thoughts and opinions on life, flavored by their experiences along the way, and shared in the hopes of helping someone else on their own journey. Without this, we'd all be stumbling along in the dark, hoping to find our way.

Sharing your wisdom and being open to receiving from others is the light that brings us home. ♦

Money Matters

Common Sense and Professional Advice

*“We’re all made of stories.
When they finally put us underground,
the stories are what will go on.”*

— Charles de Lint



Seems every generation
learns these lessons the hard way.
Can you help ease their pain?

by Sue Peterson

Managing Director, Cornerstone Advisers in Bellevue, WA

What are your family legends? Did your father walk to school both ways uphill in the snow like mine did? Or turn down the opportunity to open a McDonald’s franchise in the ’60s because “who eats burgers?”

As Charles de Lint says so beautifully, “We’re all made of stories. When they finally put us underground, the stories are what will go on.”

What are your family’s legendary stories around money? Do you talk about the times when you barely had enough to pay the rent, owned a junker car that left you stranded, or only ate potatoes in college?

There’s usually a deeper purpose than just reminiscing when we share these kinds of stories with the younger generation, some nugget of wisdom we are hoping to pass along.

As a grandparent, you are in a unique position to share struggles, good choices and regrets, and insights gained with your grandchildren about your lifetime relationship with money. Not in the form of a three-point sermon, but as a story in which you, as the main character, faced a conflict and in its resolution learned a valuable lifelong lesson.

It may seem in today’s world that the younger generation may never have written a check. They use their iPhone to purchase a cup of coffee, and they mistake reality TV for real life. You might think you can’t relate your experiences to their world or are hopelessly out of date. Remember what Solomon said: There is nothing new under the sun. As you share your stories, you might want to intentionally focus on a few key principles that every generation needs to learn (and re-learn!).

For each story, consider the personal impact on your family both in the past and today. For example, in my own case, my dad had to work almost full time during college, and he has shared that he felt like a zombie most of the time. It impacted his ability to fully participate in college life and meet friends. As a result, a financial goal for his children was paying for their college tuition. That in turn became a goal of mine as well, and I share that story with my son. In a very real way, my father’s grandson now directly understands the power and personal impact of a determined goal set more than 40 years ago.

What financial situations do your grandchildren find themselves in where you could encourage them with a personal story? They may have never thought about you as a struggling young person, seeing only the end results of years of hard work and financial planning. They may think their own struggles are unusual, embarrassing or even shameful. Dare to be vulnerable and share a past mistake or important learned principle, and your relationship will be stronger for it.

When suitable and possible, propose how you could help. This could include matching savings, offering to be a sounding board for a financial decision (without “shoulding”), or setting a challenge goal (e.g., both giving up purchasing your daily coffee for a month) and then celebrating when it’s met!

In a world where money is now so abstract, concrete stories of the power of deferred gratification, saving or financial goal setting are incredibly important to ground your grandchildren in reality. Share your own stories; make yourself a character in theirs, and your financial legacy will go on for generations. ♦

4 Ways to Get the Conversation Started

Try these topics to engage the younger generation on your thoughts about money, finances, and living a rich life.

1. **Live within your means.** What choices or sacrifices did you make when you were first starting out that paid rich dividends later? What financial decisions do you regret? Why?
2. **Save for a rainy day.** Did you lose a job, have a baby sooner than expected, or face a big car repair bill? What could have happened if you hadn’t had a reserve, or what did happen that taught you to always do so in the future?
3. **Set financial goals.** What have yours been? How have they evolved and why? How did you and your spouse work together to meet them? What has been the positive outcome(s) of those objectives?
4. **Small amounts matter.** What savings disciplines permitted you to purchase your first home or even retire? What small expenses did you elect to defer or perhaps cut out entirely to make that possible?

T H R O U G H T H E
L O O K I N G G L A S S



In a moment
of terror,
one woman
comes to terms
with vanity,
hope and what
lies beyond.

by Skye Moody

Novelist, essayist, photographer
and world traveler

I'm just vain enough to stare up close in a magnifying mirror to consider the tiny bump on my lower eyelid. Ingrown eyelash? Likeliest of possibilities; certainly not a mosquito bite, like the one that gave me malaria years ago. Nothing to fret over.

Problem is, I'm compulsive by nature and take it out on the little things. For example, I see someone's slip peeping below the hem of her dress. I have to avert my eyes, even escape the scene to prevent my telling her. Who knows? She might intend her slip to show, consider it a sly come-on to prospective partners. What business have I to take out my compulsions on her slip?

My mother always admonished her children to groom and dress as if they were going to meet the Queen of England. Alas, the habit stuck. An example of my obsession with looking my best: A few years ago, when my husband and I were separated and I lived alone in a small apartment that verged on the building's garage, one night I heard a bicycle thief attempting to saw the lock off my neighbor's bicycle in the garage. Leaping out of bed to go after the thief, I tossed on some clothes and started after him. But passing a mirror, I realized that my shirt and pants didn't go well together, so I ran back to my closet and threw together a more fashion-forward outfit and then ran outdoors after the thief. He was still sawing away and I ran him off, then returned to bed and slumber. I don't recall what, if anything, I wore to bed that night.

The bump remained on my eyelid for a year and a half until one day, peering into the magnifying mirror, I observed that the little devil had

migrated toward my tear duct. This was unacceptable. What if I had to cry about something and my tear duct was plugged up? Would I drown from within? Oh, never mind, I tell myself. And then I have an epiphany.

You know those tiny eyelashes that start to grow in the wrong direction and poke your eyeball? If your eyeball is suffering sharp pains, that's usually the cause, and your ophthalmologist will lecture you about not trying to pull them out with tweezers, but rather, come into his office and allow an expert with a microscope to tweeze out the nasty lash.

It's good advice, but I ignore it and now, a year later, I recall that I had tweezed out a slatternly lash just about where the bump now resides on the lower lid. Aha, I tell myself, herein lies the source of the mysterious bump.

No big deal. Next time I visit the ophthalmologist, I'll simply confess my impinging on his territory, and he'll make it all better again. Somehow.

The day arrives, June 8 of this year, and I sit obediently in the chair as Dr. Pham runs me through all the charts, which I know by heart, pupil dilations, and a few more exercises I don't comprehend. Then Dr. Pham surprises me by wheeling backward on his rolling chair and appearing from behind his microscope.

"You have cancer," he pronounces. "I am sending you immediately to the eyelid surgeon."

Frankly, in this moment of terror, I am less intrigued by the cancer than by the fact that such a person exists as an eyelid surgeon. But within 10 minutes, I am under the scrutiny of Tim Heffernan, MD, renowned as the

most competent eyelid surgeon in the Pacific Northwest.

"You have cancer on your eyelid," Dr. Heffernan says, confirming Dr. Pham's diagnosis.

Now reality takes hold. Dr. Heffernan is a gentle soul, but by his buff physique and the bare-chested rowing photo on his windowsill, I see he's no milquetoast. He is an athletic, even powerful, man and I realize that he's a perfectly healthy human being, and I am not.

How was I supposed to figure out that a tiny bump amounted to cancer? And anyway, it's probably only a teensy basal cell carcinoma, a half dozen of which have already been excised from various sites on my body. Fair-skinned beings have no business spending a decade or more under the equatorial sun without sunscreen. Ignorant fair-skinned beings do this far too often.

Next follows a biopsy. I go around with stitches in my lower eyelid that cause me to resemble one of those old rag dolls with exaggerated black stitched eyelashes ... on one eye. Pretty.

Two weeks pass in agony (thanks, compassionless Insurance Company and your two-week waiting period), and questions prey on my rattled mind. I'm told that basal cell carcinomas are measured on a scale running from virtually benign to close to melanoma. Thanks, Nurse, that's just what I didn't want to hear. She's being kind, actually, preparing me for potential realities to come.

Two surgeries are scheduled, 18 hours apart. The first is the cancer removal by a cancer surgeon, Dr. Birkby. Post-surgery, half-conscious, I watch as

**“Frankly,
in this moment
of terror, I am
less intrigued by
the cancer than by
the fact that such
a person exists
as an eyelid
surgeon.”**



“A
discussion
ensues between
two physicians,
and the decision
is made that I’m
brave enough
to see the
damage,
that I won’t
vomit on them
or pass out.”

Dr. Birkby draws me a picture of what he has just excised from my eyelid and, well, the skin below. He got it all, he assures me, and his sketch tells a story that causes me to cringe.

The bump on the eyelid, I see when studying the sketch, is but the tip of a growing iceberg. The excised portion of eyelid and skin below resembles a blob with long erratic-edged branches shooting out in three directions. I recall the brochure they’d given me pre-surgery. It told me that basal cell carcinoma can grow branches that, if not treated in time, may move to an adjacent organ. My eyeball? My brain?

Dr. Heffernan pooh-poohs such worrisome text, although the brochure came from his office. Still, I’m beyond relieved that the cancer surgeon cut that baby out, taking extra skin around its borders to ensure he got it all.

Now what do I look like, I wonder.

I ask to see under the eyepatch applied to my freshly wounded face. A discussion ensues between two physicians, and the decision is made that I’m brave enough to see the damage, that I won’t vomit on them or pass out. They lift the eyepatch and hold up a mirror. The wound reminds me of looking into a funhouse mirror; my eyelid split, a long downward vee where the scalpel had removed the rest of the tumor and its branches.

“Okay,” I say. “I’ve seen enough. Patch me up.”

The next day, two dear friends accompany me to the hospital to wait while reconstructive surgery is performed. One, a gentleman I am seeing, has to help me fill out forms because I am unable to read with one eye patched. I fear he’s going to see my age on the form. I don’t want him to know

“Peering into a magnifying mirror
once a week never hurt anyone.”

my age, so I whisper to the receptionist to please not state my age.

“Oh, don’t worry, honey. I got your back on that one.”

Every single page my friend helps me complete shows my age prominently in the upper right-hand corner. There are about seven pages, and the odds of the boyfriend missing that number decline as fast as I wish my age would. He never confesses; maybe he’s being tactful. Whatever, let’s get this show on the road.

Before they gas me to nirvana, I tell Dr. Heffernan that I’m vain, plead with him to match my ravished side with the other side of the face, the side I recognize as me. He chuckles and says, “Remind me to tell you a funny story about vanity.”

I tremble at the thought of a funny story about vanity, and then recall his buff photos on the office windowsill.

Still, can you trust a guy who jokes about vanity? I’m under now, asleep, at his mercy.

Hours later, I’m home in bed, the surgical area patched, and started on a 24/7 icing regime that becomes tedious to the max just before it switches to hot compresses, then it’s torture. So not to play the victim, the day after the two surgeries, I climb out of bed, dress, and apply a different patch over the hospital’s medieval version, preparing to go down to the lobby and greet my neighbors.

This patch was handmade for me by a friend in New Orleans. He had gone to the French Market and found a pirate’s patch and some jewels. Removing the uncomfortable elastic, he hand-sewed tulle ribbon to the patch, then applied the jewels to the front.

It’s so beautiful that when I finally get to remove it, one of my neighbors complains. For a split second I am of-

fended, but the patch is that beautiful, that exotic.

At home, I go patchless, and finally, weeks later, when the black eye and swelling disappear, I remove the patch altogether, place it in a charming box of mementoes to rest there, hopefully, forever.

Here’s the scoop on vanity: Stripped down to its barest properties, such as good hygiene, grooming, and generally caring for one’s physical gifts, vanity’s sometimes a window into critical knowledge. (Paranoia is absolutely discouraged.) Peering into a magnifying mirror once a week never hurt anyone.

Dr. Heffernan’s joke about vanity? Well, it’s his to tell, and it really is funny. Eyelid surgeons, it seems to me, ought to maintain a sense of humor, because when cancer knocks, someone has to open the door and let in some lightness and hope. ♦

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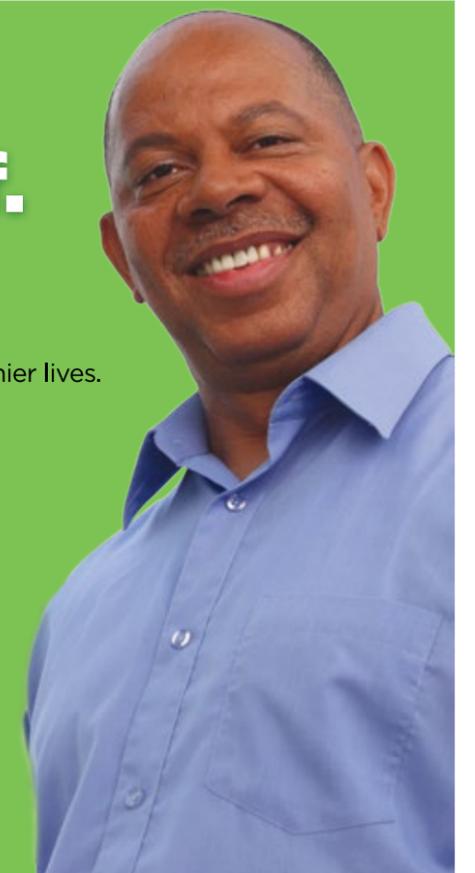
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SERVICE

Making A Difference
For Generations



The three Senior Corps programs – RSVP, Senior Companions, Foster Grandparents are administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, the federal agency that improves lives, strengthens communities and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering.



Advice for the Journey

Personal Advice and Expert Opinions



by Arica VanGelderens, LLMSW

Clinical social worker and therapist

Question: My daughter and son-in-law came over for a visit last Sunday with my 3-year-old grandson, James. While the men were playing with James outside, my daughter confided in me about some concerns their pediatrician had about James' development. The doctor recommended he undergo testing for Autism Spectrum Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

James seems like a normal, healthy child to me; I was pretty surprised when she told me this. I was also irritated. It seems like everywhere I look another child is diagnosed with and often medicated for some new mental or developmental disorder, practically unheard of when I was a child. In my opinion, kids will be kids, and the burden is on the parents to teach their children responsible behavior. I must have shown my irritation without

meaning to, because my daughter accused me of being unsupportive and closed-minded.

I do want to support my daughter and her family, and I care immensely about the well-being of my grandson; that's exactly why I felt the need to speak up about this. Why should he have to go through that testing process and end up with a label for the rest of his life? I don't mean to be pushy or judgmental, but my daughter is still angry with me and refuses to listen to my point of view. I feel that I have a right to express my opinion, especially because I have years of parenting experience under my belt and none of my children were ever medicated or labeled like this.

We have always had a close and loving relationship, and I thought she respected my input and advice. Am I way out of line, or is she?

Answer: It sounds like your daughter may have been looking for a different type of response when she decided to confide in you. Being a mom yourself, you can relate to the anxiety that accompanies any type of concern regarding your child's development or well-being, especially when it comes from a trusted source like a pediatrician.

She may have chosen to share the information with you because she was hoping for reassurance or emotional support, perhaps even as one mother to another. When she didn't receive that response, she felt vulnerable and lashed out in anger toward you, becoming defensive.

Sometimes when we are faced with a situation that threatens our sense

of stability and normalcy, we become less capable of communicating our emotional needs to those closest to us. This inability to fully explain and communicate the gravity and depth of the fear we are experiencing causes us to remain in an "activated" state until we can process the situation.

I believe your daughter does respect your input and advice. If she didn't, she never would have confided in you in the first place. She chose to share the information because of her sense of safety and closeness with you, but then reacted in anger when she didn't get the support, nurturing and love she expected to receive.

Try approaching your daughter in a way that clearly lets her know you

accept her feelings and know how vulnerable she must be feeling. You might say something like: "I'm so sorry you're going through these challenges, and I really appreciate that you confided in me. This must be pretty confusing and a little scary for you. I know it is for me. And I know you are acting out of the love you feel for your child, just as I always have with you."

This approach will go a long way toward mending the relationship between the two of you. You do not need to apologize for your personal opinions on James' development and whether this testing will have a positive or negative impact, but you can acknowledge that you missed an opportunity to offer your unconditional support and love. ♦



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What I Want Them to Know

A legacy letter or ethical will is a beautiful way to share what's truly important.

by Nancy Gertz

Health and well-being coach in Boston

When I was a kid we didn't talk about death; the subject was mostly taboo. Even the word 'cancer' was whispered or only referred to by inference. "She died, you know ... terrible disease." In recent years, as personal storytelling has become more popular on TV, the radio and the TED stage, we've dropped the veil and see more clearly into the private spaces of people's lives ... and deaths.

Many people are now writing "legacy letters" or ethical wills to their loved ones, not to determine who gets the good china when they die, but to preserve the thoughts and values that truly matter, to be read either while they are still alive or after they pass on.

"An ethical will is a letter we write to our loved ones to pass on our most cherished nonmaterial possessions: our values, guidance, wisdom, hopes and love," wrote Rabbi Elana Zaiman in a previous issue of this magazine (Zaiman, 2013).

"My father handed me his ethical will in 1978," she continues. "To this day, I continue to read it. Yes, we communi-

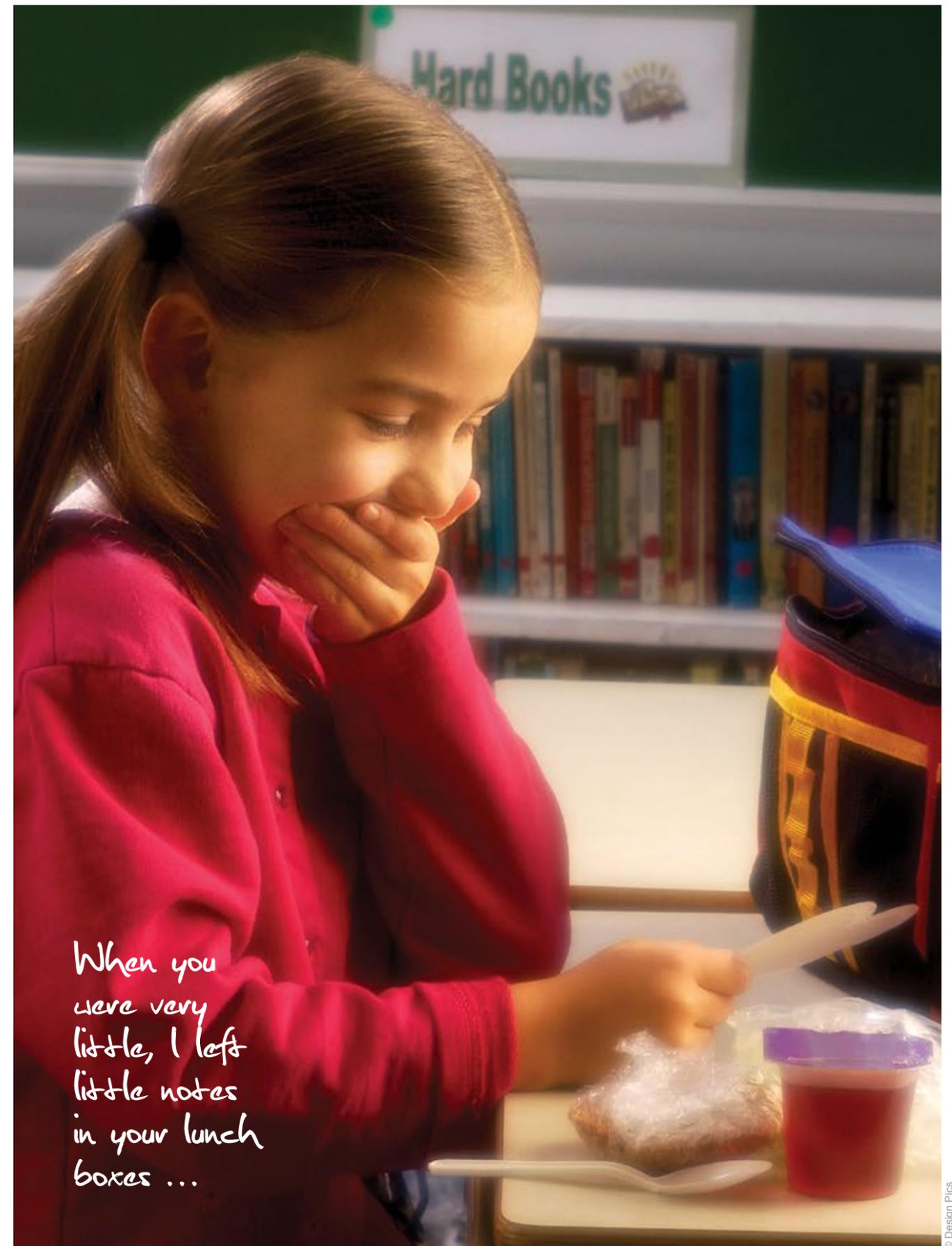
cate by email and we talk on the phone, though our day-to-day emails and phone calls don't carry the same depth of emotion, nor are they meant to."

A dear friend of mine who knew his life would soon be cut short wrote an ethical will for his daughters to hold onto after his death. He wanted to pass on his values — they were more important to him than his valuables, the latter well detailed in his last will and testament.

Of course, we need not be dying to put pen to paper in this way. One woman shared her feelings on addiction and her wishes that her beloved nieces and nephews would avoid its horrors:

"I pray that, if you would honor me and accept one small gift, then let it be this thought: Let true joy be the only addiction in your life! If joy eludes you, then change the nature of your engagement with this wondrous world. Simply try something different! Hope, inspiration and wonder are far more worthy companions than alcohol. Trust this, and God will guide you to your joy!"

For Them to Know: Continued on page 41



When you
were very
little, I left
little notes
in your lunch
boxes ...

Retire Like You Mean It
Your Life, Your Rules

TLC AND THE GREAT ALASKAN ADVENTURE

Travel as you like it
in some of the world's most amazing places.

Ahoy! Travel by Leisure Care has hosted some great adventures over the years, and this summer's cruise to Alaska aboard Holland America's *Westerdam* was no exception. Hosted by Leisure Care President & CEO Dan Madsen, residents from Leisure Care communities across the nation joined General Managers Meg Davidson and Scott Haile (the 2015 Presidential Award recipients), and Leisure Care's Guest Services Director Clint Fowler and his wife, Lisa, for the perfect combination

of luxury, fun, exploration, adventure and companionship as they cruised from Seattle to the ports of Ketchikan, Juneau, Sitka and Victoria over a span of eight days.

For some, this was their first experience aboard a cruise ship; they arrived unsure about what to expect but excited to make new friends and explore the beauty of Alaska. Others in the group had been cruising their whole lives and looked forward to the fine cuisine, endless opportunities for entertainment, and adventures that awaited.

by Lisa Fowler
Freelance writer in Seattle, WA



“For goodness sakes, when the next Leisure Care cruise comes along, be sure to sign up!”

— Kairle Terry, resident of Treeo in Orem, UT



What it's really like to take a trip with



Here's what one of our community members has to say about her recent experience:

I did it! I did it, I enjoyed it, and I had fun!

Two or three months ago I saw a brochure in our lounge advertising “Explore Alaska with the President of Leisure Care.” I thought, *Hmm, I haven't been there and I haven't done that*, so I started thinking about it. There didn't seem to be anyone else interested in my community, and I've never gone on a trip like this without someone I know, so I didn't decide right away.

It was two or three weeks before departure when I finally picked up the phone and called Carol Dennis (with Travel by Leisure Care) to ask some questions. I had apprehension like crazy! Oh my goodness, such emotions! But, I wanted to do it so I put all my doubts aside and went for it. **I am so glad I did!**

From the get-go Carol was so helpful in every way in making all my arrangements. There was a day when I could do this with a kid on my hip and one arm tied behind me, but not anymore. I tend to get uptight and a bit panicky when I do this sort of thing lately.

Carol not only made all the arrangements, but phoned me several times to update me and let me know

what the next step was. I so appreciated it, and it took all the pressure off.

I flew from Salt Lake City to Seattle in the morning, and Carol had timed my arrival in Seattle so I had plenty of time to take the bus from the airport to the dock and board the ship. There were people at baggage pick-up waiting to direct me to the bus to the port, and I just felt so comfortable because every detail was taken care of.

Once I was on the ship, Clint and Lisa took over, and they made the rest of the cruise a delight. The group that had signed up for the cruise were all fun and interesting people. As for all the details about the Alaska cruise, that's a whole other story. You will have to go and find out for yourself.

Would I do it again? Yes! I truly enjoyed myself, and I discovered a whole new side of me regarding doing new things and stepping out of my comfort zone and overcoming fears. For goodness sakes, when the next Leisure Care cruise comes along, be sure to sign up! I'll probably see you there.

Kairle Terry,
Leisure Care resident of Treeo in Orem, UT

Regardless of experience level, the Travel by Leisure Care team provided a top-notch *Five-Star Fun* experience and a good time was had by all.

On board, the Holland America *Westerdam* offered the perfect mix of relaxation and excitement. With amenities such as a casino, theater, multiple bars and lounges, retail stores, and dance floors, as well as a day spa, upscale and casual dining venues, and heated swimming pools, there were activities to suit every mood — all day, every day. Guests enjoyed magic shows, cooking demonstrations with celebrity guest chef Carnie Wilson,

dance classes, team trivia, card games, scavenger hunts, Broadway-style shows, and so much more.

On shore, there was no shortage of excursions or sights to see. From dog sledding to salmon fishing to wild life watching (bear, otter, eagle, whale, you name it), there was a new adventure at every turn. For those looking for a quieter option, simply perusing the Alaskan ports and being introduced to the heritage of each town was a great way to pass the time with friends old and new.

As guests of Travel by Leisure Care, travelers also enjoyed a number of exclusive activities, meetups and happy hours,

allowing plenty of opportunity to engage with their fellow travelers, learn about Leisure Care communities in other parts of the country, mingle with Dan and the other representatives of Leisure Care, and, most importantly, make new friends.

Folks were encouraged to go at their own speed and participate in what was of interest to them. They could do as much or as little as they wanted, allowing for a customized vacation experience for each traveler. From the time of booking the cruise to the return trip home, Travel by Leisure Care didn't miss a beat in providing a seamless, stress-free travel experience for all.

Proof Positive We're the Wise Ones

But where can we find solace
in a world with fierce melons?

by Jeff Wozer

Humorist and stand-up comedian

“What’s tan
to you and me
may be called
midnight eggnog
to one company
and dried
sandcastle beige
to another.”

Yes, without question, we, the 50 and older crowd, are infinitely wiser than the rest. My hunches support this. I don’t have the exact figures, but I’m guessing the number of people 50 and older with face tattoos, compared to the number of people younger than 50 with face tattoos, should serve as firm proof.

Another supporting hunch, the keystone of my bias, is that we bear hug what Confucius meant by, “Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated.”

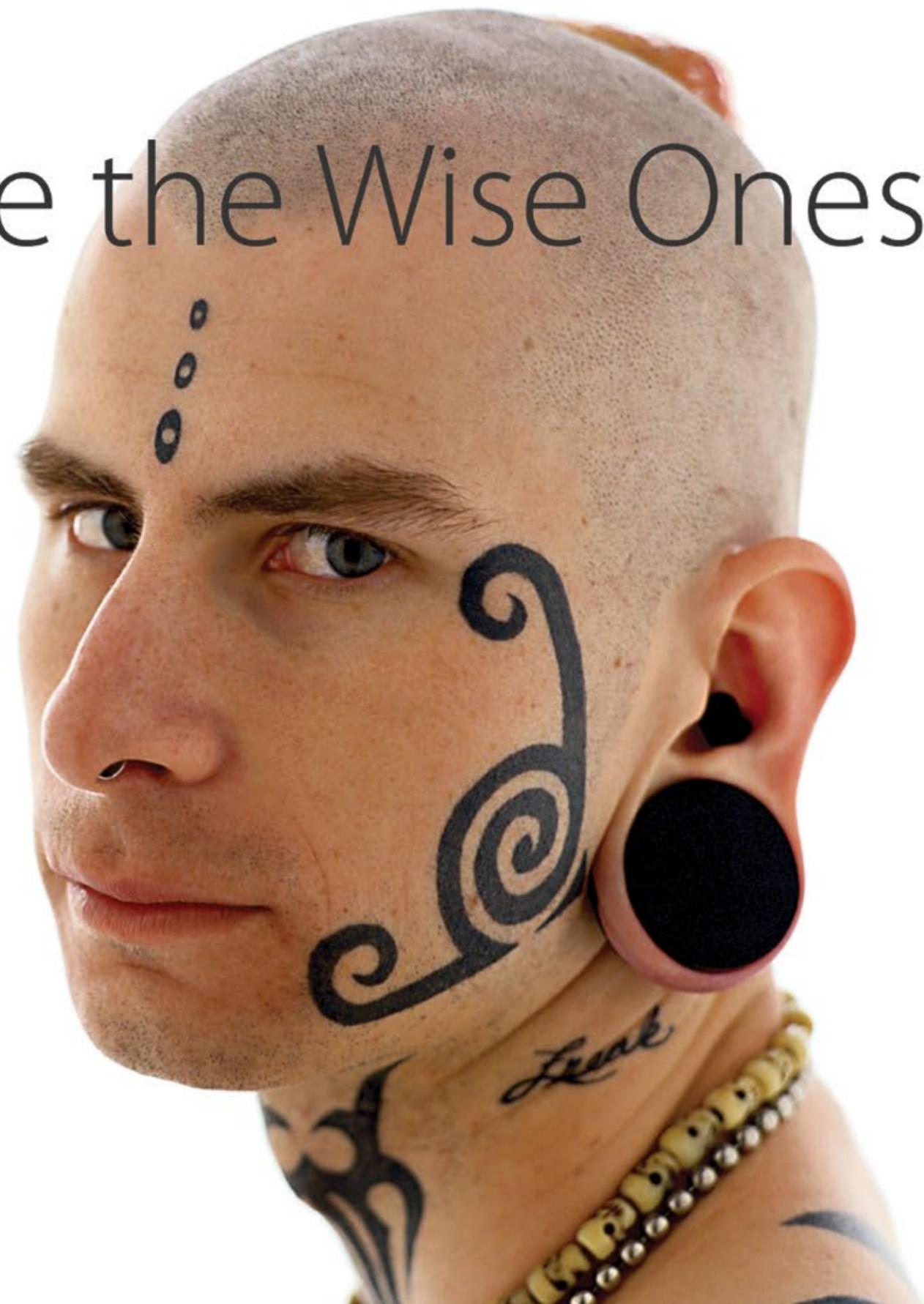
Unlike those younger in age, we recognize the virtues of simplicity. There is a high-white purity behind it. Less truly is more. This age-earned understanding frees us from mindlessly following society’s current compulsion to muddle life and find it necessary — and I say this both literally and figuratively — to reinvent the color wheel.

Thanks to today’s clothing industry there’s no longer a color consensus. What’s tan to you and me may be called midnight eggnog to one company and dried sandcastle beige to another. Our optical world has been purged of its simplicity.

I stopped ordering from a favorite Wyoming-based outdoor company in protest of the inanity of its colors. Teal is called ocean depths. Black is tap shoe. And gray, depending on jacket type, is either smoked pearl or Eifel Tower. Why? What’s the need for this? It only complicates life and may even put us at risk. If I witnessed three armed bank robbers dressed in black flee in a gray SUV and described them to police as three men dressed in tap shoe driving an Eifel Tower SUV with ocean depths wheel rims, I’d be arrested as an accessory.

Society’s crazed need to clutter life with confusion also grips beverage flavors. The naiveté of basing flavors on time-honored tastes — orange, grape, cherry — has been purged by the Huns of marketing in favor of flavors based on attitude and image.

Older But Wiser: *Continued on page 42*



The Teacher Appears as a Screaming Toddler

How a screeching child in a long post office line can be an amazing source of wisdom.

by Elana Zaiman

Rabbi, chaplain and writer in Seattle

*“As I have a low tolerance for noise, I noted myself becoming increasingly frustrated. So I decided to practice *hitlamdut*.”*

I did a little survey recently. I asked a few people (two of whom were high school students) the question, “Who is wise?” Their responses were wide ranging. Grandparents. Abe Lincoln. Someone who has insight. Someone who owns his mistakes and approaches his next mistakes with confidence. Someone who appreciates life. Someone who knows herself and who’s perceptive to the things around her. Someone who turns experience into wisdom.

Over the years, I’ve heard many insightful comments about wisdom, but the one to which I continually return is by the scholar Ben Zoma, who in *Pirkei Avot*, *Ethics of the Fathers*, a rabbinic text that contains short ethical precepts, asks this very question. He responds, “The person who learns from all people.” (*Pirkei Avot* 4:1)

Sounds simple, doesn’t it? I’d like to suggest that this is far from simple, that while we may be open to learning from people we love, respect or agree with, we’re not *really* open to learning from *all* people.

Think about it. Do you talk about your political views with everyone, or do you refrain from discussing politics with people who, for example, may be voting for a different presidential candidate? Do you talk about religion with people of different faiths or even with people of your own faith who are more stringent or lenient than you are? What about controversial topics like abortion, assisted suicide or capital punishment; are you open to discussing these topics with just anyone?

There’s more: Do we of an older generation attempt to understand our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who may be choosing to live their lives differently than we chose to live ours, or are we just concerned about making our opinions known? Do we of a younger generation try to understand from where our elders come, or do we ignore them, thinking they’re old school and have nothing to add to the decisions we are making in our lives? When we avoid talking with one another about topics that matter, we’re missing an opportunity to learn from one another, and thus to grow in wisdom.

On a deeper level, I believe that wisdom also comes from paying attention to and reflecting on our own internal reactions to all people. This approach is beautifully embodied in the *Mussar* movement that developed in Lithuania in the 19th century and, in particular, from the spiritual practice of *hitlamdut* (Hebrew root: L-M-D, to learn). Stated in the reflexive, *hitlamdut* asks us to be mindful of our thoughts, feelings and behaviors as we move through our day to notice when someone (or something) angers, hurts or frustrates us and then to internalize the learning from these moments.

I’ll use myself as an example.

I walked into the post office the other day and found myself in a long line. Shortly after, a mother and her two sons joined the line. One son sat in a stroller, pacifier in his mouth. The other, about four, ran around screeching. As I have a low tolerance for noise, I noted myself becoming increasingly frustrated. So I decided to practice *hitlamdut*. I closed my eyes, breathed deeply, and thought about what I could learn from this moment.

I found myself shifting my attention away from the boy and on to his mother, who was trying to manage her two children, and I found myself remembering how embarrassed I had felt as a young mother when my son had not behaved in public. Instead of feeling annoyed by this boy, I worked on feeling compassion for his mother. That was as far as I got at the post office.

It wasn’t until later in the day that I realized I had been annoyed even before I had arrived at the post office. I hadn’t wanted to do errands, and I certainly hadn’t wanted to end up on a long line. I also realized that I hadn’t even tried to engage with this child. Rarely do I see a child and not engage. Had I not been in my own closed and narrow place, I would have enjoyed the challenge of engaging with that four-year-old and getting him to giggle, which just may have brought his screeching to a halt. As I came to this self-understanding, I could have berated myself for not being the self I know myself to be, or the self I want to be. But I chose (in this instance, I am not always so wise) to forgive myself, appreciate my learning and move forward.

Try *hitlamdut* the next time your emotions threaten to get the better of you. It can be a truly humbling experience. ♦



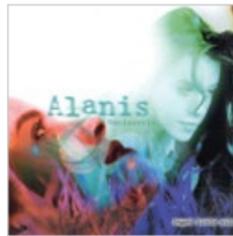
Early Summer (1951)

The Japanese master Yasujiro Ozu made films in which wisdom seems to slowly emerge from experience, tradition, and sometimes the landscape itself. In this quietly wonderful 1951 film, Ozu turns his attention to Noriko (Setsuko Hara, a Japanese star who died in 2015), a Tokyo secretary who lives with her extended family. At 28, she is already considered old for an unmarried woman. Her boss suggests she pair off with a successful older colleague, and the family approves of the idea — but we notice how well she gets along with a family friend, a widower. Adding a touch of melancholy: The widower knew her late brother, who died in the war. It's not Noriko's place to be assertive about this attraction, but she finds ways to modestly bring about the result she wants. Ozu plays this unsentimentally but with great feeling, finding time to cast a knowing eye at the community that surrounds his determined heroine. Noriko already seems prematurely wise; it's everybody else who needs to get up to speed. (DVD available on Amazon; streaming available on MUBI and Hulu)

MUSIC REVIEWS

by Joe Rodriguez / Freelance music writer

“One good thing about music; when it hits you, you feel no pain.” — Bob Marley



You Learn (Single) — Alanis Morissette, Jagged Little Pill, 1995

After years of being a child star for Nickelodeon's *You Can't Do That on Television* and becoming an award-winning pop diva in her native Canada, 19-year-old Alanis Morissette packed up and moved to Los Angeles to reinvent herself. With the help of music producer and songwriter Glen Ballard, Morissette cleansed herself of her sugary pop star tendencies and became rock's next big thing with her brooding, cynical, reflective lyrics and octave-skipping caterwauling vocals. “You Learn” was the first song she wrote for her multiple-Grammy-winning album *Jagged Little Pill*. The song starts with a simple hip-hop bass line and an electric acoustic guitar that lead into Morissette's breathy vocals. She wistfully recommends that living, loving, crying and losing are all part of learning. With each life experience big or small, we are gaining the wisdom and knowledge that enrich our lives. And she does it with a poignancy that is unforgettable.



Wisdom of Time (Single) — The Supremes, Floy Joy, 1972

The summer of 1972 was one of transition and difficulty in the world: The Watergate drama was unfolding, the Vietnam War was escalating, and the world was rocked by the tragedy at the Munich Games. It also ended a time of stagnation for The Supremes post-Diana Ross. “Wisdom of Time” is a hidden gem tucked away at the end of the erratic and uneven album *Floy Joy*. A shimmering spacey guitar and piano intro builds into a funky bass and drum line that lead into the angelic vocal duet of the Supremes' Cindy Birdsong and Jean Terrells. The main message of the song is of growth, change and hope that with time we can learn to heal and solve any of the issues the world can throw at us. It's just as relevant today to remind us all not to give into division and close-mindedness, but instead stand together with open minds.



Least Complicated (Single) — Indigo Girls, Swamp Ophelia, 1994

Why were things so much easier when we were young? On the Indigo Girls' fifth album, the folk rock duo takes a more reflective approach to song writing and become more personal with their lyrics. A great example of this new approach is the song “Least Complicated.” Beginning with a somber jangly guitar, singer Emily Saliers reflects on the scene below her second-story window as the kids walk by and reminisces on a time when everything was simpler and problems were easier to solve. The song asks why we make life so much more complex than it should be as we grow older, noting, “The hardest to learn was the least complicated.” Perhaps if we apply the simple wisdom we had as children to our “complicated” adult problems, we'd find a way to return to more simple pleasures. ♦

Everyday Women With Uncommon Strength

Style is unquestionably more than clothing and physical attributes; it is a presence, an essence of who you are as a woman. Readily coming to mind are the elegant Princess Grace of Monaco, the beautiful Queen Noor of Jordan, the lovely and loving Princess Diana, and the fierce and noble Grace Jones. They have a confidence that commands, “Look at me and see my truth.”

For many of us, it's the images of our mothers and grandmothers — those strong, solid pillars of the fam-

ily who disciplined with a stare or a gentle voice — that define a woman's style and strength. In my own life, these women were small in stature yet the sheer force of their will made them seem as giants. I can remember being quieted simply by the silent stare of my mom. No words were needed to get us to toe the line.

Was it their style that gave them this authority? Or did their authority — hard earned from life's lessons — give them their style?

When a woman stands in her strength, the two are inseparably intertwined. ♦

Read More:

- Davis-Kimball, Jeannine, Ph.D. (2003). *Warrior Women: An Archaeologist's Search for history's Hidden Heroines*. Warner Books.
- Fraser, Antonia. (2014). *Warrior Queens*. Random House.
- Olson, Lynne. (2002). *Freedom's Daughters: The Unsung Heroines of the Civil Rights Movement From 1830 to 1970*. Scribner.
- Shaggy. (2002). “Strength of a Woman” on *Lucky Dad* album. MCA Records.
- Yee, Shirley J. (1992). *Black Women Abolitionists: Study In Activism, 1828-1860*. University of Tennessee Press.

For Them to Know: Continued from page 30

Others feel compelled to share their feelings at moments of great significance in their lives. Then-President-elect Barack Obama did when he was about to be inaugurated:

“These are the things I want for you — to grow up in a world with no limits on your dreams and no achievements beyond your reach, and to grow into compassionate, committed women who will help build that world. And I want every child to have the same chances to learn and dream and grow and thrive that you girls have. That's why I've taken our family on this great adventure.”

I've recently decided to begin writing to my sons, and I confess — this is hard work. I stared at the blank pages for a long time, searching for the right place to start.

“I've written you many letters since each of you were born, usually on your birthdays and often when you or I were leaving for a period of time. One of my favorite things to do was give you a parting envelope with a letter, for the plane, for the bunk on the first night of camp, for the occasion we wouldn't be celebrating

together because we were separated. When you were very little, I left little notes in your lunchboxes, randomly, so you'd be surprised, and subtle, so you wouldn't be embarrassed if a friend copped a view of our little secret. As I write this now, I am wondering if you remember any of this ...”

I give myself permission to mess up. I tell myself I can keep revising this as time goes on. I write, cross out, get tearful, laugh a little and write some more. The important thing is that I begin.

I'm not done writing my letter — it's a work in progress, and I've only just finished the introduction! I'm realizing just how much of a challenge this is, so I'm going to take my time. I'll print it out every now and then (just in case I don't get to finish it, my boys will find it in my final papers) and go back to it when I'm feeling inspired. I'm not worried about the length; I just want it to feel right — to somehow speak for me when I'm gone. Even though it's not always comfortable — I sometimes get emotional writing like this — I'm going to keep at it. This opportunity is too important to let it slip by. ♦

How to Write Your Own Ethical Will

Inspired to try your hand at leaving your thoughts for your loved ones? Here are some resources to help you along the way.

To access (free) Stanford University Life Review letter templates, go to <http://tinyurl.com/wise-stanford>.

Read President Obama's entire legacy letter to his daughters on the occasion of moving the family into the White House in *The Huffington Post* at <http://tinyurl.com/wise-legacy>.

If you prefer to be interviewed and recorded, you can find a comprehensive list of Life Interview questions at <http://tinyurl.com/wise-interviews>.

Sources:

- Zaiman, Elana, Rabbi. (2013). “The Lasting Gift,” *LIV FUN*, Winter 2013, pp. 12-15.
- Excerpts used in the examples in this story are from sample letters published in www.life-legacies.com.

“True love stories never have endings.”

— Richard Bach

Older But Wiser: Continued from page 36

Quenching one's thirst has become secondary to quenching one's ego.

Gatorade, the top dog of the sports drink industry, offers a flavor called Fierce Melon. How a trailing plant from the gourd family long known for its deliciousness, especially during Sunday brunch, can be assigned an adjective better suited for a Siberian tiger escapes me. But rather than fall to this marketing ploy, I'm holding out hope Gatorade markets a more palatably sounding flavor like Obstreperous Berry.

There's also Glacier Freeze. What kind of taste reference do we have for this? It's a taste without proof. If you were to drink a cherry soda, you could confirm the taste by eating a Bing cherry. But outside of a select group of bearded research scientists measuring Arctic snow and several *National Geographic* photographers filming Emperor penguins, there are not many who can actually verify that Gatorade's Glacier Freeze does indeed taste like a frozen glacier. How do we, as thirsty consumers, know we're actually enjoying the taste of glacier and not some other unverifiable flavor like Irreconcilable Iceberg or Very Fierce Snowmelt?

Curious, I phoned the Gatorade hotline.

"Glacier Freeze," replied the Gatorade operator in a friendly and confident voice, "is a blend of three fruit flavors."

"So it's a marketing ploy?" I probed. "Not really," she politely answered. "It's just easier to call it Glacier Freeze than to actually list the three fruit flavors."

Yes, I thought, but when I imagine combining three fruits, I envision punch in a large glass serving bowl, not a massive, rock-strewn ice slab capable of reshaping the planet's surface.

I wanted to cite the irony of naming a high-energy sport drink after one of the planet's slowest moving features, but because she was cordial, I accepted her answer without challenge and thanked her for her time.

MiO, a liquid water energy drink enhancer, offers a flavor called Green Thunder. Admittedly, I have never pondered the taste possibilities of atmospheric sound, but it made me curious enough to examine the label for a possible weather-thirst proverb like, "Green thunder in morning, thirst take warning. Green thunder at night, thirst take flight." There was none.

And PowerAde, another sports drink giant, offers the

flavor Mountain Berry Blast, making it sound like an alpine laxative.

Where will this nonsense end? It's only a matter of time before scrambled eggs will be renamed disheveled spawn and hash browns pulverized russets. And when I try to order black coffee instead of tap shoe coffee, the younger members of my family will no doubt snicker, maybe even mockingly whisper, "What a simpleton."

But that's OK. I'll smile, taking quiet satisfaction in Leonardo da Vinci's quote, "Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication." ♦



BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS / From Page 18

Answers to Crossword Puzzle

W	A	C	S	T	R	A	P	S	G	A	S	H	
E	C	H	O	R	A	B	A	T	O	B	O	E	
E	R	I	C	O	B	E	S	E	D	E	L	L	
D	E	C	R	E	P	I	T	W	I	S	D	O	M
A	M	I	D	T	A	C	O						
A	C	E	T	I	C	D	A	R	K	N	E	S	S
D	R	Y	E	R	M	O	L	D	Y	A	L	A	
L	O	I	S	H	A	Z	E	S	B	R	A	T	
I	N	N	S	A	G	E	S	P	I	E	T	Y	
B	E	G	I	N	S	I	N	W	O	N	D	E	R
R	O	T	C	E	A	R	N						
M	A	L	A	W	I	L	I	V	E	A	B	L	E
O	R	A	N	E	L	I	D	E	C	R	I	B	
S	E	M	I	S	E	G	E	R	L	A	M	B	
T	A	P	S	T	E	A	R	S	E	Y	E	S	

Answers to Sudoku

1	6	7	3	9	5	8	2	4
3	5	4	1	2	8	7	6	9
8	9	2	6	7	4	5	3	1
2	7	1	9	4	6	3	5	8
5	8	3	7	1	2	9	4	6
6	4	9	8	5	3	1	7	2
4	1	8	2	3	7	6	9	5
7	2	6	5	8	9	4	1	3
9	3	5	4	6	1	2	8	7



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