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a Chukker**

**The Simple  
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A Publication of



www.leisurecare.com  
999 Third Avenue, Suite 4550  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Leisure Care**  
Chris Lucero  
VP, Sales & Marketing

Published four times per year  
for distribution to our residents  
and their families.

**Created by Wise Publishing Group**  
www.wisepublishinggroup.com

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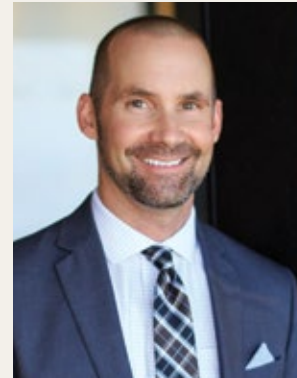
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**Production:** MLI Design / www.mlidesign.co • **Printing:** Journal Graphics / www.journalgraphics.com

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Ryan Rasar, COO, Leisure Care

## Letter From the Chief Operating Officer

### Building Communities With a Legacy of Caring

by Ryan Rasar, COO

Greetings and Happy Holidays! What a special time of the year with the holidays upon us. I hope all of you are doing well and looking forward to Thanksgiving and the magic of the holiday season. It always is a busy time in November and December, and also a great time to cherish family and friends. At Leisure Care, it's also an important time of the year, as we continue to put in place your feedback and comments from the Resident and Employee Opinion Surveys.

All of our communities and the home office take what you have to say very seriously. It helps us compile action plans and guides our energy where it needs to be directed. We also use this information in our annual business plans that each of our General Managers writes for their respective community this time of the year. In the plans, we identify what we are doing well and what we need to focus on. One of our main goals is to constantly improve how we operate and deliver service. With that in mind, we will be doing a second Resident Opinion Survey in 2017 to monitor how well we are doing with our action plans. This survey will be a much shorter version than the original, yet the goal is the same — to measure how we are doing and provide a platform for continued feedback.

It is such a pleasure to be a part of a collection of competitive and passionate leaders, people who strive every day to get better and be the best at what we do. This is the legacy we want to leave at the end of every day, and it starts with having the right people on our team, working in the same direction with the same vision. The talent at our home office and communities is impressive. Of course I am biased, but I truly believe we have an amazingly talented team of professionals who create great places to work, live and visit. Thank you for being a part of the Leisure Care family.

I also want to thank you for believing and living the Leisure Care values. Recently, I was reminded of this when I was speaking with one of our General Managers regarding a situation with an employee. What made me smile was when deciding what to do, the GM asked, "What is the right thing to do?" You see, this isn't just a catch phrase; it is something that guides us in the decision-making process, and it's how we've built a legacy of caring and trust. We don't claim to be perfect — but we do wake up each day with the goal of getting better and doing the right thing. In the process, we make the communities around us better places to live and work. It is an honor to be part of this team, and I look forward to a spectacular holiday season.

**Ryan Rasar**  
Chief Operating Officer, Leisure Care



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Expressing Your Unique Self

# Dividing the Spoils

Parsing the family loot among the emotionally bereaved, or relieved, can generate chasms of bitterness.

by Skye Moody

Novelist, essayist, photographer and world traveler

*“Once inside the family home that day, the scent of burning incense across her casket still fresh, every object acquires a critical sentimental value.”*

Is that thunder I hear, or me pounding my head against a doorframe?

Crack. Crack. Crack. Until my niece pulls me away, and by then I’ve bequeathed myself a football player’s concussion.

I don’t remember driving home. Later that evening, my younger sister phones to apologize for what she said, cruel words that triggered the head-banging, sparking such emotional trauma I need to injure myself physically in order to divert the source, and nature, of the pain itself.

I cannot speak, let alone think. I want to take the phone, tell her I forgive her, that I love her, and understand we’re all grieving, none of us are thinking clearly. But the concussion has rendered me as vocal and animated as a piece of the furniture.

Did I mention furniture?

Of course, that’s why I have a concussion. Our mother has recently passed away, and the three daughters, per Mother’s explicit directive, have swooped down on the sprawling ancestral home to arrive before the stepdaughters, lest non-blood relations grab the haul and abscond. As if. Her two sons are welcome to also join in this morbid rite — colloquially dubbed “dividing the spoils” — but wisely choose to absent themselves; there’s plenty to go around, even in the trickle down.

Her possessions seem to sough as we enter the vacated house. Ancestral booty, furniture and important paintings already antiques by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, heaps of sterling silver and ornate *objets* imbue our mother’s personally designed chambers with her brilliant eclectic style, punctuated by occasional fillips of droll humor: In a kitchen window bay, a bright yellow bowl of Italian porcelain shaped and painted to resemble a spray of bananas, two white monkeys seated atop, one peeling a banana while the other looks on in envy. A controversial piece only I will covet.

In her bedroom suite, jewelry boxes overflow with gold, diamonds, sapphires, pearls (she always wore pearls), and throughout this wing of the house, five huge closets are packed to the rafters with couture clothing, many garments still unworn, their designer tags attached.

Not merely a mother of five grown children, stepmother to six more, this stately doyenne was publicly acclaimed for her tireless charitable works and generous philanthropy. She gave her tithe and more, including once a week for decades, stepping off her wingback throne to roll up her St. John cardigan sleeves at the local Catholic seafarers’ charity, risking calloused hands and chipped manicures to serve hot meals and kindly words to homesick sailors from around the world, along with glimpses of her great beauty. I suspect that, like my father, many of the salty lads fell for her; those fabulous legs.

Widowed for a short time — every rich widower in town tries wooing her — she falls madly in love with a prosperous seafood merchant who elevates her financials even higher. More important, the second husband teaches her to relax, to laugh unguardedly, to tip more than one glass of Canadian and 7 of an evening. Unburdened of her scattered chicks, she freely kicks up her shapely ankles, traveling widely and painting the town turquoise (her favorite color).

The sorting and division of the departed lady’s possessions might’ve proved peaceable, reminiscently serene, if she’d owned, say, only a few dresses, a coat or two, a handful of costume jewelry, and a favorite couch. Yet I’ve heard nightmarish accounts of relatives dividing up such minor payloads. Never mind how trivial the spoils, dividing family loot among emotionally bereaved, relieved or simply greedy relations can generate chasms of bitterness, destroy lifelong mutual sibling affection, even result in murder.

While the matriarch is still living, I brag that I have no interest in inheriting family treasures; I care only that

the important art work and ancestral memorabilia remain in the family for the next generation to inherit, and pass down. Read: Squabble over. Yet, once inside the family home that day, the scent of burning incense across her casket still fresh, every object acquires a critical sentimental value. My siblings, too, possess vivid childhood memories attached to these same objects. For us, the monetary value of an inherited object means little; its sentimental stock is what skyrockets in the wake of our mother’s death.

We invent a dozen formulae for divvying up the spoils, an act that must constitute the ugliest aspect of a loved one’s departure and sickens my soul. The death triggers such bittersweet longing, such banal possessiveness that we fail to recognize ourselves, either as individuals or as the loving siblings we have been, until now. Thus, the first ugly words ever spoken to me by my equally grieving and possibly more distraught sister.

Why do we lash out during the division of the spoils?

I believe the dilemma lies in the freshness of a loved one’s passing. We’re still in shock, after all, awash in pain, each grieving in our own style, including swallowing a hefty dollop of anger that she deserted us, in my case, before I’ve made my peace with her. I am sensing that the family circle will rupture in the wake of her desertion. I sense that only she has kept us truly corralled as siblings who share a mother yet perhaps little else — except, of course, the spoils.

The words blurted by my sister’s grief-stricken persona in the wake of our mother’s passing remain the most vivid memory of that awful day, and I have only one question, but it’s for my mother, who cannot answer: Why the heck didn’t you leave behind a list detailing which child was to receive which item? Then again, perhaps the grand dame was getting in her last laugh, bequeathing us a test of our individual integrity. ♦



# Entertain Your Brain

Books | Movies | Music

Enjoy our reviewers' choices on the books, movies and music that touch on what's left behind.



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## BOOK REVIEWS

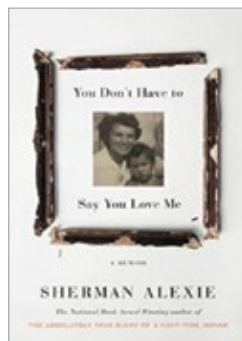
by Misha Stone / Readers' advisory librarian & Booklist Magazine blogger

*"Carve your name on hearts, not tombstones. A legacy is etched into the minds of others and the stories they share about you."* — Shannon L. Alder

### You Don't Have to Say You Love Me: A Memoir

by Sherman Alexie (Little, Brown and Company, \$28.00)

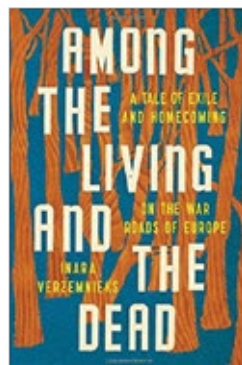
After his mother died, Seattle author Sherman Alexie found himself overflowing with poems exploring their complex, fraught relationship. Growing up on the Spokane, Washington, Indian reservation, Alexie's childhood was spent volleying between a delinquent, drunk but loveable father and a cold, withholding mother. Revisiting the complex dynamics that he and his mother shared, he reckons with their mutual stubbornness and their unnamed mutual mental illness — he believes both he and his mother suffered from an undiagnosed bipolar disorder. Through his writing, he begins to understand the trauma the world inflicts on indigenous women and how her personal pain prevented her from fully feeling and sharing love. This patchwork quilt of essays and poems is raw, vulnerable, funny and devastating. Alexie won the National Book Award for his autobiographical coming-of-age novel *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. But in his first memoir he shows he is an author whose voice will resonate and matter well beyond his lifetime.



### Among the Living and the Dead: A Tale of Exile and Homecoming on the War Roads of Europe

by Inara Verzemnieks (W. W. Norton, \$26.95)

Raised by her grandparents in Tacoma, Washington, Verzemnieks was weaned on stories of her immigrant family's struggles and their lost and fractured history in Latvia. Attending Latvian summer camps, she learned the language, folklore, history and songs of her culture and began to realize that Latvia's history is one of displacement. Her education continued into adulthood, as the former journalist and university professor learns that her grandfather was arrested by the Allies after the war. Like many of his countrymen, he was conscripted to fight for the Nazis when Germany invaded. It was a common story: Conquered and rounded up by Russia countless times, forced to fight in other country's wars, Latvians left behind a liminal country where loss and reclamation resound through the generations. This narrative nonfiction debut captures a lush, literary voice coming to grips with questions she may never fully answer.



## MOVIE REVIEWS

by Robert Horton / Film critic for *Seattle Weekly*

*"Talk low, talk slow, and don't say much."*  
— John Wayne

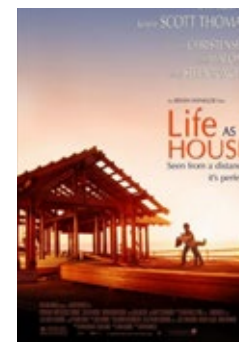
### True Grit (1969)

*True Grit* is a Western, exciting and funny, featuring the greatest star of that once-dominant genre. But *True Grit* is also a sneakily touching tale of a disreputable, cantankerous man stirred to pass along his hard-bitten know-how to a plucky teenage girl. The man is — of course — John Wayne, in his Oscar-winning role as the one-eyed, generous-bellied Rooster Cogburn. Rooster doesn't want a protégé, but he has one pressed upon him in the form of the determined Mattie Ross (Kim Darby), who means to find the varmint who killed her father. Also in the mix is a Texas Ranger, played by the late Glen Campbell, who's not much of an actor but manages to be appealing anyway. Wayne is frankly glorious, and the movie has a rich vein of humor drawn from Charles Portis' brilliant novel. At the movie's heart is a depiction of how expertise gets passed down (if reluctantly at first) and how even a grouchy coot like Rooster Cogburn has the makings of a teacher in him. (Jeff Bridges put his spin on the role in the Coen brother's fine 2010 remake.) (Available streaming on Google Play, Amazon and YouTube; on DVD from Amazon.)



### Life as a House (2001)

There's a good part for Kevin Kline in this low-key drama that wears its metaphor in its title. Kline plays a longtime employee — a model-maker — at a California architecture firm. When he learns he has only a few months to live, he sets about replacing his ramshackle cliff-top house with something new — a process he hopes will capture the attention of his troubled son (Hayden Christensen). Turns out the job also helps repair relationships with his ex-wife (Kristin Scott Thomas) and a neighbor (Mary Steenburgen), among others. This film is predictable in how its various plotlines play out, but the theme of someone redeeming himself by utilizing his professional skills is a sturdy one, and the cast is terrific. Plus, there's the chance to watch Kline in action, essaying a dramatic role with his usual intelligence and without an overdose of sentimentality. (Available streaming on Amazon, Google Play, YouTube and Vudu; on DVD from Amazon.)



Entertain Your Brain: Continued on page 40



Out and About  
Journeys Completed or Contemplated

# What Remains??

No grand fortune, no great works ...  
just the surprising and lasting impact of small change.



*"I like the idea  
that my work,  
my life, if even  
a single page,  
is enough to  
shift the line."*

by Pam Mandel  
Freelance travel writer and photographer

There won't be a whole lot of money left after I die, though there will be more than nothing. I made good choices in real estate — I got lucky by choosing to live in neighborhoods that were transitioning for the better and bought before the market peaked. Assuming my health holds and I don't have to liquidate everything to cover medical expenses, there should be enough left over to pay for a kid's college education, or take the grandkids on some kind of epic travel adventure, or maybe help the progeny make a hefty down-payment on a home of their own.

Thing is, my husband and I don't have any kids. Currently, anything left after we stop using our bodies to live in this world is to be placed in an education trust for the nephews. I don't know them well — they live halfway across the planet — but I like the idea that these funds will allow them to learn something new at any age. The guidelines for the trust are generous. Even as grown men they could learn to blow glass, speak a new language, or become certified diving instructors. It's not earmarked for traditional education, only for learning in the broadest sense. Even if I live a long life, perhaps what little cash remains will allow them to pursue a dream delayed or get training for a mid-life career shift. I hope it helps them some and that if or when it does, they take a minute to wonder who I was.

But I don't see this potential gift as leaving my mark, not really. I won't know the results of their choices; I'll be dead, after all. And they're not my kids — they're not even my husband's kids; they're his sister's kids — and my contributions to their presence in the world are minimal at best. When you don't have kids — or haven't created a remarkable body of cultural or scientific work during your lifetime — what gets left behind when you go?

I pour most of my energy into creative pursuits. The writing — of the kind you see here — is transitory. It sits in these pages (and online, and tucked in between the pages of a few anthologies), but it doesn't feel enduring, not in a historical sense. I have an extremely modest career as a musician — my band has recorded two CDs; they are cover albums, and I'm keenly aware that our sound, our style, is of this moment. We will not

change the course of music like Mozart or Kurt Cobain. I've done a lot of visual art too, photography and painting. But my photography is now online and my paintings? As much as I still get pleasure in looking at the work, I don't anticipate being discovered as an unrepresented genius after my death.

No grand fortune. No great works. No kids. What's left? A surprising number of small things that add up, I hope, to a life well lived. Not just well lived in that it gave me pleasure. A life lived in such a way that there was a small shift in the world, that those minor efforts for the better make a difference for a long time to come. The park that now exists in part because I helped gather signatures for it. The school in Cambodia that got funded through a non-profit I helped found. Smaller things. That German I met while traveling; I could see his ideas about immigrants shift when I told him how hard the simple things in life were when I lived as in immigrant in his part of the world. A friend I taught to play the ukulele while she was being treated for cancer. A dog snoring at my feet instead of living in a shelter waiting for a home. Smaller things, still. A stranger who, after reading one of my stories, wrote me to say he was glad I'd visited a place he remembered from his childhood; he was glad to know it was still there. The friends who gathered at my kitchen table on a day we all mourned and left my house laughing, lighter, hopeful.

The Mexican artist Jorge Mendez Blake tackled the impact of small changes in a work of art called "The Castle." It's named after a Franz Kafka novel, but you don't need to know about the novel to understand the artwork. Mendez Blake built a brick wall — 75 feet long, 13 feet high, no mortar — and underneath one section of the foundation, placed Kafka's book. There's a visible change in the line of the wall because of the book. It doesn't destabilize the wall, but it changes it; the ripple of Kafka's novel breaks the pattern, changes the line.

I make no claims to be Kafka — or Mendez Blake. But I like the idea that my work, my life, if even a single page, is enough to shift the line. It doesn't have to be noticeable or acknowledged; it's enough that I know it's there and can take those memories with me when I go. ♦





# *I Love You, Now Let Me Go*

It was her choice, her plan, hers alone ...and it made all the difference in how she was remembered.

**by Shelby Ostergaard**

Freelance writer based in Washington, D.C.



**M**y father's mother chose her death. Diagnosed with lung cancer, she looked at the statistics, looked at the treatment options, and decided she did not want any part of it. She was 70-something; she believed she had lived enough.

I was 10 when she made her decision. My dad explained it to me and my brother in a calm voice. We got in the car and drove an hour to go see her. She came into the living room, the same space we had used for countless jigsaw puzzles, and she sat down on her chair, the same chair my brother and I sometimes fought over when she wasn't in the room.

She looked so frail to me. She was using a walker, and she seemed so tired and sick. I was a little scared of her and almost did not want to hug her. But I did. I hugged her, and she held me close to her. She whispered that she loved me, and I told her I loved her too. I walked away happy, and so did my brother. Dad loaded us into the car, and we left.

She died a few days later, in the house her husband had built for her.

Illness never hung around my grandmother. That is the only memory I have in which she seems sick, or even old. Throughout my life, my grandma was aging, yes, but she was full of life. I remember her hands, covered in liver spots and veins. As a child, I thought they were so beautiful and used to cling to them, telling her they looked like spider webs. I can think of her knitting, and of all the sweaters and afghans she made my cousins and me. As a knitter now, I picture the conversations we would have if she knew me as an adult.

To me, she is pies, an odd love of giraffes, a gentle teasing of my mother about cutting down the crab apple tree in our yard. She is, still, a person in my mind. When I think of her, there are so many other adjectives that come to mind before *sick* and *old*. Even though, objectively, she was both. But her choices ensured it would be hard to remember her that way.

### Hitting the Road Instead of the Hospital

My grandmother's story is echoed in the adventures of Norma Jean Bauerschmidt, who choose to decline chemotherapy at age 90 to embark on a family road trip across the country.

"We found ourselves sitting in an OB/GYN office talking about treatment options," says Norma Jean's daughter-in-law Raime. The doctor described the proposed treatment — surgery, radiation and chemotherapy — warning them that these treatments were not likely to be successful. When he was finished, the doctor asked how she would like to proceed.

"A tiny woman at 101 pounds and under five-feet tall, an exhausted Norma looked the young doctor dead in the eye and with the strongest voice she could muster, said, 'I'm 90 years old. I'm hitting the road,'" Raime explains. And they did, logging more than 13,000 in an RV with Raime, Norma Jean's son, Tim, and a dog named Ringo. (Sims, 2016)

For most of human history, death was a more constant companion, a dog that followed us around and bit frequently. Death didn't discriminate. It took children and the elderly; it took the vibrant and the weak. But now, death is somehow less unexpected. We've trained it better. The dog doesn't bite as much. It is still inevitable, but now death seems somehow kept more at bay.

Many of the former leading causes of death, like pneumonia and tuberculosis, have been reduced to small worries. Achievements in public health have made food and water safer, birth less dangerous for mother and child, cars less hazardous, and smoking less common. As time has progressed, life has gotten easier, less prone to random endings.

It has also gotten longer. According to data gathered by the United Nations, life expectancy hovers around 79 years in the U.S., and they predict that the first person to live to 150 has already been born. (UN Data, 2017)

### Medical Miracles Bring New Choices

Modern technology has changed every aspect of our world, including how we leave it. Technological improvements afford the option to keep bodies going far beyond what was possible just a generation ago. Life can indeed be extended, but at what cost?

Dr. Louis M. Profeta, M.D., an ER doctor, agrees that life-extending technology is amazing, but "the trouble is, we're doing it more and more ... more people are getting these things done to them." (Profeta, 2016)

He explains that, too often, when an elderly patient is rushed to the ER, previous calm contemplation often flies out the window as their family faces the pressure of the hospital. The family will often say that they want every possible thing done, unless the doctor thinks there is no hope.

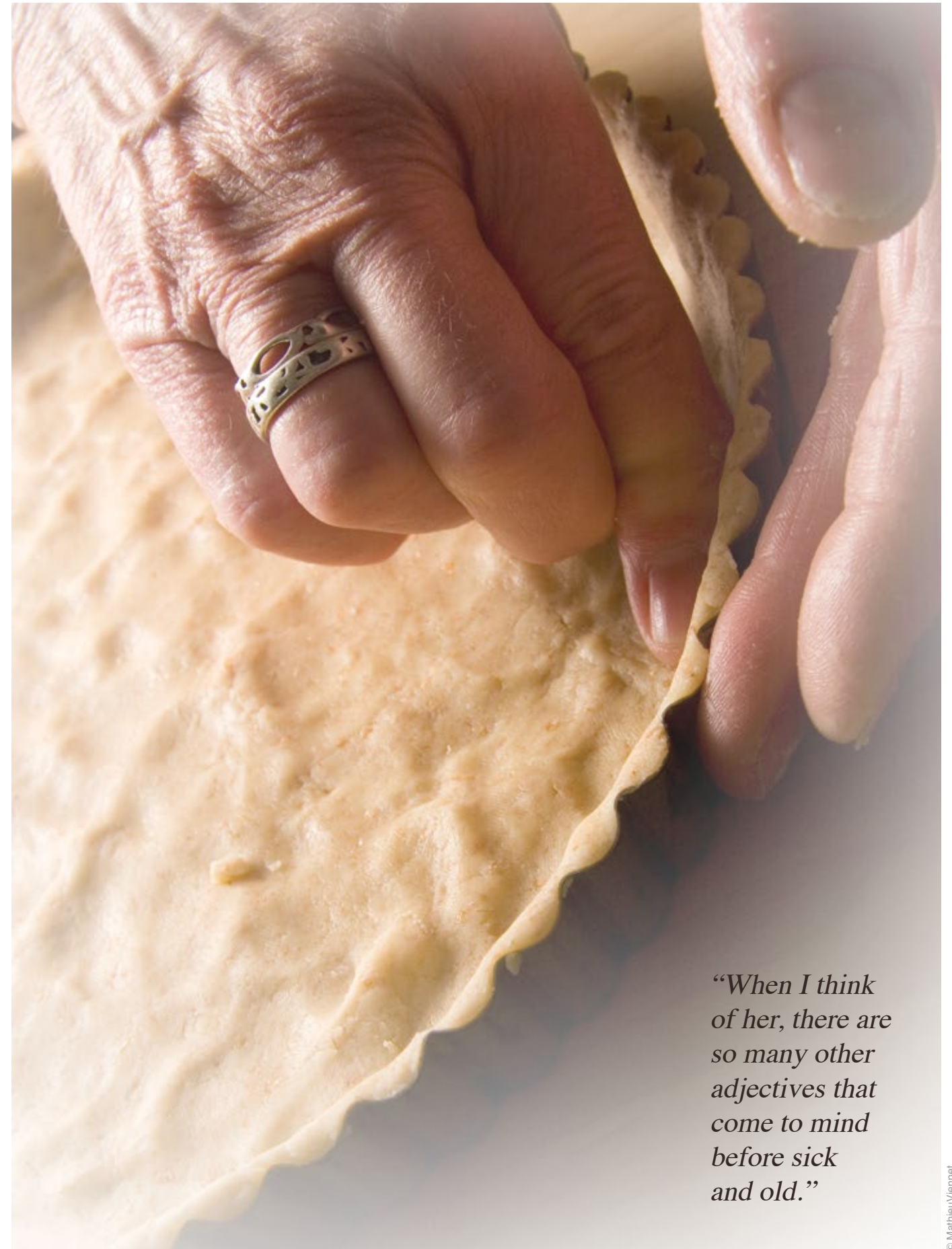
As Dr. Profeta explains, "Everybody thinks that 'no hope' happens instantaneously, but it doesn't. It's a gradual process."

Sheila Aird, a clinical director of a hospice team, has worked within this process for more than 15 years. She helps people plan how they will leave this world with as much forethought as many modern births. There is an emotional component to what she assists with, as well as spiritual, financial and clinical components.

For some people, she explains, planning even "includes going out and finding their plot, choosing their funeral songs, and picking out their casket."

Aird is careful to note that thorough planning helps prevent the panicky situations often seen in the ER. Hospice workers like Aird help people prepare specific plans for life-sustaining treatment with advanced medical directives that outline how a person wants to be cared for.

"Once you've made all those decisions and done all that planning," Aird explains, "you can just get on with the business of living." In her field, she says, "we want you to live until you die."



*"When I think of her, there are so many other adjectives that come to mind before sick and old."*





© James Woodson

And living today, more so than ever, means having choices. Astounding technological advancement has expanded our options regarding what we eat, how we work, and where we can travel. It has opened up entirely new possibilities for how to spend retirement. The world we live in now is practically overflowing with features and options.

#### Picking Our Poet

It is vitally important that we acknowledge that life's end, just like life itself, has no right answers and is up for much discussion. The poet

WH Auden believed that “death is the sound of distant thunder at a picnic,” constantly hanging over us and never something we should welcome.

Dylan Thomas urged us to “rage, rage against the dying of the light,” viewing death as the inevitable punch in the gut. Oscar Wilde found death peaceful, a chance to “forget time, to forget life, to be at peace.” Haruki Murakami saw “death [as] not the opposite of life, but a part of it” and urged us all to accept it as such.

In the end, it's up to each of us to pick our poet and pick our metaphor.

I never had a chance to ask my grandmother which poet's thoughts she preferred, just like I never had a chance for her to teach me to knit a sweater. But I do know that I personally admire her for her choices. My grandmother died 12 years ago as a person. Despite dying old and sick, she was never personified by her age or her sickness.

To my 10-year-old self, it was a brave decision. And I know that because of the choices she made — the plan she chose for herself — her long and lovely life outshone its short end. ♦

#### Read more about current ideas in end-of-life planning:

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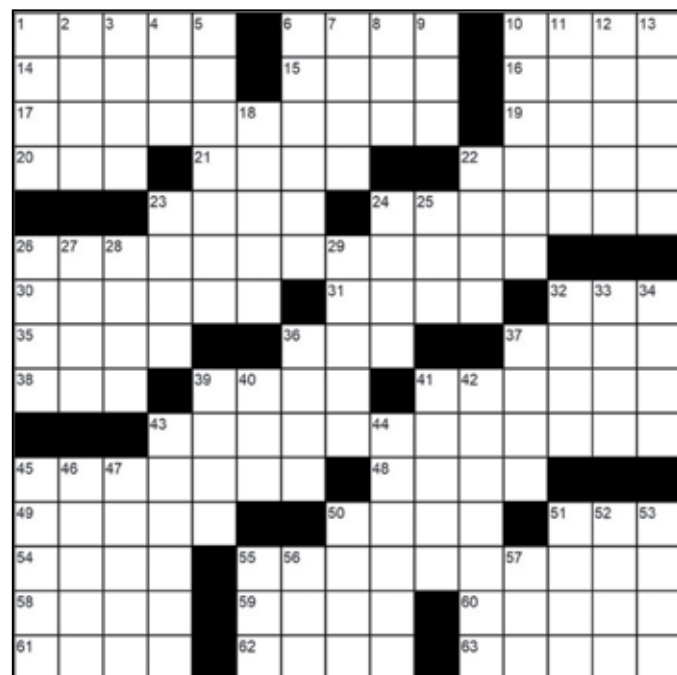
# LivFun Brain Games

Crossword & Sudoku

John Pearson, Puzzle Editor

## Crossword Puzzle

Remember Me?



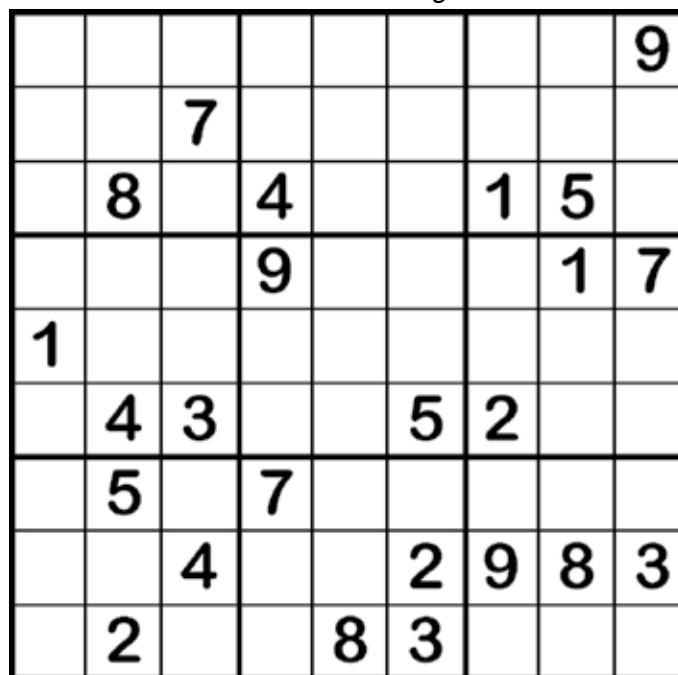
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### ACROSS

- 1 Unwelcome houseguest, usually
- 6 Try to hole it
- 10 Word with camp or ten
- 14 No place like dome?
- 15 Part of AA, abbr.
- 16 Basics
- 17 Readable audio
- 19 Debatable
- 20 Eastern sect
- 21 Form of cricket
- 22 Chaplain, sometimes
- 23 Roe adversary
- 24 Dilutes
- 26 First part of a Shakespeare quote
- 30 Blackboard adjunct
- 31 Patsy Cline was one
- 32 Geologic time
- 35 Orch. division
- 36 Judge
- 37 Wile E. Coyote's preferred source
- 38 Half of a deadly pest
- 39 *Blazing Saddles* actress
- 41 Second part of quote
- 43 Where alarms may be raised
- 45 Last part of quote
- 48 Inst.
- 49 Actors Jeremy and Max
- 50 Early victim
- 51 Tax-saving acct.
- 54 Socially challenged one
- 55 Stabilizing agent
- 58 Prescribed amount
- 59 Deceased
- 60 Alongside at sea
- 61 Druggie
- 62 Catshank or Bimini Twist
- 63 Neato!

## 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 Luxury stop in London
- 2 Folk tale figure
- 3 Polymath Turing
- 4 Pro partner
- 5 2005 Willis film
- 6 An astronomical distance
- 7 Torr or pascal
- 8 Go beyond
- 9 Explosive channel?
- 10 Mali capital
- 11 Residence
- 12 Disdain
- 13 Pol Kefauver
- 18 Fragrant durable timber
- 22 Step in Madrid
- 23 Adam or Mae
- 24 Sly
- 25 Enrichment workshop
- 26 What Russian dolls do
- 27 Mineral finds
- 28 Fancy trim
- 29 Things to spin
- 32 Repeat
- 33 Arab Sultanate
- 34 Key "Untouchable"
- 36 Epicene pronoun
- 37 Uric is one
- 39 Just barely touch
- 40 Paul's onetime partner in song
- 41 Heats
- 42 Dressing type
- 43 Gibson competition
- 44 Popular Wi-Fi device
- 45 Third-largest religion adherent
- 46 Milk's favorites, according to the ad
- 47 Scandinavian language
- 50 Prefix meaning 'self'
- 51 Medieval estate
- 52 Spanish automobile brand
- 53 Significant force
- 55 Deer relative
- 56 Occupy a station
- 57 Case handler

BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS ON PAGE 42

## Healthy U

Good Health 101 and Beyond



## To Supplement or Not to Supplement?

What your little pill containers might be telling you about your diet.

by LIV FUN editorial staff

It's one of the symbols of life at this age; that long, plastic container divided into seven neat little compartments. Each day of the week is stuffed with medications, vitamins and supplements. Suddenly, with age, it seems like these little pill boxes rule the cycles of our days. It's tempting to cut out some of the "unnecessary" ones ... and extra vitamins and supplements are often an easy target.

Is it possible, at any age, to get the nutrients you need from food alone? As we get older, it's a little more difficult to get those nutrients naturally in our diet. Eating well becomes perhaps a bit more challenging. Age can cause hormonal changes in taste and smell, which often has an effect on appetite. We also may tend to overindulge in the sweets and desserts that are offered up on the daily menu.

Yet as we age, eating right becomes even more important for our health. Are you getting enough of these?

### Calcium & Vitamin D

The older we get, the more calcium and vitamin D we need to maintain bone health. Experts at EatRight.org recommend three servings of vitamin D-fortified milk or yogurt every day

for people over 65. You can also eat calcium-rich foods like fortified cereals, fruits, dark green leafy vegetables, tuna, and salmon. Sunlight is also a good source of Vitamin D.

### Vitamin B12

Vital for cell reproduction, Vitamin B12 helps keep skin elastic and can reduce wrinkles. Even more importantly, vitamin B12 keeps blood and nerve cells healthy and prevents some types of anemia. Despite its importance, many adults over 50 do not get enough vitamin B12 in their diet. Lean meat and fresh seafood are excellent sources of vitamin B12, as are fortified breakfast cereals.

### Fiber

Fiber is nature's maid service. Fiber-rich foods help you to stay regular, which many elderly people struggle with. That regularity isn't important only for comfort; keeping your intestines in good working order is critical for disease prevention. Fiber rich foods include whole-grain breads, cereals, pastas, and beans and peas. Fruits and vegetables are also excellent sources of fiber. Experts recommend a high fiber diet for maximum health.

### Potassium

Increasing potassium may lower your high blood pressure and keep muscles strong and pain-free. Bananas, sweet potatoes, dried fruits, fish, and low-fat or fat-free milk and yogurt are good sources of potassium.

### The common denominator?

When you look at the foods that deliver the nutrients our older bodies crave, it can be overwhelming. Do you have to track everything you eat to be sure you get everything you need every day? Probably not — unless you're on a severely restricted diet from your doctor. Improving your nutrition can be as simple as making three little changes:

1. Add a green salad to at least one meal a day;
2. Grab a piece of fruit for an afternoon snack; and
3. Opt for turkey, fish or lean meat three times a week.

While that long, plastic pill box might be a symbol of aging, there may be ways to cut down on the number of pills you need to take. And that can be a delicious change to your routine. ♦



# I'D LIKE FOR SOMEBODY TO SAY ...

WHAT MAKES  
FOR AN IMPRESSIVE  
RESUME GENERALLY  
MAKES FOR A SECOND-  
RATE EULOGY.

by Mark DiGiovanni  
Certified Financial Planner

*"It does not really matter what we expect from life,  
but rather what life expects from us."*

When the wealthiest man in town died, the citizens gathered for the requisite memorial service. Two old friends who knew the deceased for decades were chatting. One asked the other, "Do you have any idea how much he left?" The other replied, "I know exactly. He left it all."

Many of us spend most of our lives building the most impressive resume we can. One reason we do is the admiration (or maybe envy?) our resume generates in

others. An impressive resume also increases earning potential.

We might spend 40 years or more building that resume, along with a substantial bit of material wealth. Yet, ironically, what makes for an impressive resume generally makes for a second-rate eulogy. A resume highlights skills; a eulogy highlights virtues.

Just two months before he was assassinated, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave a sermon about his resume and his eulogy:

*"If any of you are around when I have to meet my day, I don't want a long funeral. And if you get somebody to deliver the eulogy, tell them not to talk too long. And every now and then I wonder what I want them to say. Tell them not to mention that I have a Nobel Peace Prize — that isn't important. Tell them not to mention that I have three or four hundred other awards — that's not important. Tell them not to mention where I went to school.*

*"I'd like somebody to mention that day that Martin Luther King, Jr. tried to give his life serving others.*

*"I'd like for somebody to say that day that Martin Luther King, Jr., tried to love somebody.*

*"I want you to say that day that I tried to be right on the war question.*

*"I want you to be able to say that day that I did try to feed the hungry.*

*"And I want you to be able to say that day that I did try in my life to clothe those who were naked.*

*"I want you to say on that day that I did try in my life to visit those who were in prison.*

*"I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity."*

One of the arguably most important books of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was *Man's Search for Meaning*, by Viktor Frankl. An up-and-coming Jewish psychiatrist in Vienna in the late 1930s, Frankl was soon to be sent to Auschwitz and later Dachau. He survived, but his wife, mother and brother died in the concentration camps. His experiences help form some profound perspectives on where real meaning lies in our lives. Frankl helped millions understand that it does not really matter what we expect from life, but rather what life expects from us. Our answer must consist not in talk and meditation, but in right action and in right conduct. (Frankl, 1946)

A human being, he believed, is not one in pursuit of happiness, but rather in search of a *reason* to become happy. Sometimes the frustrated search for this reason to be happy is vicariously transmuted into a quest for power. And often,

power is represented by money and what it buys.

How does this relate to your finances? Your resume tells the source of your money. Your eulogy, on the other hand, will tell how you used it, what meaning you imparted to it.

Some may believe that only charitable acts deserve mention. I believe the first, most important use of your money is to enable you to live with independence and dignity throughout your life. That's no small accomplishment, and it's worth mentioning at eulogy time. And if you can live with independence and dignity and still be in a position to help others financially, more power to you. It's never too late to work on your eulogy. ♦

**Read more:**

Frankl, Viktor E. (1946). *Man's Search for Meaning*. Massachusetts: Beacon Press.



# Life Can Be a Chukker

by Candace Wade

Writer, adventurer and recreational equestrian



At 63 — with two hip replacements — a self-described “horse slut”  
tackles the “fourth stage of life” her way.



I ride, at age 63, in spite of two hip replacements. I quest for opportunities to mount horses. Then I write about them. This vocation may be “finger nails on the chalkboard” for those whose primary goal past a certain age is to work on their legacy. (Manson, 2015) An exclusive pursuit of “making my legacy endure” feels forlorn to me. I don’t feel that I am done creating myself. I’d rather hit myself over the head with a brick.

My credo is to keep my juices flowing by challenging (or, in some cases, scaring the hell out of) myself. I do it on horseback.

#### Who Is This Woman?

I sprouted in the suburbs of Los Angeles during the “baby boom” ’50s. I was 45 when my husband and I transplanted from San Francisco (with all the urbanity that implies) to rural Middle Tennessee (with all the stereotypes that implies). The bucolic adventure captured my imagination. Yet, if I was going to give up authentic Chinese food, I thought I should replace it with ... not fried okra, but an indigenous activity.

*Maybe I’ll learn to ride horses.*

#### Just How Does One Become a Horse Slut?

I didn’t (and don’t) own a horse. I found that I would (and still will) do almost anything to throw my leg over a saddle. That includes driving great distances — on a road that looks like a goat path; paying tidy sums for lessons; offering to muck out stalls and, maybe, to sweep spider webs out of hay lofts. That’s my definition of a horse slut.

After years of sporadic saddle time under my stretchy jeans, I tested my less-than-Olympic-level skills in horse-focused active travel — a haunted Halloween trail ride on forest paths and cobbled-streets of tiny towns in County Offaly, Ireland; an Etruscan ruin ride outside of Rome, Italy; a fall crush ride through aromatic vineyards of Lake County in Northern California, where we tasted season-end grapes off the vines as we rode.

Fast forward through 15 years of mind-straining lessons, surviving gut-twisting trail rides, and “keep-up-with-the-younger-

riders” forays through foreign countries. A reasonable person may well ask: Why pursue a potentially maiming and/or life-threatening activity when others are dandling grandkids?

Because: “... memories of who we were and what we used to do smash at our egos like bugs on a windshield on a sultry summer night.” (Wade, *Horse Sluts*, 2015) I believed that through learning something new (riding), I could still create my future. I didn’t have to surrender to the dead bugs.

A drive to “try” bloomed inside me. I felt a rebirth of chutzpa. The joyous gift from trying was the feeling of rediscovering courage, pushing past fear, no matter how toothy. The feeling is like a drug. I jones for the surge of success I feel when I ride.

#### Why Not Try Freelance Writing?

The adventures resulted in a book, *Horse Sluts — The Saga of Two Women on the Trail of Their Yeehaw*. My goal was to encourage other adults with my picaresque misadventures. My message was that the “me” of me was still inside even though my wrapper may be a little worn and wrinkled.

Hey, I survived my terror when clinging to a horse swimming across a roiling river; I can push past my croaking self-doubt and some humbling editor rejection. The result was a WINNIE Award (Equus Film Festival NYC) for equine journalism for “Saving Theo,” my series on the rescue of an ex-big lick Tennessee Walking Horse. I am proud that I have a voice to advocate for the breed — from the comfort of my home computer.

Stepping out on the high dive of the mature-epoch of my life revealed opportunities I never considered. The successes — and non-successes — challenge my perception of my limits. Had I listened to the “shoulds” and followed the norms, I would have cheated myself out of a global mission and a cinematic alfresco supper — on a rare, balmy November night in Manhattan when I won the WINNIE. To drift on the dreamy cloud of “who-would-have-thunk-it” surprise is heady stuff ... but it can lead to polo.

**“I was gripped by panic in the parking lot. My husband almost had to foot-shove me out of the car.”**



© Candace Wade





### Add Polo and Shake — In My Boots

My “wahoo, I can do anything” juices messed with my brain. I agreed to write an article on polo. I felt I should at least sit on a horse while holding a mallet if I was going to write about it — sort of a George Plimpton scheme for research. My first attempt was to crawl around my friend’s arena on a somnambulant schooling horse while I struggled to whack a beach ball with a croquet mallet duct taped to a PVC pipe. My rooting section was a covey of aged women riders at the barn. The eldest had passed age 90. They hooted and hollered at every missed swing. A benefit of age is I no longer care if someone laughs at me. I laugh first.

I signed up for an Introduction to Polo lesson with our local polo club. “Oh crud” nerves kicked in the night before. Lesson day — I was gripped by panic in the parking lot. My husband almost had to foot-shove me out of the car. Once on the horse, a hatchling of my dormant competitive nature raised its head. I was more focused on hitting that “dern” ball than the risk of tumbling to the ground. I actually scored a goal. Okay, I nudged the ball near the horse’s foot and he kicked it in.

I now take lessons to see how far I can lean off the side of the horse without falling off.

My surprise? Fear of falling off has vanished. Fear has been replaced with frustration when I miss the ball. I’m not used to floundering at the bottom the class, but I accept “tail end” as a new friend because I am at least in the class. I may never play one chukker (an inning, as it were), but I feel deep satisfaction that I am trying.

Oh, and I have gathered an exhilarating coterie of women through polo. I’m the oldest mare in the herd, but they don’t treat me like I could be their mother. We have lunch once a month to gush over each other’s adventures. I immerse in their vitality; they help me snub my limitations.

**I feel exhilarated  
when I climb off a horse.  
I have challenged my brain,  
body and perception.**



### The Point of All This?

Had I believed that my self-creating stage of life was over; had I nestled into living vicariously through anybody else; had I not swallowed my fears and ignored the naysayers, none of these satisfying adventures would have knocked on my cocoon of comfort.

I feel exhilarated when I climb off a horse. I have challenged my brain, body and perception. I am the “fetch” (aka cool) grandmother Cece because I took our grandson for a polo lesson. He now wants to go to horse camp.

Okay, I’ll give. I have a legacy. My legacy is to be an example to keep challenging ourselves in all stages of life. Keep dragging ourselves for-

ward, even by our fingernails. For me, any other approach to my “mounting maturity” is horse pucky. I’m not special. I’m not a super woman type. I’m you. I’m determined to go out with a fight — maybe from the back of a polo pony. ♦

### Sources:

Manson, Mark. (2015). “The Four Stages of Life.” Retrieved May 28, 2017, from [www.markmanson.net](http://www.markmanson.net).

Wade, Candace, with Langley, Penelope. (2015). *Horse Sluts — The Saga of Two Women on the Trail of Their Yeehaw*. Franklin, TN: PennyCandy Productions.

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## Advice for the Journey

Personal Advice and Expert Opinions



by Arica VanGelderens, LLMSW

Clinical social worker and therapist

**Question:** I've never been the type of person to reach out and make friends, even though my wife has always been very social. She was the one person I was close to, and I've never needed anyone else. We lived together happily for 30 years until she was diagnosed with bone cancer two years ago. She passed away recently, and ever since I just can't find the energy to take care of myself. The only tasks I can

accomplish consistently are simple household chores like doing my laundry. I'm having a hard time keeping up on paying my bills, remembering to take my meds, putting a shopping list together. All these things were so easy before. And I keep waking up during the night thinking my wife is lying next to me. Without her, I feel like I'm just taking up space in the home I used to share with her.

**Answer:** Thank you for sharing something that I am sure was not easy to express. I am sorry for your loss. It sounds like you had a beautiful and intimate connection with your wife, and overcoming that kind of grief is never a straightforward or brief process.

I will start by mentioning how positive it is that you are pushing yourself to do some tasks around the house. Even if you are not able to keep up on everything that needs to be done, the fact that you are engaging yourself in taking care of some things shows you have the desire to take care of yourself, even though it may not feel that

way. It is crucial that you take as much time as you need to grieve in your own way, focusing especially on the idea of closure. Do what feels right to you in terms of honoring your wife's memory and your relationship with her.

It may take some time before you reach a point where you are consistently taking care of yourself in every area of your life. You were accustomed to a certain daily routine with your wife for decades, and having to construct a new routine in the wake of her passing is extremely difficult. Try not to put too much pressure on yourself to figure it out right away. Set small goals for

each day or week that are achievable for you, and begin moving forward from there. Try to engage yourself in tasks or activities you have always enjoyed, and try to hold onto the small moments of meaning you experience within the day.

You may feel the weight of your wife's absence, but forming a structure you can live within will help ease the pain and give you a personal sense of meaning over time. Know that you are doing the best you can in a devastating situation, and eventually you will start gaining some traction in moving forward. ♦



# HOW TO LIVE TO 120



© Dana Gilell on staff at Hebrew Senior Life  
Author Irving Silverman with his daughter and coauthor, Ellen Beth Siegel.

**Everyone has something to give and receive in the mentoring relationship, particularly in old age.**

by Nancy Gertz  
Health and well-being coach in Boston

**A**t the age of 97, Irving Silverman is emphatic that he's not done with living. It's going to take much longer to finish "giving back," he proclaims.

Irving's list of accomplishments includes a 45-year career at the National Knitwear Association, establishing and leading the Long Island chapter of Parents Without Partners, serving as President of the NY Region of the United Synagogue, and in 1980, leading an effort to allow Jews to emigrate from the Soviet Union.

"I want to be remembered as a philanthropist of ideas, as well as money. I hope to be appreciated as an example of what one person can accomplish in the short period of time we are privileged to inhabit this world. Living is wonderful, but leaving a legacy is even more wondrous," he explains.

I had the pleasure of interviewing Irving after a recent profile in the *Boston Globe* featured his new book, *Aging Wisely ... Wisdom of Our Elders*, a compelling collection of essays by 75 seniors and selected experts in aging.

I've always had a soft spot for the "older and wiser" folks in the world. Walking into Irving's apartment on a sunny summer afternoon reminded me of when I was a young 16-year-old, excited to be able to drive so I could visit my grandmother all by myself. For me, an older person is an overflowing treasure chest, spilling fascinating stories and lustrous pearls of wisdom, knotted one by one over years of living this one life.

Irving is sight- and hearing-impaired, so we sat unusually close together, and I used a microphone so he could hear me. Though I approached the interview in the normal fashion, I quickly learned that I would be asking less and listening more.

**Q: What do you say to someone who is no longer able to pursue their passion — whether it's due to health, financial or other reasons?**

**Irving:** All my life I have had to overcome obstacles — I was born

legally blind and needed an ongoing series of accommodations through school and onward. I've benefitted from all kinds of gifted mentoring, starting in my early years, as well as decades of skilled professional guidance. Everyone has something to give and receive in the mentoring relationship, particularly in old age.

**Q: Why is mentoring so important in old age?**

**Irving:** Loneliness and loss of a sense of purpose are common in old age. Mentoring provides a continuous loop of feeling emotionally attached and even important to others, something we all need.

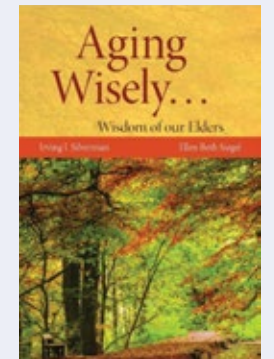
I moved into this retirement community when I was 90 years old, and I knew I needed to make new relationships with the others here so I would feel connected, but also because I wanted to feel useful. There are wonderful educational programs here, and we are invited to hear fascinating speakers.

When I first arrived, I attended some of the programs and was disheartened to not be able to hear and learn and, in turn, transmit to others. Then I realized that I wasn't alone — at least half of the others couldn't hear either. I researched the tools available through technology, and we introduced a looping process, so now the sound is transmitted to the hearing devices people are wearing. We can hear, learn the material, have conversations and teach others.

**Q: What's your advice for people who are less motivated, who doubt the value of their contributions to others?**

**Irving:** Everybody's life story is interesting and needs to be told. Tell your story. We have the technology to do this easily, and it is deeply gratifying to complete. Ask for help. Either do it by yourself or get a grandchild or professional to put the story into print or audio.

And everyone can listen. Be a listener so someone else can be heard.



## 'Aging Wisely' ... The Book

Irving Silverman has always been a "project person." And at 95, he decided to write about living long, soliciting contributions from other residents of his community for a book he tentatively titled *How to Live to 120*.

He persuaded Jones & Bartlett Learning to publish it; publisher Cathy Esperti pushed for a greater diversity of contributors and a shift of focus from "how to live long" to "how to live well." Along with his coauthor and daughter Ellen Beth Siegel, they sought out contributors from across the United States, asking them to write about what was important to them about aging, what they themselves had learned.

The result is a book that showcases the voices of a large group of elders and the professionals who work with them — 75 in all — with topics such as the biology of aging; emotional aspects of aging; interpersonal relationships as we age; the changes aging brings (and how to manage them using internal strengths and external resources); practical issues of retirement, housing, driving and money; finding fulfillment in older age; coping with loss; and looking at legacy, how we want to be remembered.

The central theme of the book is passing on the wisdom gained with advancing years.

*Aging Wisely ... Wisdom of Our Elders* is available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, direct from Jones & Bartlett Learning at [www.go.jblearning.com/silverman](http://www.go.jblearning.com/silverman), and at bookstores everywhere.

Live to 120: Continued on page 41



# Live Big. Live Bold.

Your Life, Your Rules

Leisure Care residents around the country are embracing the ideals of community, friendship and caring. Their stories make our communities better places to be.

When Ralph Taylor's wife passed away a couple of years ago, he stayed in their home and continued to "live" there; he got up each day and did what was needed to take care of the home they had shared. It wasn't until he visited his son

in Orem, Utah, that he realized he wasn't really living much at all. He and his son visited Treeo South in Ogden, and he knew from the start it was a good opportunity for him. Ralph is now living again – spending time sharing stories

with friends, going to baseball games and football games – and he's even started writing poetry again, something he gave up when his wife died. Ralph shared this poem with us, and we are honored to share it with all of you.

## TREEO

by Ralph Taylor 9/16/17 "God bless Treeo!"

Before I came to Treeo,  
Getting old was not much fun.  
For all intents and purposes,  
I felt my life was done!

One gets to feeling lonely,  
once your spouse has passed away.  
Home doesn't feel like home no more,  
it's just a place to stay!

You feel there needs to be a change,  
you must start your life anew.  
However, things like roots and memories,  
make it very hard to do.  
With advice from friends and family,  
I started in my quest,

to check out Senior Living,  
which is what we thought was best.  
When we discovered Treeo,  
my search became complete.

All they have, to offer here,  
would be impossible to beat!  
Treeo is our haven,  
the tenants feel safe and secure.

Despite our various maladies,  
their concern, is to help us endure!  
The people who work here at Treeo,  
are special folks indeed.  
Our welfare, is their main concern,  
they see that we get, what we need.

It's a family type environment,  
which, actually, it transcends!  
Our neighbors aren't just neighbors,  
our neighbors are our friends!

The activities and incentives,  
are too numerous to mention!  
But to keep our minds and bodies active,  
is Treeo's main intention!

"Home is where you hang your hat".  
To that I will attest!  
I hang my hat at Treeo,  
so I feel that I've been blessed!



All photos © Leisure Care

# The Words That Built a Bridge

The simple act of writing a letter takes on new meaning for these students and residents.

by Kathi Keen

Program Supervisor, Fairwinds – Ivey Ranch

In those at either end of the life course — the young and the old — we sometimes find striking similarities. We live in a society that values adulthood and, in turn, *doing* — all embodied by productivity and ongoing activity.

The young and the old, however, share a different rhythm. It's one that focuses less on the constant *doing* and more on the power of *being*. It's the simplicity of playing with blocks or tending to flowers. In this way, the young and the old are often most close-

ly connected with the essence of living. They can exist in a moment that's the grand sum of past, present and future. Rather than time being the enemy — rushing tasks or stressing to fit as much into time as possible into our "adult" lives — time becomes a comfortable companion, a circle rather than a line.

We divide up our communities and our activities by age — young people in schools, adults in the workplace, older people in retirement communities or other facilities. We talk a lot

about all the ways we need to help older people, yet they can help us in many ways. It's the experience of life in a multigenerational, interdependent, richly complex community that, more than anything else, teaches us how to be human.

For example, what began as a simple writing project between the generations quickly transformed into a genuine friendship and left a lasting impression on the hearts of many, young and old.

**Built a Bridge:** *Continued on page 41*



Top: Stan Kukawka and his pen pal Ayden. Bottom, left to right: Fairwinds – Ivey Ranch residents and their pen pals from Ivey Ranch Elementary School enjoy visiting and sharing with each other.



LEISURECARE



# Live Big. Live Bold.

Your Life, Your Rules



© ardanarama

## TAKING THE LEAP

Moving outside your comfort zone can be excruciating ... and liberating!

by Raymond Mensing

Guest Services Manager, Broadway Proper

Many of us think of the “comfort zone” as a relic of ’80s motivational psychology and a tagline on cheesy corporate “reach for success” posters. But, in fact, the comfort zone is a useful psychological concept that can help you embrace risk and make changes in your life that can lead to real personal growth.

Alan Henry writes that the comfort zone is a “behavioral space where your activities and behaviors fit a routine and pattern that minimizes stress and risk.” (Henry, 2013) The operative words here are *stress* and

*risk*. In our comfort zone, there is a sense of familiarity, security and certainty. When we step outside of our comfort zone, we’re taking a risk and opening ourselves up to the possibility of stress and anxiety; we’re not quite sure what will happen and how we’ll react.

An increasing number of seniors are taking leaps of faith in changing lifestyles as they age. We see more seniors becoming willing to take risks, step out of their comfort zone ... and those who do are reaping the rewards.

“God is speaking to me more than He ever has, and I am listening!”

What would happen if we all could leave our comfort zones, not for our own sake, but with the intention of expanding the comfort zones of others? The residents of Broadway Proper of Tucson, Arizona, recently celebrated an example of just this kind of evolution, thanks to one incredible resident.

Her name is Carolyn Short, and her story goes like this.

Before moving to Broadway Proper, Carolyn had always lived with her parents as a result of her struggles with epilepsy. Then came a crisis; Carolyn’s parents were in need of higher levels of care and chose to move into an assisted living facility. With her brother’s help, Carolyn made the decision to move into a different community — and faced the daunting journey of living on her own for the first time at 62 years of age.

When I first met Carolyn, she was shaking and on the verge of tears — unsure how she was going to manage or even that she would be able to manage at all. We encouraged Carolyn to get out of her apartment and take part

in activities so she could meet other residents and start building some good relationships.

At first, Carolyn seemed distressed; being outside her comfort zone in so many ways was surely traumatic. The team at Broadway Proper continued to gently encourage her to get involved. She started to attend some activities, such as Wii Bowling and Table Tennis. As she began to have great conversations, joking and laughing with new friends, her insecurities started melting away.

Eventually, Carolyn asked if she could help another resident, who is blind, with Wii bowling, and she has been faithfully helping him ever since.

When the Ambassador Program was introduced, Carolyn was one of the first to raise her hand. She wanted to be involved with helping new residents get involved and to never feel alone, since she remembered how scary it was for her when she first moved in. When Carolyn introduced herself during the first Ambassador meeting, she gave a heartfelt and open story about her life,

her challenges and growth while at Broadway Proper — there was not a dry eye in the room. In Carolyn’s own words, “God is speaking to me more than he ever has, and I am listening!”

In Carolyn’s case, leaving her comfort zone — the loving protection of her parents — wasn’t a choice, but a necessity. In working through the discomfort, she evolved from that scared, reclusive person who rarely made eye contact to a strong woman who is now helping making positive impacts all around her.

We all have an impact on our communities; and we all have those places that feel uncomfortable — even painful — to explore. Carolyn’s story shows us it is never too late for growth and positive changes in your life — and the lives of those around you. ♦

**Source:**

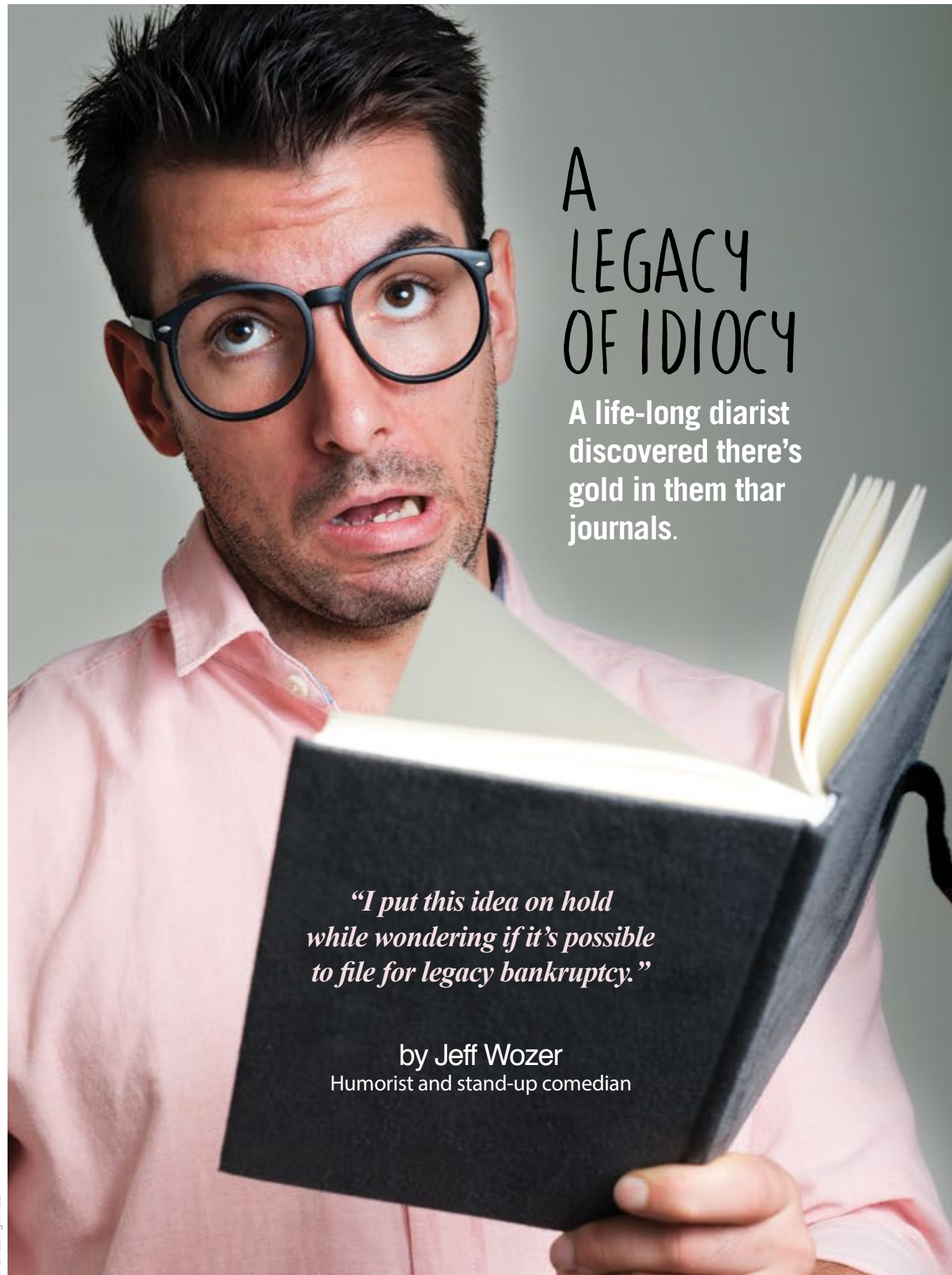
Henry, Alan. (2013). “The Science of Breaking Out of Your Comfort Zone (and Why You Should.)” Retrieved on September 23, 2017, from [www.lifehacker.com](http://www.lifehacker.com).



Carolyn Short (center) at her retirement party with her parents, shortly before moving into her new home at Broadway Proper.

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# A LEGACY OF IDIOCY

A life-long diarist discovered there's gold in them thar journals.

*"I put this idea on hold while wondering if it's possible to file for legacy bankruptcy."*

by Jeff Wozer  
Humorist and stand-up comedian

© amazingmikael

I'd always viewed my journal collection with pride. What began as a high school English requirement matured into a discipline that still — 31 notebooks later — carries on today. It was to be my legacy gold.

But after recently reading my journals from life's high-speed years — late teens to late 20s — I put this idea on hold while wondering if it's possible to file for legacy bankruptcy.

I thought I'd find pages filled with the creative brain-blooms of a writer to be, imparting youthful life lessons with rare articulation and wit.

What I found resembled exclamation points on barbiturates, highlighted by my first-ever journal entry, as a high school sophomore, on September 20, 1976:

*The god-damn Buffalo Bills should have won. God they make me Sick! Mr. Ende and his dumb pear-head makes me sick! Sister Jeanne is so dull! The bus driver ticks me off! He passes my bus stop every time on purpose! This*

*weather stinks, but one thing it's good for is football, I love playing in the mud!*

After reading this I half expected the ghost of Anne Frank to appear and box me across the ears for such lousy journal writing.

What made me think I possessed the ability to write? When author Hunter S. Thompson was in high school he was writing high-minded prose asking his classmates, "Who is the happier man, he who has braved the storm of life and lived, or he who has stayed securely on shore and merely lived?"

Who is the happier man, indeed.

It wasn't me. Not after reading page after page of embarrassment.

The problem is that journals are never meant to be read by other eyes. When the threat of "going public" comes into play, journal entries that once bemused are now tainted with the tyranny of self-consciousness. You feel double-crossed, as if the journal's empty pages conned you into revealing

your mistakes, insecurities, embarrassments. In essence, your journal has gone rogue.

When I shared my reservations with a friend, she suggested attending a local coffee shop's once-a-month journal reading night. I did, and it was wonderful. Participants read early journal entries addressing everything from first sex to romantic breakups. Though shockingly awkward, we all laughed in communal recognition that we've all been there. And that's when all doubt about leaving my journals as my legacy disappeared.

Rather than disavow we should embrace our idiot moments. It's our rough edges that make us unique, or better yet, authentic — a rare trait in this age of Facebook, where all flaws are laundered.

Comprehending this brought immense relief. Especially since my idiot moments were many, underscored by my lack of game at romance that carried into my adult years:

## April 18, 1978

*Well I did it. I made an ass out of myself when I called Chris to ask her to the prom. She's going but I'm mad at myself because my voice kept on cracking, I got real nervous. Why do I always do that when I call her?*

## May 29, 1979

*I couldn't believe in the afternoon Kathy Brown called me and asked me to her prom this Saturday. I told her I wasn't sure because my brother and I might be going up to Canada and I wouldn't find out till my brother got home. After I said it I realized my brother was the one who answered the call.*

And red-faced evidence that I understood that the unexamined life is not worth living:

## May 19, 1977

*I made a mistake wearing a sweater in school. It got to being pretty hot during the last few classes.*

With a rare wisdom that belied my age:

## February 12, 1977

*I got fitted for my tuxedo today, where my brother was trying to convince me that I had to get also measured for a hair piece. Thank God I didn't believe him.*

And I was glad to read that the example my parents set in the virtues of hard work became my foundation:

## May 16, 1985

*My Lotto tickets failed to make me an instant millionaire frustratingly again. Crap, I don't feel like working. The summer is here, it's time for tans, late nights, long sleep-ins and downright stupid behavior. Work is such a drag. It ruins all irresponsible fun. I simply do not want to work.*

And that this love for work carried over to consummate professionalism as a bare-knuckled cub reporter for WFAD in Middlebury, Vermont:

## September 8, 1988

*Lieutenant Governor candidate Howard Dean eventually tracked me down at the radio station. I tried hiding. But when he found me hiding in the supply closet I had no choice but to interview him. He must think I'm a nut-job. Throughout the interview I held a yogurt-covered fork in my hand and kept waving it in his face every time I asked a question.*

Not surprisingly, I'm no longer in radio, never married, and am still waiting to win Lotto. But that's not the point. The point is this: If ever in doubt about leaving a legacy of private thoughts to inspire future minds, remember that there's gold in them thar journals. ♦



## Ethics and Spirituality

Reflections and Contemplations on Life and Living

# Lost and Found

She refers to the artist, the creator as different from herself.  
This is the mark of a true artist. The work stands alone.

by Elana Zaiman  
Rabbi, chaplain and writer in Seattle

*“It is when you give  
of yourself that you  
truly give.”*

— Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet*

One of our greatest fears as we age is losing our memory. I see it in my parents, who are almost 80, and in the elders I work with. I see it in myself. I put an item in a safe place, and within moments I can't remember where I put it. I dial the phone; who am I calling? I find myself saying, “something” or “that thing” instead of using descriptive nouns.

My friends tell me it is because I'm multi-tasking or multi-thinking. This may be true, but I also understand that my memory is changing, that there are blips and breaks and disconnects, and I wonder how my memory will continue to shift and change as I age. Will I be aware enough to sense the changes in myself and to mourn their loss?

As a rabbi and chaplain, I've been spending time with a woman I'll call Libby, a poet and artist whose memory is changing, who increasingly has trouble finding her words, and who inhabits a world that is both present and foreign to her at the same time.

When I first visit her in her apartment, Libby has a slight recognition that I am someone she knows. Or maybe it is just that the person at the door — me — looks kind. Or maybe it is that I call her by name, or that I introduce myself as Rabbi Zaiman, and my name rings a bell.

Her artwork hangs on her walls. Still lifes, orange carrots so lush you want to eat them. A fruit ensemble with three uniquely shaped pears, a peach and an apple, the colors rich mustard, green, beige, brown, red. There are sketches of faces in black charcoal (or pastel? I am not sure), each with a touch of pink, caricatures almost, with expressions so alive and present you feel ready to engage with them in conversation. A few of her poems sit on her dining room table. I notice reminder notes on her refrigerator, table and counter.

Together we look through a small spiral notebook full of pastel colors, and I turn page after page, the colorful drawings and faces as bold and welcoming as the pictures on her wall. I comment on the colors, the humanity of the faces, how I had known she was a poet but had not known she was an artist too.

During our visit, she has trouble finding her words. As we look at her notebook, there are nods and attempts to speak, but the words don't easily emerge.

“I cannot do it anymore,” she says referring to her artwork.

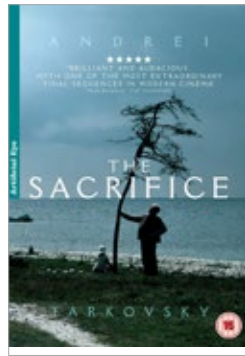
“Does that make you sad?” I ask. “Or do you say to yourself, ‘I'm at a different place now’?”

Libby says, “Yes.”

When I recall this conversation later, I realize I have asked too complex a question. It is unclear which

**Lost and Found:** *Continued on page 42*





**The Sacrifice (1986)**

The mind-expanding Russian filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky knew *The Sacrifice* would be his last film when he was making it, which may account for the film's extra layer of gravity. On a remote island, an aging writer (Erland Josephson, star of many Ingmar Bergman pictures) and his young son plant a tree on the man's birthday — a gesture of faith in the future. Then word arrives that a new World War is imminent, and this one will probably end it all for mankind. The writer makes a bargain with the Almighty, or whatever is out there: He will give up everything if only the war is halted. As is typical for Tarkovsky (*Solaris*), nothing is traditional about the way this story is told, from the long duration of the shots to the enigmatic resolution of the film's big questions. Puzzling though it is, this might be Tarkovsky's most accessible movie. Tarkovsky seems to be saying everything is at stake, our present and our future — not just in this fictional nuclear fantasy, but always. (Available streaming on Amazon, Fandor, Google Play, YouTube and FilmStruck.)

**MUSIC REVIEWS**

by John Pearson / Retired musician and lifelong enthusiast

*“Death is very often referred to as a good career move.”*  
— Buddy Holly



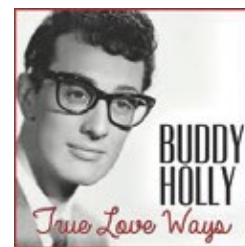
**Songbird (Single) — Eva Cassidy, Eva by Heart, 1997**

Released as part of the album *Eva by Heart* one year after her tragic death and later released as a single, this track is a fitting legacy for this talented singer. Sadly, at the time of her death she was nearly unknown outside of Washington, D.C. and surrounds and garnered international recognition only posthumously. Her work has since been released on several albums, selling millions of copies worldwide. Written by Christine McVie and first released by Fleetwood Mac, “Songbird” shines anew with Eva's spectacular voice, her razor sharp harmonies (via multi-track recording), and startling dynamic range. Her talent was not limited to her singing ability — as her recordings show, she was also able to attract some top-notch musicians to support her.



**A Change Is Gonna Come (Single) — Sam Cooke, 1964**

Released as a B-side single, this composition reached a peak position of #9 on Billboard's R&B singles chart soon after its issue in 1964. It has since been covered by dozens of artists and has been selected for preservation in the Library of Congress. While not among Cooke's series of upbeat popular hits like “You Send Me,” “Wonderful World,” “Chain Gang” and others, “Change” showcases his voice at its soulful peak. More importantly, it gives the listener an insight into his more serious side as a songwriter inspired by personal events. The number has a complex arrangement, as well as a darkly portentous tone — both factors in Cooke's decision to publicly perform the song only once in his short life. Unfortunately, the tape of that performance on *The Tonight Show* was not saved.



**True Love Ways (Single) — Buddy Holly, The Buddy Holly Story, Vol. 2, 1960**

Holly shares the writing credit for “True Love Ways” with Norman Petty, his recording engineer and first manager. (It was a fairly standard practice at the time for an engineer to add his name to a recording's writing credits, although Petty discontinued doing so later in his career.) The song was written by Holly as a wedding present for his wife, Maria, four months before the plane crash that took his life and the lives of Ritchie Valens and J.P. “The Big Bopper” Richardson. Rather than employing the so-called rockabilly sound predominate in his string of early hits with The Crickets, this now wedding reception standard uses an 18-piece ensemble behind Holly's unique voice. The surprisingly lush feel to the arrangement makes it a landmark tune for Holly, with the strings, saxophone, piano and harp tastefully supported by the rhythm section. The fill riffs by Abraham Richman on sax are truly memorable. ♦

*“Your thoughts, words and actions create a ripple effect, much like a stone thrown into a pond. The quality of that ripple effect is your legacy.”* — Kosta Stoyanoff

**Q: What's ahead for you?**

**Irving:** I want to live to 120 so I can continue to contribute to the world — I'm not done giving back. Recently, I learned that my new book is going to be recorded as an audiobook! I have been listening to recorded books for years as a blind person, so this is deeply gratifying to me.

The way in which one lives has to be determined by establishing commitments and goals and then working doggedly until they are achieved. This has been the key to my success. All of the proceeds of the book I've just written with my daughter will be dedicated to charities that help other people. I am traveling a long road, and I'll continue to transmit helpful information as long as I can and feel driven to do so. If I can reach 10 people, and they can each reach 10 more, by the time all the roads have been traversed, I will have helped many hundreds of people.

Irving shifts in his chair and looks more intently at me, and I wonder what he really sees.

“There may be another person who you interview 10 years from now. You are young, capable and smart enough to continue this journey that I've designated as my life's work. This was a magnificent interview. I might not be Warren Buffet, but we have both gained something here, and I hope others will also be able to benefit from this interview and your column, and my books, in the years ahead.”

With that final stroke, Irving masterfully steps into his familiar mentoring role, offering me inspiration and positive reflection on my work, expressing his gratitude for the connection, and engraving his lessons for those who benefit in the future. ♦

**Built a Bridge: Continued from page 33**

*“Being pen pals with our older friends gave a purpose and meaning for our writing, but the true gift was the meaning and purpose it gave to our community.”*

Beginning in October 2016, Ms. Hillhouse-Shokes' second-grade students from Ivey Ranch Elementary School began writing pen pal letters to 22 residents at neighboring Fairwinds – Ivey Ranch in Oceanside, California.

Topics such as “What is your favorite color?” and “Do you have any pets?” were some of the initial focus of conversation. As the relationships evolved, students delivered holiday cards to their pen pals and went caroling at Fairwinds – Ivey Ranch. In January, Fairwinds – Ivey Ranch hosted their young friends at a pizza luncheon, where for the first time the pen pals had the opportunity to eat and visit with each other. As the relationships deepened even more, they exchanged Valentine's and Easter cards and continued to keep one another updated through letters.

For the children in the program, the pen pal project was a learning experience.

“It made me feel really happy (to have my pen pal), because I got to spend time and have fun!” said 8-year-old Annabelle, pen pal to resident to Loretta Brown. “We learned how to write better, and I got more practice.”

As spring rolled around and the letters continued, the school invited the pen pals over to read out loud with them for Dr. Seuss National Read Across America Day in March. Later that month, Fairwinds – Ivey Ranch reciprocated, hosting a read-aloud with resident reader, Ms. Julie, at the recommendation of Leisure Care President and Chief Executive Officer Dan Madsen, who had visited the community that spring.

For the resident reader Julie Terrel, time spent with her pen pal Taylor was a gift. “Her enthusiasm was a-typical for a second grader; I would say she was a lot ahead in most social situations,” Julie explained. “Spending time with Taylor was nice too, because it gave me something to take my mind off myself and my problems.”

As the school year drew to a close, Fairwinds – Ivey Ranch hosted an end-of-the-year BBQ luncheon on the patio. The residents and their pen pals were given all the materials to plant seeds in the garden and watch them grow all summer, just like their bonds of friendship. There were also lawn games for the kids and even a tear or two shed as the pen pals exchanged addresses

so that they could continue writing to friends over the summer months.

According to Fairwinds – Ivey Ranch residents Stan and Nancy Kukawka, it had been a long time since they had a chance to interact with an 8-year-old.

“We haven't been in a primary classroom for many years and were amazed to see all the computers and new technology,” Stan explained, who shared a good book with his pen pal Ayden.

“We are very lucky to be near Ivey Ranch Elementary School,” said Kathi Keene, Program Supervisor at Fairwinds – Ivey Ranch. “There are so many positives in the intergenerational relationships of our residents and the children. Our residents teach them empathy and character, while the children offer joy, renewed hope, and for some a ‘second chance’ to make a difference in a young one's life.”

Ms. Hillhouse-Shokes, the teacher who began this cross-generational adventure, added, “Being pen pals with our older friends gave a purpose and meaning for our writing, but the true gift was the meaning and purpose it gave to our community.” ♦



**Lost and Found:** Continued from page 39

question Libby is responding to. My sense is that it is both.

I acknowledge her strength amidst what she sees as her lack, her knowing amidst her not knowing. I say what I believe, that she is still an artist and a poet in her approach to life, how even with her memory loss and her trouble word finding, she still perceives and engages with the world as an artist.

I am looking into her eyes as I say this. Our faces are close. She is looking into mine. She is thinking this over. She smiles. She nods.

"I know what you mean," she says. And she does. Something inside her knows that this is who she was, and who she still is, even if she is not able to be the creator she once was.

When I am next at work, I find in my mailbox an envelope from Libby with two of her poems. I ask her if she remembers when she wrote them. "No. I don't. It's sad, but I can't anymore. This happens as we age."

I'm particularly struck by one of them, written within the past year. I read it over several times. It's a 32-word poem that captures her struggle with her aging memory and her inability to find her words.

I ask her about the poem, about a particular word she has repeated

six times, only once in the singular. I ask if this was her intention. She says, "Yes. The artist intended this to make it ..."

I complete the sentence, as she is having trouble finding the words, though through her gestures I understand.

"Stand out," I say.

"Yes," she responds.

She refers to the artist, the creator, as different from herself. This is the mark of a true artist. The work stands alone.

She reads out loud another poem she has written. As she comes to the final line, she covers up the last two words. She says she would now end the poem without these two words, to give it a bit more mystery. This is the mark of a true poet, still revising her work.

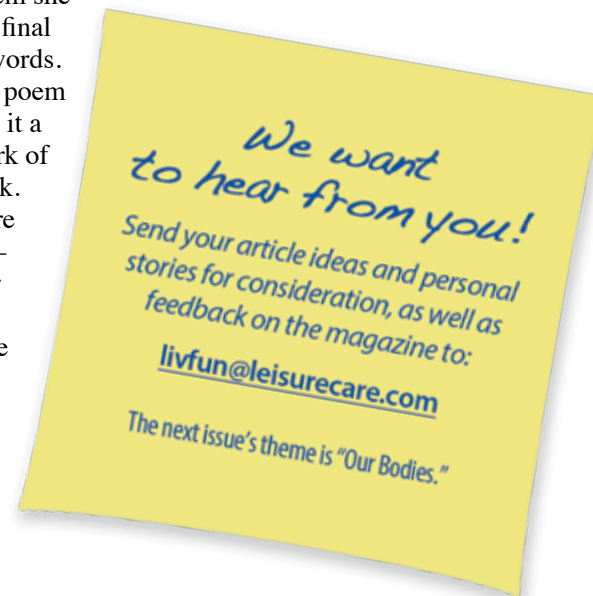
The dichotomy is striking. Here is a woman who has trouble finding her keys, the numbers on her phone, and her way around, yet she is so present and aware of the shifts in her aging memory.

At some point, she asks me how I got to doing what I do. I'm not sure if she is asking about my being a rabbi or a writer so I tell her a bit about both. As we are both writers,

I tell her I just wrote a book. I explain that it is about sharing our values and love with the people we love. Then I say, because I just then recall, "Today is the day it is coming out."

Libby claps. She smiles. She is so happy for me. Here are the words that emerge: "You are a runner. You are a breather. And you get in there with a great deal of love and readiness. Your happiness is there, and so is your head, and so is your Judaism."

This is her gift to me from her poet soul. ♦



**BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS / From Page 18**

**Answers to Crossword Puzzle**

ROACH	PUTT	BASE
IGLOO	ANON	ABCS
TRANSCRIPT	MOOT	
ZEN	TEST	PADRE
WADE	WEAKENS	
NOLEGACY	ISSO	
ERASER	ALTO	EON
SECT	TRY	ACME
TSE	KAHN	RICHAS
FIRESTATIONS		
HONESTY	ACAD	
IRONS	ABEL	FSA
NERD	EMULSIFIER	
DOSE	LATE	ABEAM
USER	KNOT	NIFTY

**Answers to Sudoku**

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



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