

Winter 2020: Open Arms

# livfun

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Give Till it Feels

## Great

Finding the right organizations to support

Five Feet Tall With Arms Wide Open

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## My American Story

A contemporary tale of two identities

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*"Love gives itself; it is not bought."*  
— Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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## THOUGHTS FROM THE HOME OFFICE The Year We Changed ... Together



Greetings everyone,

This year has been a year of change for people around the globe. Early in the year, the COVID-19 pandemic response took so many things away that were absolutely basic to life. As we've grappled with the fallout and come to understand it better through the year, some of those things are slowly coming back. Many restaurants are now open, some businesses are open and working, and life is moving forward again after we came to what seemed like a screeching halt in March. But it's a little different. Did you ever think you'd be saying to a friend or neighbor, "Hey there — I really like your mask!"

Throughout this health crisis, we've seen people bring out their best — and, in some cases, their worst, but I choose to focus on the best. I cannot thank the extraordinary employees in our communities enough for what they've done to help people and care for them through an incredibly stressful time. They showed up! They knew there were risks, and they came in and made sure our residents were taken care of. And I'm so grateful for them. Beyond the basic needs, we've seen innovative ways that people are staying connected and engaged with life and with each other. Technology use has gone through the roof, as our residents are Zooming and FaceTiming, playing virtual Bridge games, and so much more.

Some of these changes will be lasting and some fleeting. But I hope that the spirit it has brought out in all of us will continue forever. We have shown tremendous resilience in the face of danger and uncertainty. We have come together as a company, as a community, and as human beings, all facing challenges we never thought we'd face. The media generally shows us what's happening in a negative and fearful light because it drives ratings. But let's focus on the best things, the positive aspects we are seeing all around us. None of us wanted this pandemic to happen, but it did. What can we take away from it that will make us better? What can we learn from this?

One thing we've had a lot of practice with this year is dealing with change. We're all doing our part to hold the virus at bay and keep our friends and families safe and sound — and that means we don't touch things like we used to without thinking about where it's been and sanitizing our hands afterward. The magazines are gone from waiting rooms, not likely to return anytime soon. But as I mentioned, we're finding ways to connect and shifting to technology to stay informed and engaged.

This issue of LIV FUN in your hands is the final copy that will be printed and distributed in physical form — at least for a while. We are in the early stages of introducing an electronic application that will allow our residents to see menus, order services, sign-up for excursions and activities, schedule transportation, and engage with one another. The MyLeisureCare App will be introduced to you and your families in the first two months of 2021. We are excited about what it will bring to all of you and how it will move us forward. There will be more to come on that in January.

And although this issue is the last of LIV FUN for a while, I will still be in touch with you from time to time on the app and other ways. Thank you all for being amazing people through the most challenging times and focusing on the positives as we move forward.

Respectfully,

Greg Clark  
Executive Vice President  
Leisure Care

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# The Embrace

A Seattle sidewalk sets the scene for a hug felt across the years.

by Skye Moody

Novelist, essayist, photographer and world traveler

Lunch time, and it's a special date. Our mother is taking her three young children downtown to lunch with their grandfather. I'm three years old, small for my age, wearing a couture dress, handmade by my French-trained seamstress grandmother, Bee. My older brother and sister are wearing coordinating outfits.

Bee only dresses her family; nothing professional. Inside each glorious creation is sewn a label: "Handmade by Bee Green." In her coats, the label is sewn upside down, á la the fashion of John Doyle Bishop, Seattle's iconic fashion designer.

Challenging my zeal for perpetual motion, every outfit requires several stand-still fittings; first sewn in muslin, the prototype of what splendid garment results, then the minimum two fittings in the genuine article. Not counting school uniforms, we wore no store-bought clothing before our teenage years. Even then, Bee, and later, our mother, created the important pieces in our wardrobes. Lush, enviable prom dresses, impeccable Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas couture; complete wardrobes for each season of each year.

This balmy spring morning, we four fashion plates stroll along a sparkling clean sidewalk in the city's financial district, looking forward to meeting our Grandfather Alan, the distinguished English gentleman who always wears a red poppy in his lapel. Now a bigtime U.S. businessman, his office is situated in the Smith Tower (tallest building west of the Mississippi back then).

Through a three-year-old's eyes, I see the sidewalk is not exactly congested, but thickly dotted with pedestrians. Occasionally, a passerby will glance in our direction, smiling at the darling children in matching outfits

with their beautiful young mother. I detect more than a few of the men focusing in on our mother's Betty Grable legs; she isn't oblivious either.

My hand in its white glove fights my mother's grip. Nobody, even Betty Grable, can hold me at bay. I'm an incorrigible escape artist, and I believe Bee's bespoke dresses afford a source of aerial lift to my gait, a bit like Mary Poppins' umbrella. My mother's grip tightens.

I am beside myself with excitement. The sidewalk is level and seems to go on forever. I keep a sharp eye on the pavement stretching into infinity, feeling alternately like a tortoise, then roadrunner, all while anticipating Grandfather Alan's embrace. My heart pumps; my breath stirs.

Here he comes! In his distinctive dark business suit and gray fedora, he's heading our way. I wriggle out of my white glove, free from my mother's grasp, and bolt.

As he advances on the sidewalk, I run to him, my white ankle-length oxfords scuffing as I detour around pedestrians, making a beeline for Grandfather Alan. Here he is! I raise my arms and leap up onto his chest like a wild monkey to a coconut palm, planting a fervid kiss on his cheek. He hugs me and rocks me gently, just long enough for my mother to rush up on her Betty Grable sticks, her Revlon lips forming mortified apologies.

Apologies for what? I'm in heaven in my grandfather's arms, joy pulsing through me, the warmth of his embrace exuding love and security.

Then, very gently, he sets me on my feet on the sidewalk. He stoops down and peers into my wide green eyes.

He says, "I wish I were your grandfather, honey." ♦

## Entertain Your Brain: Books

by Misha Stone

Readers' advisory librarian & Booklist Magazine blogger

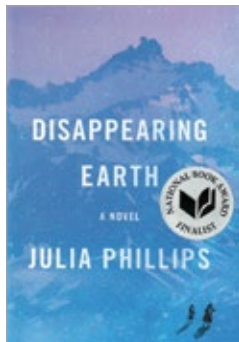
*“Even the longest lived of our species spends but a blink of time in the span of human history. How dare anyone cause harm to another soul, curtail their life or life’s potential, when our lives are so short to begin with?”*

— Isabel Wilkerson



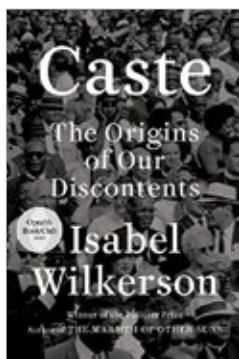
**Hamnet** by Maggie O'Farrell (Knopf, \$26.95)

“How were they to know that Hamnet was the pin holding them together?” The famous playwright Shakespeare lost his 11-year-old son Hamnet, twin to Judith, in 1596. While Hamnet’s cause of death is unknown, the plague, otherwise known as the pestilence, is a likely culprit. Why was his name and his death lost to time and not mentioned in conjunction with Shakespeare’s most famous play, *Hamlet*? O’Farrell, author of *The Hand That First Held Mine* and the memoir *I Am, I Am, I Am: Seventeen Brushes With Death*, explores the lives of Shakespeare, his wife, Agnes, their children, and extended families as they grapple with immense loss. No doubt losing a child deeply influenced the famous playwright’s life and work; exploring how grief shows up when we lose our loved ones to sudden illness remains a timeless theme, immensely relevant to our present moment. Literature binds space, time and memory, and Shakespeare distilled universal truths and dramas that reverberate even now. O’Farrell’s historical novel illustrates how an unsung life can be a blessing to us all.



**Disappearing Earth** by Julia Phillips (Vintage, \$16.95)

Sisters Alyona, 11, and Sophia, 8, go missing after a walk to the beach while their mother is at work in this riveting debut set in Russia’s Kamchatka Peninsula. Their kidnapping reverberates through the lives of other women in the outpost town, and the prejudice toward the browner-skinned native peoples also rises to the surface. Each chapter alternates perspectives among a host of other vignettes, delving into the life of a young girl whose single mother marks her as different, a stern parent who runs a tight ship at work and home, a young woman whose brother is obsessed with alien contact, and the missing girls’ mother who is introduced to another mother whose daughter disappeared. Superb writing, deft insight into character, and a vivid setting make this literary mystery hard to put down. Will the whereabouts of the missing girls ever be solved, and how does the uncertainty cast a pall over the lives of those left behind? These questions linger until the final pages. Phillips builds tension subtly, revealing the lives, dreams and universal longing for closure and hope teeming on a stretch of icy, remote land nestled between the seas that border Alaska and Japan.



**Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents** by Isabel Wilkerson (Random House, \$32.00)

The Pulitzer Prize Award-winning author of *The Warmth of Other Suns* returns with a groundbreaking work of nonfiction (already selected for Oprah’s Book Club) determined to change how we think about race in America. Our lives have been shaped by a caste system that is invisible by design, and Wilkerson illustrates how deep this system has embedded into our society and psychology through examples throughout history and metaphors that drive her points home with stirring reverence and sweeping impact. By braiding the triple strands of India’s caste system with Nazi Germany’s rigid caste lines that were inspired by America’s own racist policies and hierarchies, the depths of our country’s unconscious and explicit adherence to caste thinking becomes apparent. While this sounds like (and is) heavy subject matter, Wilkerson’s skill, compassion and storytelling prowess makes this an absorbing, page-turning read. James Baldwin is famous for saying, “Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced,” and this ethos informs every line of this important and gripping historical analysis as it asks us to embrace a more just and joyous future for all.

## Entertain Your Brain: Movies

by Robert Horton

Member, National Society of Film Critics

*“You know, people seldom go to the trouble of scratching the surface of things to find the inner truth.”*

— Jimmy Stewart in “The Shop Around the Corner”



**The Shop Around the Corner** (1940)

Two salesclerks work in a little store in Budapest — Budapest by way of the MGM backlot, that is. They don’t much care for each other, but each has a pen pal, someone they’ve never met, someone who truly understands them. You know the twist: They are actually writing to each other, a revelation that will be delayed until it can have its full bittersweet effect. Margaret Sullivan and James Stewart play the confused leads, two people who will have to learn how to readjust to unexpected possibilities. They are an utterly enchanting pair, ably supported by Frank Morgan (the wizard of Oz himself) as their boss. Director Ernst Lubitsch brought his worldly “touch” to the proceedings, making the film both funny and poignant. The story has been redone a few times, including as a Broadway musical (*She Loves Me*) and an internet-age reboot, *You’ve Got Mail*. (Available streaming on Amazon Prime, iTunes, Google Play, YouTube and VUDU.)



**Once** (2007)

Dublin’s Grafton Street is a pedestrian-only area lined with buskers, those earnest street musicians passing the hat for a few coins of appreciation. Here we meet a singer-guitarist played by the Irish musician Glen Hansard (we never learn the character’s name), who might be on the verge of a breakthrough. He gets a little help from a Czech immigrant (Markéta Irglová) gifted with musical talents herself. If they are attracted to each other, some clumsiness at the beginning of their friendship makes them both wary — a distance that will be worked out, sometimes thrillingly, through the language of music. One scene in particular, as the two sit down to explore a new tune, perfectly illustrates the way creativity can be an embrace. Writer-director John Carney’s little movie became a sleeper hit, winning an Oscar for Best Original Song and spawning a successful stage adaptation. It’s rooted in street-level reality, but the power of song makes its portrait of earned trust seem quite magical. (Available streaming on Amazon Prime, iTunes, Google Play, YouTube and VUDU.)



**Our Little Sister** (2015)

When three adult sisters are suddenly saddled with care of their adolescent half-sibling, the prospect comes loaded with complexity: The younger girl is the product of their late father’s second marriage, for which he abandoned his first family years earlier. But the new arrival is taken in and made part of this unit (the older sisters all share a house in a seaside city), an organic process that makes for heart-tugging viewing in this lovely film from the modern Japanese master Hirokazu Kore-eda. Everybody’s got problems that must be sorted out, but Kore-eda sidesteps big melodrama in favor of appreciating the little revelations and triumphs that make up everyday life. This is a portrait of people accepting each other under odd and improvised circumstances. Without sugar-coating anything (death and estrangement are real issues here), the film makes the radical suggestion that such acceptance can be accomplished with kindness, patience, and the occasional well-placed sip of plum wine. (Available streaming on Amazon Prime, iTunes and VUDU.)

## Entertain Your Brain: Music

by John Pearson

Retired musician and lifelong enthusiast

*“At this point in my life, I’d like to live as if only love mattered.”*

— Tracy Chapman



**Open Arms** (Single) — Journey, *Escape*, 1981

Penned by bandmates Steve Perry and Jonathan Cain and recorded in 1981, “Open Arms” was a hit for Journey and remains one of their best-loved tunes. Over the years, it has been covered by many artists and in various genres — from Mariah Carey to Boyz II Men to Collin Raye. Wistfully romantic lyric aside, the melody is an ideal showcase for Perry’s powerful voice, while the rest of the personnel, including co-writer Cain on keyboard, provide a solid professional backing for this so-called power ballad. Phrases such as “one of the greatest love songs ever written,” “the greatest power ballad of all time,” and “one of rock’s most beautiful ballads” have been used regarding “Open Arms.” Whether the song deserves this level of praise may be a matter of debate, but one cannot argue with its stellar chart performance and continued popularity.



**Open Arms** (Album cut) — Tracy Chapman, *Matters of the Heart*, 1992

Chapman’s third album did not have the vertigo-inducing success of her first release. While not producing a hit single of the magnitude of “Fast Car” or “Give Me One Reason,” “Matters of the Heart” nevertheless contains a gem in this track. An intimate song, softly sung, it captures the honesty and vulnerability that Chapman embodies in many of her works. It is understated and simply yet effectively delivered. A catchy guitar riff that engenders a feeling of serenity to this reviewer’s ears repeats throughout. (The personnel listing on Wikipedia for this track shows the great Bobby Womack on acoustic guitar. While it is not certain that he is responsible for the signature riff, it would not be at all surprising.) Former “American Idol” judge Randy Jackson does an admirable job as bass player.



**Back in My Arms Again** (Single) — The Supremes, *More Hits by the Supremes*, 1965

This single was the fifth Number 1 hit in a row for The Supremes during the heyday of Motown’s success. (All five hits were written and produced by the amazingly prolific team of Holland-Dozier-Holland.) Ms. Ross’ lead vocal is backed by Florence Ballard and Mary Wilson, who are sometimes overlooked as significant contributors to the success of The Supremes. The overall production, including the vocals and the Funk Brothers’ (Motown studio musicians) backing instrumentation, sounds compressed — but not in a bad way. The track’s audio processing was optimized for AM radio play, common for many hit tunes from that era. The drone of the thumping bass, sometimes doubled by sax, is a notable feature of the arrangement and provides an exhilarating release as the bass moves to follow the chord changes in the latter half of each verse.

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# Internet Interdependence

In our small world, life online mimics real life.

by Pam Mandel

Freelance travel writer and photographer

For some time, I was spending my winters in a small town in Austria. This sounds very jet set, very romantic, and I suppose it was on the surface. I lived in a picture-book-pretty small town. Just next door was a farm with a paddock where doe-eyed cows would graze on hay on sunny days. The skies were cobalt blue, and the pristine snow would pile on the rooftops like so much vanilla frosting. Red-cheeked children in snowsuits went ice skating on the lake.

I ate a lot of pastry, went cross-country skiing for many, many miles several days a week, and read mountains of books. This was life in my husband's home town; as a freelance writer able to work anywhere, I had the privilege of being able to choose it over the rainy gray Seattle winters.

It sounds ideal, and in many ways, it was. I was also very, very lonely.

A somewhat introverted person who is good with words, making friends in a language not my own was an impossible task. We lived in a very small town with few outsiders; the few that came were mostly Germans on ski vacations, passing a week or so enjoying the immaculate cross-country trails and cozy restaurants before returning to their homes in German cities. My in-laws were kind and welcoming, but that is not the same as having a tribe who understands you.

My gateway to the world was a computer tucked into the tiny office in

our apartment. Every afternoon I would switch it on, connect to the internet, and find people who, like me, lived in places to which they were not quite connected. I met Sal, a paralegal who worked for a company in Chicago but lived in Spain. He stayed after his divorce because his daughter was there, but he pined for home. I met Christina, a Canadian housewife raising two boys in Northern Germany, who missed the smell of the Pacific Ocean in British Columbia. I met Diane, a photographer from New Zealand, who lived in an apartment in Brussels but could never quite connect to that urban financial center.

I'm still connected, 20 years later, with these four sympathetic humans. Our lives have all changed markedly, but thanks to the internet — and that online community for expats where we first met — we're still friends.

I got to see Sal in Chicago once. He'd moved back to the U.S., and I was in his city for a conference. I also hopped a plane to visit Diane in Brussels for a long weekend. Christina's entire family stayed with me for a few nights at my home in Seattle. All of us became friends without ever meeting in person — but our friendships extended to the real world. These three are probably my first true online friends, but they're far from the only ones.

These friendships have worked because everyone involved presents their authentic self when we interact online. Their pictures aren't staged. Maybe they're swearsy or political when we

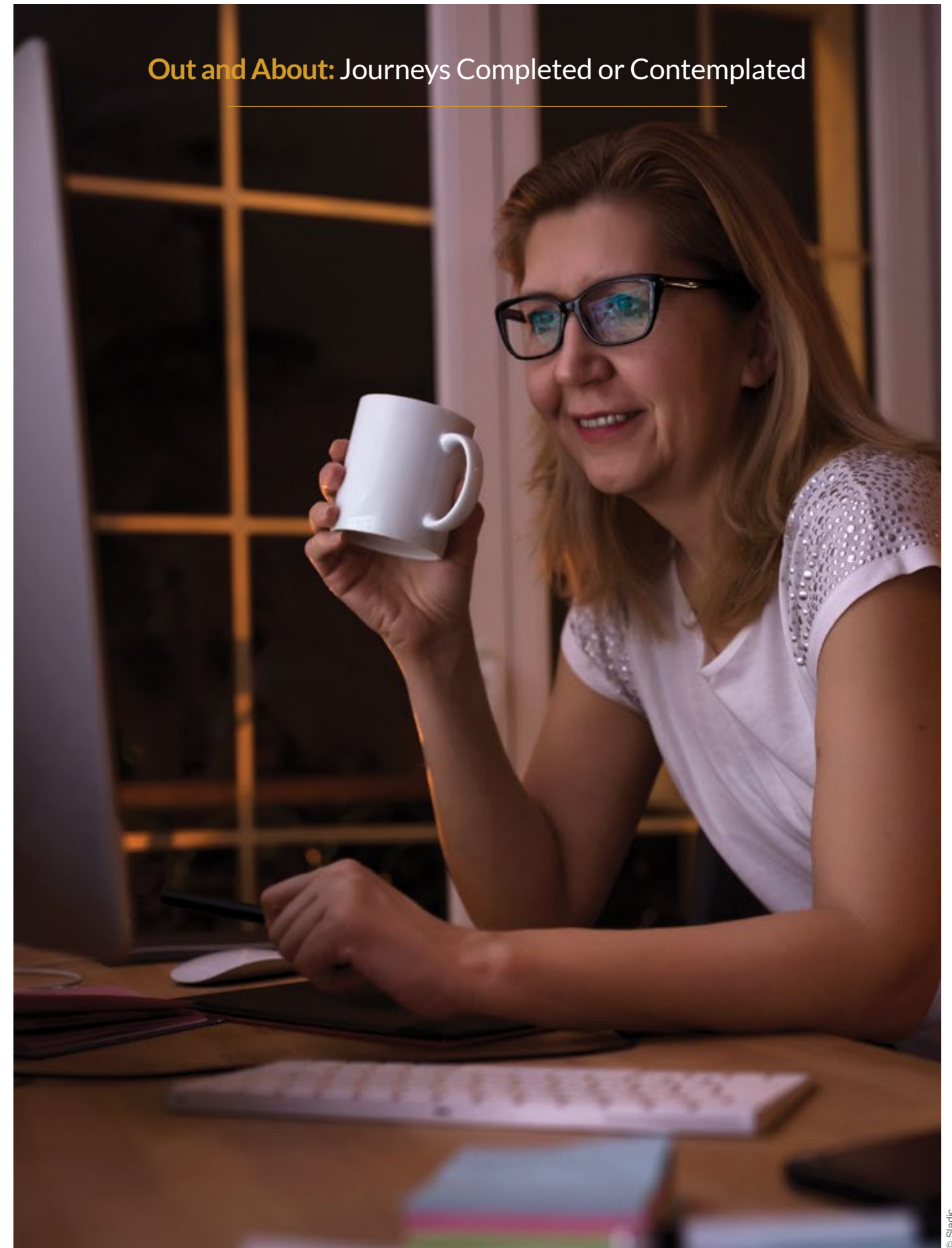
chat because that's how they are in real life. Online, just like in real life, these friends don't want anything more than conversation and connection. And they always default to being universally, consistently kind.

We're stuck in this strange era of COVID, when every social interaction is fraught with risk. In-person visits are often dominated by discussions of who's behaving how and been where. This allows us to decide if we'll sit at the table with them, take two steps back, or only visit outside — or any number of complicated scenarios. It can be singularly unsatisfying, especially in a time when all we want is a hug.

But as we struggle through all of this, I am grateful for the lessons I learned in my early days online. Those friendships were — still are — no less real for them taking place primarily online. I have moved many of my in-person friendships to cyberspace. I have a weekly video call with three girlfriends, another one once a month with my aunt and my cousins, and I started playing with an open house-style video gathering using Facebook's new "room" feature. These digital house parties are not the same as having everyone in my kitchen, but the same rules apply. Bring something to share, even if it's only an idea or a story. Give other people a chance to talk. Be kind.

The connections are no less valid for being online. And I'm not sure if they've ever been more necessary. ♦

Out and About: Journeys Completed or Contemplated



# My American Story

A contemporary tale of two identities.

by **Shaní (Sha-nay) Clayton**

Freelance writer, artist and educator

[Waves crashing nearby]

It's the sound of my alarm clock going off.

Exhausted and uninspired,

I realize it's time to start my day.

Another day in which I have a role to play.

A role I was hired to play five to six days a week.

As I finish my morning routine,

I have 30 mins until I am expected to be on stage.

So I straighten my hair,

Shield my natural curves with loose-fitted clothing,

Readjust the natural timbre of my voice,

And leave my racial identity backstage.

Holding back tears, I walk on stage and play the part I'm

requested to play.



# This is my American story.

When I moved to New York City in 2008, I was full of hope, charisma, self-expression and drive, ready to take on my next challenge: venturing into the world of advertising. For years, I was enamored by the dynamic culture of the ad industry, especially the creative aspects of visual artistry and community comradery amongst colleagues.

I was fortunate enough to dip my toe into the industry a few years prior as an intern and later a full-time employee at an agency based in San Antonio, Texas. It was here that I had the great fortune of collaborating with one of the top ad agencies in New York City. I befriended one of the account executives there and would later meet her on a trip to NYC in winter 2006. This brief encounter would be the catalyst for my eventual move to NYC two years later and the start of an expanding career. Unfortunately, this would later turn into a gut-wrenching and heartbreaking reality check, leading to my eventual departure from not only the advertising industry, but from the corporate world altogether due to years of discrimination.

While my experience involved making the tough personal decision to leave behind financial security and a 10-year career, it launched me on a path of exploring ways in which our communities could come together so that other African American women and women of color wouldn't have to sacrifice their careers and could be seen authentically in the workplace.

## My Hair. My Skin. My Tone. My Name.

Imagine for a moment your favorite vinyl record player spinning the classic tune "Four Women" by Nina Simone. "My skin is black. My arms are long. My hair is woolly. My back is strong ..." The song goes on, describing the experiences of four Black women living in America, defined not by the content of their character or expertise, but by the color of their skin, the definition

of their hair, the tonality of their voice, and the spelling and pronunciation of their name.

This is what it means to be a Black woman in America.

When I listen to this song, I always think about my first advertising job in NYC. So young and full of heart, ready to take this new path toward my career goals in the ad industry. When I first started working there, I was strongly advised to straighten my hair (at the time I had a mid-sized afro) to look more "professional." My colleagues were also curious to see what my hair would look like if it were straight. At the time, it didn't seem like an odd comment; yet reflecting on this situation years later, I realized how discriminating this exchange was. Why were my white female colleagues never asked to change their hairstyles?

In Western society, natural African hairstyles have always been a hot topic, and in many states across America, companies still have the option to terminate or not hire someone based on the "unprofessionalism" of their hairstyle. In 2019, California became the first state to ban discrimination based on one's natural hair. (Díaz and Willon, 2019) I was shocked to learn that this was not outlawed decades before. The ban prohibits companies from enforcing discriminatory grooming policies based on certain hairstyles that are typically worn in African American communities: braids, afros, dreadlocks, etc. New York became the second state to do so shortly after California. (Griffith, 2019) My experience of being coerced into straightening my hair for the approval of others is an experience I will never forget; it took years for me to regain my confidence in owning my hair identity.

There were a slew of other racially involved experiences, including direct superiors demanding I use a different vocal tone to appear less "threatening," a supervisor requesting I wear clothing that would hide my curvy figure, and — to my shock and hor-

ror — a chief marketing officer who couldn't pronounce my name deciding to call me "Karen" instead.

When I began to reflect on all of these experiences, I realized: *There is a tremendous lack of empathy, equality-centered comradery, accountability and compassionate leadership* in our American society, especially in the workplace. Why were people, like myself, having to shrink or hide our identities for the comfort of others? Isn't there space for everyone's story and identity? What are the root causes of such disheartened behaviors within our society? These questions led me on a quest toward finding tangible solutions rooted in collective healing.

## Where Collective Healing Begins

Our corporate systems and cultures are built on education, economic and social structures that make it nearly impossible to crack the foundations of inequality within them. As a result, the stories and historical backgrounds of minority communities have largely been ignored and excluded from the mainstream framework and acceptable ideologies of American culture, leading to millions of Americans having countless racialized experiences within and outside of the workplace.

We are now at a crucial point where we must begin to actively engage in transforming these systematic issues around race whereby every person's history and experience matters. Below, I have laid out three key components I feel are critical to igniting this process of transformation: (1) **vulnerability** (empathy + compassion), (2) **accountability** (unlearning + re-education), and (3) **allyship** (community + unity). Incorporating this process into our daily lives opens a new pathway where the experiences and histories of Black and Brown communities alike are validated and respected, allowing their stories and identities to become an acceptable and necessary component of American history.



### 1. Vulnerability (Empathy + Compassion).

Approaching subjects such as race and America's colonial past tend to be very sensitive for most people as it involves facing a reality that is uncharted territory for those who don't have a direct connection to both. However, these are topics that must be addressed for our desired unity. The first step involves the process of vulnerability. Dr. Brené Brown defines vulnerability as "uncertainty, risk and emotional exposure." (DeBara, 2018)

Based on Dr. Brown's definition, I pose the question: How can white communities incorporate *uncertainty, risk and emotional exposure* when it comes to racial inequality in social and professional settings? I believe it begins with embodying both empathy and compassion toward minority communities. If we can take a moment to step back, pause, reflect and listen to minority communities without judgement, we activate our emotional sensors, exposing us to feel in ways that we may not have before. This allows for us to open our hearts to seeing how our collective reality is not inclusive for every American.

From this realization, we activate the next stage, which involves *accountability*.

### 2. Accountability (Unlearning + Re-education)

Accountability involves holding space for one's vulnerability, which

leads to self-reflection. Self-reflection is the practice of reviewing how one's actions affect our immediate environment. On a societal level, it involves reflecting on how our collective actions have affected collective outcomes. In this instance, when reflecting on race and America's colonial past, accountability involves understanding how our current structures and workplace cultures, in particular, have been rooted in a white-male, Euro-centric patriarchal system, leaving no room for the possibility of a new framework that incorporates the safe inclusion of minority communities.

In order to move in a direction of total inclusivity, we have to honestly look at how our education system has failed to transparently explain the histories of both African Americans and Indigenous communities. This lack of transparency has led to enormous levels of misinformation and naiveté when it comes to minority communities, leaving ample space for discriminatory behavior toward them.

So this leaves us with the task of unlearning much of what we have been taught to allow for the process of re-education. I believe that we have a collective responsibility to understand every aspect of our past in order to proceed into a healthier future, equally.

### 3. Allyship (Community + Unity)

Once the process of unlearning and re-education is activated and engaged, we have a much more solid founda-

tion for consistent and sustainable allyship. To me, allyship means being able to see each other as one community while simultaneously celebrating cultural, racial, religious and sexual orientation differences. In the workplace, allyship begins when we see every co-worker as a human being living a human experience.

African American women are often advised to dim their light in order to "fit in" to the corporate patriarchal culture so as to not make others uncomfortable or hurt someone else's chances for advancement. (Cheeks, 2018) Every person deserves space to be their authentic self, at all times. Instead of erasing someone's identity, let's embrace and celebrate them. We all have something *magical* to contribute to the world. Allyship is seeing the magic in everyone and lifting them up through support and comradery.

### Vulnerability + Accountability + Allyship = Healing

The steps listed above are just a few ingredients we can add to our daily lives that enhance our abilities to see each other without prejudice. Incorporating vulnerability + accountability + allyship = creating a beautiful, alchemic journey that will not only heal our immediate environments, but allow us to heal ourselves as well, transforming society at large, one person at a time. And by doing so, I firmly believe that we will finally be able to heal America. ♦

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# Creativity at Leisure Care Communities

Leisure Care communities across the country have become even more creative in their efforts to engage residents over the past few months.

Knowing that writing is a great way to relieve stress and anxiety, The Carillon at Boulder Creek, a Leisure Care community, held a poetry contest for residents to write about this unprecedented time.

Resident Joan Patch won with the following poem. We believe this poem summarizes how so many of our residents and staff are feeling as we patiently, but expectantly, wait for the day when we can all be together again post-COVID.

*Staying at home  
Told not to roam  
Wish I could see  
Someone else, not just me.*

*Relief not tomorrow  
Much to my sorrow  
Just have to wait  
For an all clear date.*

*Masks on our faces  
When out of our places  
Meetings on Zoom  
No public places.*

*Then we'll open our doors  
On all of our floors  
Say hi to our friends  
Isolation ends!*

 the  
**CARILLON**  
AT BOULDER CREEK

 **LEISURE CARE**

[LeisureCare.com](http://LeisureCare.com)



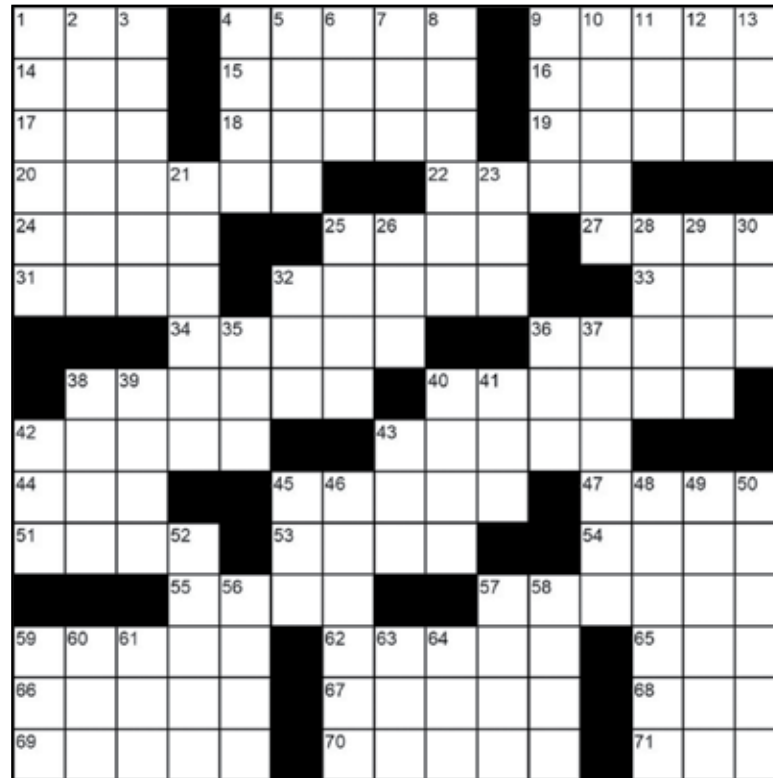
# Brain Games

John Pearson, Puzzle Editor

## Crossword Puzzle

Grab On and Hold Tight

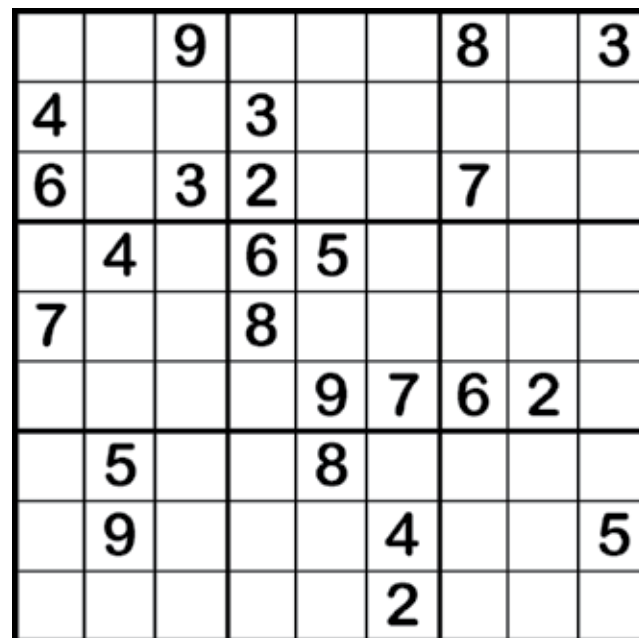
- ACROSS**
- Hard drink?
  - Pickle choice
  - Moral principles
  - Sports org. founded in 1917
  - Delta option
  - Northernmost U.S. Air Base
  - Rival
  - It covers the main points
  - Pushes
  - First part of a Leo Buscaglia quote
  - Where tomato juice is the state beverage
  - Type of group or conference
  - Semicircular recess
  - Something your ear might get
  - Prefix meaning foreign
  - Literary house
  - Ralph Cramden's work vehicle
  - Partner of wine
  - Colorful rock
  - 1966 Coca-Cola introduction
  - Second part of quote
  - Insight or inspiration unit
  - Particularly annoying pest
  - Progressive rival
  - Modern greeting
  - Military instruction org.
  - Third part of quote
  - Last part of quote
  - Continental currency
  - Large lot, perhaps
  - Bad thing to hit
  - Blue shoe material
  - Moved gently
  - Place for an enc. or OED
  - Bustling
  - Beg
  - Barely obtain
  - Pine
  - Tries to find
  - Sailor Jack?
- DOWN**
- An arrival, as of tourists
  - "Pick a card"
  - Number of Saints in a play?
  - Indian outfit
  - Shepard's followers
  - Key to getting out, sometimes
  - Where whiskey is the state beverage (abbr.)
  - One state to be in
  - Where a needle may be found
  - Pulse
  - Eco-friendly action?
  - It is surrounded by eau
  - These in France
  - Wears
  - That girl
  - Lost
  - After Rachel Maddow, Brian May, or David Duchovny in print
  - Auction option
  - Loons
  - Half of an African danger?
  - Chapel Hill sch.
  - Sorta
  - Shock partner
  - Attic
  - Burger action
  - Fury
  - What a snob might put on
  - Inc. across the pond
  - Letters on a letter?
  - Accident sound
  - Corn unit
  - Ones to avoid
  - Before mall or after electrical
  - Russian sleigh harness
  - Beach \_\_\_
  - Zenith opposite
  - European physics lab
  - Schnoz
  - Sports figures
  - Come out with
  - Avail
  - Pilot's guess (abbr.)
  - Pub order
  - Holy \_\_\_



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## Sudoku

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



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DIFFICULTY ★★★☆☆

BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS ON PAGE 42

## Healthy U: Good Health 101 and Beyond



# A MEAL FOR THE SOUL

Social connections are so important to our well-being. Be present when they happen, and drink them in.

by David Tumbarello

"Sorry we're late."

My wife and I walked up the stairs and onto our friends' back deck, feeling a bit sheepish. "Thanks for texting your address, and we'll be sure to save it in our phone for next time."

After accidentally leaving their address at home on our refrigerator, we arrived more than a few minutes late after driving around in circles until we called from the road to get directions.

We stood on their deck and looked out over the forest and field not too far away. They told us about the deer that came onto their property the night before and how they snapped close-up pictures before it sprinted away. Within a few minutes, chicken, salads and blueberry cocktails were brought out and we shared an outdoor socially distant dinner.

While the occasion provided food for the body, it provided so much more in the form of nourishment for our souls and spirits. Science shows there is a long list of mental and physical benefits that come from a close network of friends.

Individuals in their 50s and 60s who are regularly engaged with friends, for example, have a lower risk of dementia later in life. In one study, people who saw friends daily at age 60 had a 12% less chance of developing demen-

tia than someone who saw friends only once every couple of months. (Sommerlad et al., 2019)

Another study with a population of people born between 1920 and 1947 found that lower social contact led to higher rates of depression and anxiety symptoms. More social connections mean less depression and anxiety. (Santini et al., 2020)

For women in particular, a large social support network can lower risk of death. In one study for less connected women, death risk was 2.5 times greater than those who participated in large social networks. (Lyyra and Heikkinen, 2006)

But what does that mean for us now, when we can't be as close to friends as we'd like? While social distancing may be a healthy course of disease prevention, it can directly lead to feelings of isolation and increased depression and anxiety. How do we manage friendships and stay connected in order to maintain both physical and mental health?

Learn to listen more, affirm it is difficult to be socially distant, and make plans and connections on the phone.

At the end of the night with our friends, instead of giving and receiving hugs, we planned for a future socially safe time together, and I was grateful

for the physical and spiritual nourishment and grateful for our friendship and safe time together.

The sun tucked behind the trees, and we said our goodbyes. When we returned to the car, I turned on the GPS and clicked the button labeled Home. And I had a very good feeling we weren't going to lose our way this time! ♦

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# The Giving Dilemma

*A three-step approach to finding the right organizations to support.*

**Jessie Palmatier**

Nonprofit development professional  
in the Bay Area



In a world where countless issues vie for our attention (and solutions seem few and far between), how do you decide what problem you want to help solve and how best to go about it? Donating to an effectively run nonprofit organization is one way; supporting a team of dedicated experts working for a cause you believe can be truly empowering. It is heartening to see that many Americans agree on the importance of charitable giving: The past three years are the highest on record when it comes to charitable giving in the United States. (Giving USA, 2020)

But with around 1.5 million nonprofit organizations in the U.S., finding the right organization to support can be overwhelming. Just like you might shop around before making a new purchase or research a company before buying stock, do

your homework before deciding where to donate.

While there are many trustworthy organizations to choose from, there are also, unfortunately, many scams and unethical organizations. Follow these three steps to help find the right charity to support.

### 1. Clarify Your Own Values

The first step in choosing a recipient for your charitable donation is to narrow down what type and scale of work you want to support. Consider where your passions and interests lie, and use that as a starting point in your search.

### 2. Understand Their Mission

Once you've found an organization to support, dig a little deeper and ensure that the nonprofit is ethical and effective. Find the organization's mission

statement, and make sure it is clear, easy to understand, and aligns with your own mission and values.

Look for progress updates from the organization as well. This can take many forms, including an annual report, a regularly updated blog, a newsletter, testimonials, and more.

### 3. Get the Facts

While it is important to hold organizations accountable for how they spend their money, remember that nonprofits have overhead costs just like businesses. Under-investing in infrastructure and overhead has been linked to poor performance and reduced longevity for nonprofits. (GuideStar, 2020) Go in with realistic expectations about the organization you choose, and be sure to look at the longevity and sustainability of the organization, as well

as short-term results. (Gregory and Howard, 2009)

Finally, be sure they are a legitimate organization by looking them up in [GuideStar](#). If they aren't listed there, be careful and do more homework to avoid falling for a less reputable organization.

### Three Organizations; Three Missions

Thankfully, these criteria leave a huge range of options open for us as prospective donors. Ethical and effective nonprofit organizations are as diverse as the needs they represent. Even within your personal interest area, it is likely that you will find a wide variety of organizations doing vastly different work.

Let's take children's services in the city of Oakland, California, as an example.

**Children Now** is an organization based in Oakland with a mission to work at the state level to build power for kids by advocating for "pro-kid" policies and budget priorities. Employing a whole-child approach, it advocates for state policies that benefit kids in a wide range of issue areas. Its work is broad and effective, and the organization and its staff are well-respected in the state capitol. The organization has successfully advocated for a wide variety of policies that benefit kids all over the state. A single donation to Children Now can help to improve every aspect of kids' lives in California.

**Children Rising** is another organization based in Oakland, working on a more focused goal: mentoring and tutoring Oakland students to close

the achievement gap in city schools. This more focused mission means the organization and its donors get to see specific results more quickly: Each year, hundreds of students learn to read, catch up to grade level in math, or are prepared for college and careers. A donation to Children Rising can produce more tangible results, like workbooks, materials or tutor training.

Another organization serving kids in Oakland is operating on an even smaller scale. **Urban Mentors** grew out of one woman's passion for the kids in her community of East Oakland, and she has built a community of kids, teens and mentors who are more like family than friends. A donation to Urban Mentors often meets very specific needs: supplies for a back-to-

**Giving Dilemma:** *Continued on page 43*



# From the Fire ... to the Frame

**After a life-altering diagnosis,  
one UK man discovers a new  
world at the end of his lens.**

by Susie Kearley  
British freelance writer and journalist



© Ian Randall Photography

Helping others has long been known as a catalyst for better mental health and new social connections. While science gives us plenty of examples of the benefits of doing for others, we found evidence of this in the beautiful story of Ian Randall and his volunteer work.

A fire officer in the U.K. for 18 years, Ian was diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma (bone cancer) in 2010. He made a good recovery but was unable to resume his career fighting and investigating fires. Still a relatively young man, Ian wasn't ready to stop working and contributing. So he volunteered to work with Sarcoma UK, a national charity working to help people diagnosed with this disease, as Ian was. He offered to become their official photographer, and didn't have to offer twice. He started within a week!

"One of my first projects was taking

pictures of their runners in the London Marathon," he explains. "They had about 15 runners then, but it's really exploded in recent years. Now there are usually around 65 people running for Sarcoma UK. It's quite hard to spot them amongst 40,000 participants, but some are easily identifiable by their Sarcoma UK vests."

Being diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma changed Ian's life. He's now committed to doing what he can to help other people who are facing some of the difficulties he experienced.

He explains, "When I was diagnosed, I was told not to look up my condition on the internet, because it's usually bad news. So it wasn't until after treatment that I came across the Sarcoma UK charity online. I wanted to try and help other people who were going through rehab and pass on any positive aspects of my experience.

"I had physical and mental prob-

lems, which meant I couldn't do physical activities, but I could make use of my interest in photography."

#### Finding a New Focus

It's been a whirlwind of event photography, portrait photography and medical shoots. Ian has met a lot of people who've been affected by the disease, and with every new project, he learns more about the charity and those brave people who benefit from its work.

"Some people have lost family and friends to the disease. I'm pretty quiet usually, but having the camera gives us a focal point for our conversations and helps me talk more easily. People open up, and it helps me talk about my experiences too."

"The charity uses my photos on their website, on social media, in brochures, and in their subscribers' magazine. My photos have been used in numer-

ous projects over the last 10 years, and it's nice to see how the designers use them," Ian continues.

As part of his work for Sarcoma UK, Ian photographs the charity's annual quiz night, its big fundraiser attended by British celebrities and politicians. In 2014, he was asked if he'd like to get involved in producing a charity calendar. Always keen to help, he didn't hesitate to say yes.

"A group of fellow cancer survivors and their families came together, and we shot photographs for the Bone Cancer Research Trust Calendar 2015," he explains. "It attracted a lot of press interest, sold well, and did a brilliant job of raising awareness of bone cancer. I tried new photography techniques too."

A few years later, Ian was invited to photograph a fashion show. "Having a chance to shoot at London Fashion week in early 2016 led me to shoot for

Models of Diversity, where I met some amazing and inspiring people," he says.

In 2016, he was invited to take photographs at the Prime Minister's Office in Downing Street, when they made Sarcoma UK their official charity of the year. "I also went to the Houses of Parliament in 2018 to represent Sarcoma UK as part of the Cancer 52 awareness campaign," Ian explains. "It was raising awareness of the lesser known cancers that don't get any government funding."

Ian also started photographing sporting events and has now received his Football Association (soccer) Photography license and shot Premiership and League games. "Shooting the 2018 Women's FA Cup Final at Wembley was a dream come true," he says. "Then last year I did another photo shoot at Downing Street when Sarcoma UK was invited back to launch their Genomics Development Pro-

gramme" — important research that will hopefully lead to earlier diagnosis and better treatments.

#### From a Hobby to a New Career

"Photography was always a hobby," Ian explains. "But before I got ill, I didn't have time to pursue it properly. I was working two jobs — one in the fire service and then on my days off I was doing fire safety inspections and risk assessments."

During his recovery, Ian had to take stock. He realized he wouldn't be able to go back to work and started to look at other ways to keep himself busy without overdoing it.

"I had a chat with the fire brigade incident photographer, and he told me I just needed a cheap Canon camera and he'd show me the basics. He lent me his equipment and taught me how to use Photoshop. Then I went on a course," he explains.



***“I asked them to tell the patients that I too had been a patient, so I knew what they were going through.”***

© Ian Randall Photography

Since then, Ian’s photos have appeared on *BBC News* and in the press. “I’ve had a lot of practice over the years,” Ian says. “I now do weddings, portraits, corporate events and sporting events. A lot of what I do is helping people out.

“I do weddings in the summer — it’s a lot of pressure and tiring, but I get huge satisfaction and joy when the edits are completed. And the newly-weds are always overjoyed! My main thing now is the football photography. I volunteer at Queens Park Rangers women’s and younger teams, and they use my photos on their website and on social media. It’s not paid, but I enjoy it. Some of the players buy my photos, which helps to cover expenses. I also work for a football photography agency, which covers league games.”

So what does Ian enjoy the most about his volunteering work?

“The highlight is always shooting the London Marathon,” he says. “It’s very emotional and challenging. It takes a lot of concentration to get good shots of the Sarcoma UK runners in the crowds, but I enjoy it.

“I’ve done a couple of weddings abroad,” he adds, “which were highlights too. I did a wedding at Ravello in Italy and got some stunning photos. I also attended a wedding in Iceland. These assignments cover all my costs, and I’ve seen some lovely places. In Iceland I got a free helicopter ride!”

Ian’s still working with Sarcoma UK.

“My latest project for them was taking shots of patients in clinic with their doctors,” he explains. “I said I didn’t want to be there if they were given bad news. It was difficult. It felt intrusive. I asked them to tell the patients that I too had been a patient, so I knew what

they were going through. It’s a fine balance between being professional and getting personally involved. But it was a very worthwhile shoot. They’ve used those photos a lot.”

Ian has thoroughly enjoyed sharing his time and skills with others while developing his own passion for photography into a growing career. It gives him a great sense of achievement after a difficult time, and he’s particularly passionate about supporting Sarcoma UK and helping those still fighting the disease. ♦

**Read more:**

Visit Ian’s website at [www.ianrandall-photography.co.uk](http://www.ianrandall-photography.co.uk) or follow him on Instagram.

Learn more about Sarcoma UK and the important work they are doing at [www.sarcoma.org.uk](http://www.sarcoma.org.uk).



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**Advice for the Journey: Open Arms**



**We're all struggling with something. Maybe the right thing to do is just ask ... and listen.**

**Question:** I have a part-time caregiver who comes into my home and helps out three days a week. She's always been so sharp and on the ball ... but lately it seems like she's not paying attention. The simplest things, like doing the

laundry, take twice as long as they should, and she's always losing her keys or forgetting where we parked. And she's short-tempered sometimes instead of her usual cheerful self. I don't want to replace her ... but what should I do?

**Answer:** The first thing I would suggest is to be patient with her. Most likely there's something going on in her life that's making it harder for her to focus and concentrate, and she hasn't shared that with you. And it's very likely that the pandemic could have something to do with it!

Many mental health experts report their clients saying they are far less productive the past few months. It's quite understandable: We all have more challenges to deal with and more demands on our time ... especially working parents and people in "essential" jobs like caregiving. Just going to the grocery store, something she used to do all the time without a problem, now has the added stress of wearing a mask,

keeping socially distant, and all the rest. Our routines are completely off, and what seemed easy now seems that much harder.

It's likely the same in your own life. The things you used to do without a second thought ... dropping in to visit a friend or going out for coffee ... probably make you more anxious too. Being under a constant state of anxiety like this can have profound impacts on how we navigate through the day. We tend to get more easily distracted, upset, short-tempered, even angry when what we know as "normal" is no longer that way.

Aside from the pandemic, maybe the work itself isn't challenging enough. It can be harder to stay on task if someone finds the work a bit boring or re-

petitive. Maybe she needs a challenge beyond laundry and errands ... like helping you reorganize that closet in the spare bedroom or sorting through your photo boxes and putting together albums with you.

The next time she comes by to care for you, put the kettle on and sit down to a cup of coffee or tea. Ask her how her family is and how she is feeling. Don't be critical or judgmental, but rather ask as a concerned friend would. She might not even realize that her lack of focus is that obvious, and she might be grateful for the chance to share her feelings. Open yourself to listening, and sharing your own feelings too. Approach the situation with a profound willingness to understand, and help be part of the solution. ♦





## Your Life Well Lived

Wellness Advice for Mind,  
Body and Spirit

# APPRECIATING LIFE

An illness or injury can dramatically alter the way we see the world. With this different lens, sometimes we discover a new type of mystery and magic.

by Nancy Gertz

Health and well-being coach in Boston

photos (c) Betsy Gertz

*This article originally appeared in our Summer 2012 issue. We are republishing it here in memory of Betsy as a tribute for a life well lived.*

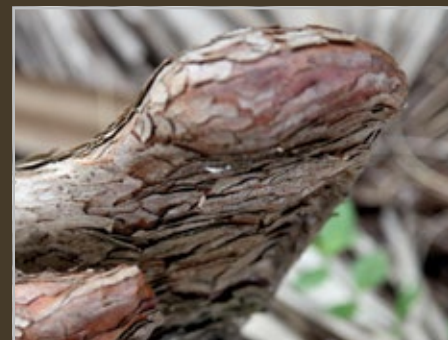
My sister, typically ebullient and charismatic, our unofficial stand-up comic, adrenaline-seeking emergency medicine nurse, and world-traveling art photographer, sat at a family meal in the budding month of April shivering with the onset of what we thought would be a passing “bug.” This bug turned out to be a monster beast: herpes encephalitis, a potentially fatal infection of the brain. Nobody could explain why my sister became one of approximately 200,000 cases to be diagnosed that year, with the best possible outcome being mild irreversible brain damage.

Beyond any patient’s struggle looms the collateral damage. I was selecting a bag of shrimp at Trader Joe’s when my cell phone rang with a too-calm voice asking if I was “next of kin.” Without warning (as if that would have helped!) I was hijacked, plucked directly from the frozen food bin straight to the frigid confines of the intensive care unit. Lives interrupted, never to be the same.

What followed was a brutal boot camp of life training, and I was a naïve recruit. After all, we never do expect life as-we-know-it to change in a thin splice of moments, even though we are reminded of this reality time after time. Loss of loved ones, job changes, financial crises, leaving our homes, and difficult diagnoses, like this one, are just the beginning of a long list of paths to inner frenzy. What can we do to protect and strengthen ourselves, knowing these events can unravel us?

Nine years after her last hospital stay, my sister and I are taking a walk in the woods on an unseasonably warm winter morning, blue skies above, crisp paths underfoot. The reservoir off to the right is a dark gray, and I am imagining the lily pads that will soon dance along its smooth surface. The sun is at a low angle, throwing shadows on my sister’s face as she mechanically lifts her feet to avoid tripping on thick roots. She is visiting me because her spirits are languishing. Since she no longer works, it has been hard to find her purpose in life. We are still in the aftermath, still seeking a new normal, still searching for ways to appreciate life through a different lens.

## Through a Different Lens



The camera bounces at her side as we navigate paths strewn with fallen branches, stones and rocks that have been dislocated by seasonal shifting. Winter has been mild, but everything is affected one way or another. I watch as she studies the ground, peers into emptied-out stumps, and gets personal with the emerald green moss growing on the barren tree trunk. She bends down slowly and deliberately, adjusts the focus on the lens, and zooms up close to the smallest of images.

Quietly I celebrate how differently we move through this shared experience. I come to the woods often as a way of being good to myself; here I build and replenish my internal stores. Stepping onto the path, the details of my life are lifted away as my attention is drawn to the expansiveness of nature. In my mind’s eye, I zoom out, and intentionally I expand my curiosity about everything I see, hear, feel and smell. Under the trees I am part of a larger whole, and like all things around me I feel strong,

adaptive and resilient. I make a conscious effort to inhale the beauty so I can keep it with me, pass it along to others. Leaving these woods, I am more hopeful, graced by a higher power, physically enlivened, and more capable of addressing what seem like smaller personal challenges, even when they are big monster beasts.

While my mind’s eye is zooming out, my sister’s is zooming in. She chooses to adjust her lens to something much smaller; she squints to see micro images that only she knows are there. After a series of shots, we press our shoulders together to shadow the screen, and in the silence of the sleepy woods we review her cache. I can’t believe what I see: two trunks merged in an unintended embrace, a decaying stump that mirrors a fish with gills, the bark that is crumbling but still begging to hold onto its source. My sister has captured the majesty in the smallness of

**Appreciating Life:** *Continued on page 43*

photos (c) Betsy Gertz



*Live Big. Live Bold.*

Your Life, Your Rules

## Finding Joy in the Journey

The biggest problems can be solved with the seeds of generosity.

by Alissa Sauer

Blogger and Leisure Care writer

The end of a year is always a good time for reflection. Now that the year is nearly over, we can look back and ask ourselves how we lived. Did we live with open hearts, an open mind, and open eyes? Did we try to understand the impact of our decisions on others? Did we take the time to understand ourselves, accept others, and see the world around us like it truly is? Did we greet the world with open arms in a true spirit of generosity?

According to Dr. Marcia Sirota, M.D., four fundamental principles significantly increase happiness for ourselves and those around us. She calls them the four pillars of happiness. The

first pillar is having an open heart, the second is having an open mind, the third is having open eyes, and the fourth is having open arms. (Sirota, 2015)

2020 is coming to an end, and it is fair to say that this year did not go as planned. When our journey toward happiness began, we assumed the status quo for the year. No one could have predicted the twists and turns of 2020. There were undoubtedly hard times, but there were also really good times. There were times when we came together to overcome hard things, to show the world that there can be happiness and joy in difficulty.



*“How do you make a practical and tangible impact when the world seems so overrun with difficulty?”*

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### 3 Steps to Living With Open Arms

Everyone likes the idea of living with open arms, holding on loosely to material possessions and living generously. Most people are actively seeking ways to make a positive impact in the lives of others.

If nothing else, 2020 has taught us that the answer to happiness starts with self but ends with others. It lies in sharing what we have. The truth is that we are all interdependent in our local and global communities. Recognizing this truth and being generous with our fellow human beings creates a happier, more fulfilling existence.

But how do you become more generous? How do you make a practical and tangible impact when the world seems so overrun with difficulty?

#### 1. Understand the benefits of generosity.

Booker T. Washington once said, “Those who are the happiest are those who do the most for others,” and science backs him up. A 2018 study conducted by psychologists from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business and Northwestern University Kellogg School of Management found that we may receive longer-lasting happiness by giving to others than receiving for ourselves. The study also found that participants who spent money on themselves over five days experienced a steady decline in satisfaction. (O’Brien and Kassirer, 2018)

#### 2. List your priorities.

In today’s 24-hour news cycle culture, it can feel like everything is urgent. Every foundation needs your money; every shelter needs your time; every cause needs your attention. Making a list of your priorities can help you focus on one or two needs and make the most significant impact on what matters to you.

#### 3. Start small.

Know that giving even a little can have a significant impact. Do not be overwhelmed by the cause you have chosen. The problem is probably a big one, and you are here to help, not solve it on your own. Whether a monetary donation or giving your time, start small. Test the waters and commit to a small donation or hourly volunteer job to ensure the organization is the right place for you at the right time.

#### Finding True Happiness at Leisure Care

Leisure Care communities are places where seniors come to thrive, finding happiness and making a real difference in the lives of the communities where we live, work and play. We start by hiring people who accept themselves, are honest with their shortcomings, and are ready and willing to work in a team environment. Our employees know that their roles bring the opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of others.

The bottom line is that we know who we are, and we know that we have the power to help others live better than ever. We celebrate strengths, recognize our weaknesses, and crush our goals in a way that is genuinely empowering. At Leisure Care, residents can start a new chapter finding new interests, making new friends. It all begins in a loving and accepting environment where residents are empowered to grow in their sense of self and ultimately help others do the same.

Our residents and their families have chosen to live intentionally. They care about their future, their health, and their well-being and have made that choice evident by moving into a Leisure Care community. Leisure Care communities offer a wide range of care services, including independent living, assisted living and memory care. Residents and their families have peace of mind knowing needs will be met, encouraging true happiness and lasting joy.

No matter if you need senior care in the form of assistance with activities of daily living, motivation to attend that group fitness class, help to cultivate meaningful connections, or planning that overdue family reunion, we are here to help. Leisure Care communities encourage residents to seize the day and see the world, launching new adventures from a safe place.

Generosity is the final stop on the journey toward happiness and will ultimately lead to the joy we are all seeking. Eventually, you may just find you really are living better than ever. ♦

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*“I watched a wind gust topple six test luminaries and set them ablaze, creating the charming look of a mini-firestorm racing across the driveway.”*

# Sometimes a Not-So-Great Notion

**Doesn't everyone store baked beans in the medicine cabinet?**

by Jeff Wozer

Humorist and stand-up comedian

Within seconds of sending the e-mail inviting 14 family members to my house for dinner, I thought of T. S. Eliot's line, "Between the idea and the reality ... falls the shadow."

The shadow, in this case, was me.

Havana, Cuba is more qualified to host the Winter Olympics than I am to host a large dinner party. This admission comes not from lack of desire, but from domestic realities. My house, when it comes to entertaining, is a Martha Stewart netherworld.

Atop my refrigerator sit two cookbooks: *Anyone Can Cook* by Better Homes and Gardens and the Food Network's *How to Boil Water: Beyond Takeout Food*.

I don't drink coffee, which means I don't own a coffee maker. Asking my family to go without coffee after dinner is like asking KISS to perform on stage without make-up.

My house lacks a garage, necessitating creative winter storage practices. Consequently, wedged next to the kitchen table stands an 11-foot lime

green kayak, making it look as if the kitchen is furnished with items from *Bed, Bath and Boat*.

The gas stove has one functioning burner, limiting menu options to either chili or oatmeal. (I, of course, would never serve oatmeal at dinner. But if I did I would dim the lights and try convincing everyone it was a vegetarian paté.)

My dining room table could maybe seat 14, but only if I were entertaining hobbits. (OK, I'll say it: Lord of the Dinner Napkin Rings.)

The living room carpeting, due to a glass-of-red-wine incident, looks as if it suffers from psoriasis.

And my house sits atop a hill, accessible only by a steep, curving, two-track dirt driveway hemmed with hardwood forest. During winter, it acts as four-wheel drive Kryptonite, regardless if plowed or not. So whenever anyone I invite over asks, "What can I bring?" I always reply, "Your Triple A membership card."

But the house does possess five-star ambience thanks to a massive fieldstone fireplace. Centered

**Not-So-Great Notion:** *Continued on page 43*



# Five Feet Tall With Arms Wide Open

**What are we really saying when we welcome someone with open arms?**

by Rabbi Elana Zaiman

Seattle-based Rabbi, chaplain and author

**W**hen I hear the words “open arms” I think of my five-foot grandmother, all smiles, standing at her front door, arms wide open, waiting to hug her daughter, son-in-law, and each of her four grandchildren after our three-and-a-half-hour car ride from Rhode Island to New York.

I think of my grandmother’s open arms when she and my grandfather would drive up to visit us too. Upon arrival, my grandfather would take his time getting out of the car, but my grandmother would run up our walkway, laughing, waving her hands, saying, “I have to make a sis.” Upon entering the house, she would pull down her hose and loosen her girdle as she shuffled down the corridor so that when she finally arrived in the bathroom, she was ready to go. My sister and I would follow her to the bathroom where we would find her seated on the toilet, cotton skirt covering her thighs, and we would stand there waiting for her to finish her long “tinkle” and wash her hands. Then, we would give her a hug.

My New York grandmother comes to mind when I think of open arms because her open arms were a sign of welcome after a journey, and when we were young, this was the journey we took most often.

“... her open arms were a sign of welcome after a journey, and when we were young, this was the journey we took most often.”

While COVID-19 has put a damper on our ability to welcome one another with open arms, there's no need to retire this expression.

On a walk one evening after work this spring, I saw a family of four at the corner of a block near my home. Two children on bicycles — a boy about four with curly blond hair and blue eyes and a girl about six with shoulder-length brown hair and brown eyes — were hanging out with their mom and dad.

I was so happy to see new kids in the neighborhood, I wanted to welcome them with open arms. So, I did. I engaged them from a six-foot distance. Initially, they spent quite a bit of time trying to guess my age. That their first guess was 100 should come as no surprise. We then had a discussion about hot chocolate and squishy, mushy things, and I don't remember what else. I do remember asking them silly questions. And I do remember giggling so hard that even though I had walked only a block, by the time I returned home for dinner I

felt recharged. We had such a good time together that before heading home, their mom and I exchanged names, emails and addresses.

The next day, I found a homemade card in a large manila envelope in my mailbox. The card, a white piece of 8-by 11-inch paper folded in half, with an oval aquamarine gem glued to the middle of the right page surrounded by a circle of hearts, a large red cardboard gem glued to the center of the left-hand side of the page surrounded by hand-drawn boxes filled with rainbow colors, and “I love you” written at the top. This note, their gift of open arms.

This past July I found a floral bouquet at my front door. Inside was a card that read, “Thinking of you on this day.” The flowers were from a friend. When I called to thank her, I asked her how she had remembered. She said that on one of our recent six-foot-distance walks I had mentioned July 31 as the first anniversary of my father's death, and she had kept that date in mind. Her bouquet, a hug from a distance.

Not long ago, I boarded a plane back East to see my Mom. It was my first trip since the pandemic and the first time I was able to see her since she had returned home from rehab after hip surgery. Usually, when I visit I stay with her, but due to the virus I stayed elsewhere. Before our last get-together, I called to let her know I was on my way. She said, “I'll be waiting with open arms.”

My mother's arms are always open, even when I talk with her on the phone. So eager she is to hear what's going on with me and my family. So eager she is to offer words of love, support and blessing.

Open arms can mean opening our arms wide to welcome someone in an embrace. Open arms can also mean “I care about you. I love you. I support you. I'm here for you.”

So open your arms wide and think of how and whom you can embrace from a distance. Then, put that thought into action. ♦

**Appreciating Life:** *Continued from page 33*

things; she narrows her lens to see a bigger world. Inside, a quiet prayer rises in me that she is on her own path, getting closer to appreciating her life through her own new lens, however narrowed or expansive it is.

Sometimes, in order to find strength and revive our resilience during trying times, it helps to zoom out and look

at the full scope of our lives. At other times we can choose to zoom in and focus on the smallest of images, thoughts or memories. With an adjusted lens, we can find perspective in a mere dimple in the cheek of someone we love. ♦

For more pictures by Betsy Gertz, go to <http://www.throughbetsyslens.com>.

**Giving Dilemma:** *Continued from page 23*

school drive, holiday gifts, or gift cards for kids and families in need.

These types of organizations exist in just about every state, city and interest area you can imagine. After doing research and finding an organization that looks trustworthy, start with a small donation. Evaluate the process of that donation, and imagine you are beginning a relationship with this organization. Make sure they earn your trust and your continued support — without making extravagant requests. After finding an organization you are proud to support, there are a couple of ways you can make your donation go even further.

Nonprofits need reliable and predictable sources of income in order to thrive, especially in the uncertain times we are all experiencing right now. Monthly donations can help an organization plan and budget for the future more effectively, and smaller monthly gifts can often make a greater impact than larger one-time gifts. Planned giving, or a bequest, is a wonderful way to make a lasting impact on the organization of your choice. If you have built a strong relationship with an organization, this can be a great way to leave a legacy that will continue for years to come. ♦

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**Learn more about these Oakland, California, area nonprofits and the work they are doing:**

Children Now: [www.childrennow.org](http://www.childrennow.org)

Children Rising: [www.children-rising.org](http://www.children-rising.org)

Urban Mentors: <https://oaklandcitychurch.org/urban-mentor/>

**Not-So-Great Notion:** *Continued from page 39*

in the living room, especially when ablaze with popping hardwood logs on a winter night, it serves as a visual barbiturate that borders on transformative. I'm convinced Snoop Dogg could sit before it and feel, without knowing why, the compulsory urge to don L.L.Bean flannel pajamas, sip Sleepytime Tea, and say things like, “Dis Robert Frost mofo is dope.”

It was for this reason I opted to place emphasis on ambience. Play to my strength, as it were. In addition to the fire inside, I would wow everyone, especially my 91-year-old mom, by bringing fire outside. I would deliver the look of Santa Fe to upstate New York by rimming the driveway and the front door walkway with the calming candlelit glow of luminaries.

I have a tendency, especially when entertaining, which is not often, to create more work than needed. Several years ago I hosted 30 or so friends for a summer barbecue at my former home in Colorado. Knowing that party guests can be nosy, I emptied the bathroom medicine cabinet's four shelves and restocked each one with six eight-ounce cans of Bush Baked Beans. To encourage snooping, I left the medicine cabinet mirror door slightly ajar and waited for expectant laughter. To my crushing dismay, not one person commented. It still rates as one of life's biggest disappointments.

But the luminaries would be different. They would be out front, visible for all to see, requiring no reliance upon chance or nosiness. The perfect added touch. Or so I thought.

In retrospect it would have been easier creating the look of Santa Fe by stuccoing the house with adobe and replacing the shrubbery with yucca plants. When making harried last-minute shopping runs, most dinner party hosts go for wine or crackers or Zoloft. I, 90 minutes before guest arrival was shopping for sand for luminary-anchoring purposes. This need was only realized after I watched a wind gust topple six test luminaries and set them ablaze, creating the charming look of a mini-firestorm racing across the driveway.

Thirty minutes later I was in my kitchen filling paper lunch bags with sand. Instead of preparing a dinner, I felt as if I was preparing for a flood. It was during this process I realized I was standing in the shadow between the idea and reality of my “Santa Fe Plan” and downgraded ambitions to illuminating only the walkway and front steps.

As I was lighting the last of 34 luminaries, the headlights of my brother's car, which taxied my mother, turned up the driveway. I hurried in and began stirring the chili, trying to look nonchalant.

Two steps into the house and my mom, before even saying hello, curtly asked, “What's with all of the paper lunch bags outside?”

I should have taken my cue from the baked beans: Some things just aren't made to be shared. ♦

## BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS / From Page 20

### Answers to Crossword Puzzle

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

### Answers to Sudoku

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

# Leisure Care Retirement Communities



## *Live Big. Live Bold.*

### **ARIZONA**

Broadway Proper  
Fairwinds – Desert Point

### **CALIFORNIA**

Bella Villaggio  
Fairwinds – Ivy Ranch  
Fairwinds – West Hills  
Fairwinds – Woodward Park  
Heritage Estates  
Springfield Place  
The Woodlake

### **COLORADO**

Mackenzie Place – Colorado Springs  
Mackenzie Place – Fort Collins  
San Marino  
The Carillon at Belleview Station  
The Carillon at Boulder Creek

### **CONNECTICUT**

The Landing of North Haven  
The Linden at Woodbridge

### **FLORIDA**

The Landing of Lake Worth  
The Willows

### **IDAHO**

Fairwinds – Sand Creek

### **MARYLAND**

The Landing of Silver Spring

### **MASSACHUSETTS**

The Cottages at Dartmouth Village  
The Linden at Danvers  
The Linden at Dedham

### **MISSOURI**

Fairwinds – River's Edge  
The Landing of O'Fallon

### **NEW JERSEY**

The Landing of Hamilton  
The Landing of Washington Square

### **NEW MEXICO**

Fairwinds – Rio Rancho

### **NEW YORK**

The Village at Mill Landing  
The Village at Unity  
The Village Townhomes

### **NORTH CAROLINA**

Treeo of Raleigh

### **OKLAHOMA**

The Linden at Stonehaven Square

### **OREGON**

Canfield Place  
Markham House  
Russellville Park  
The Ackerly at Sherwood  
The Ackerly at Timberland

### **PENNSYLVANIA**

The Landing of Collegeville  
The Landing of Southampton  
The Landing of Towamencin

### **UTAH**

Treeo – Orem  
Treeo – South Ogden

### **WASHINGTON**

Fairwinds – Brighton Court  
Fairwinds – Brittany Park  
Fairwinds – Redmond  
Fairwinds – Spokane  
Hawthorne Court  
Murano  
Van Mall  
Washington Oakes  
Woodland Terrace

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