

APRIL 2021

# Reader's Digest

**I Love  
ARMY  
FOOD!**

By **KELLY  
MCHUGH-STEWART**



**DON'T  
WASTE  
YOUR  
MONEY**

23 Things **Not** to Buy

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**HOME  
REMEDIES  
That Truly Work**

An RD GLOBAL SURVEY

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**In the Jaws of a  
GRIZZLY**

A DRAMA IN REAL LIFE

---

**Manage Your Next  
MELTDOWN**

From THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

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**Meeting My  
Heart Donor's  
FAMILY**

From BICYCLING

**7 Inspiring  
LIFE  
U-TURNS**

PEOPLE WHO TOOK A CHANCE



# LOVE in a Snap!

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**Fancy Feast**  
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# CONTENTS

## Features

# 56

COVER STORY

### DON'T WASTE YOUR MONEY ON THESE 23 THINGS

Avoiding unforced spending errors will let you save for the stuff you really want.

BY JODY L. ROHLENA AND AMANDA WALKER

# 68

GOOD DEEDS

### The Biker with a Big Heart

Her son's organ donation saved his life. So he rode 1,426 miles to meet her.

BY A. C. SHILTON FROM BICYCLING MAGAZINE

# 78

INSPIRATION

### Starting a New Chapter

Some people don't find their true direction in life until they are halfway through it.

BY ANDY SIMMONS AND EMILY GOODMAN

# 88

DRAMA IN REAL LIFE

### A Grizzly Encounter

A lone hiker crosses paths with a bear three times his size—and with one enormous appetite.

BY OMAR MOUALLEM

# 96

13 THINGS

### Top Folk Remedies from Around the World

We asked our international editors to share their popular home health treatments. Here are the ones that check out with scientific research.

# 104

NATIONAL INTEREST

### The Last Days of the Pioneer

After printing the local news for 121 years, another small-town paper faces the end of a noble enterprise.

BY RICHARD FAUSSET  
ADAPTED FROM  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

# 78



ANNA KNOTT

# Departments

6 **Dear Reader**

8 **Letters**

**EVERYDAY HEROES**

14 **Off the Beaten Path**

BY ANDY SIMMONS

17 **Just the Ticket**

BY MARC PEYSER

**QUOTABLE QUOTES**

24 **Bubba Wallace, Pope Francis, Amanda Gorman**

**LIFE WELL LIVED**

26 **The Taste of Home**

BY KELLY MCHUGH-STEWART ADAPTED FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE

**I WON!**

30 **National Teacher of the Year**



## On the Cover

PHOTOGRAPH BY *Joleen Zubek*

Don't Waste Your Money.....	<b>56</b>
Home Remedies That Truly Work.....	<b>96</b>
In the Jaws of a Grizzly.....	<b>88</b>
Manage Your Next Meltdown.....	<b>114</b>
Meeting My Heart Donor's Family.....	<b>68</b>
I Love Army Food!.....	<b>26</b>
7 Inspiring Life U-Turns.....	<b>78</b>



GREGORY CHERIN

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BlueShield**

**MEDICARE**

WE FOUND A FIX

32 **Ant-Proof Pet Food Dishes, and More**

THE FOOD ON YOUR PLATE

36 **I Am Mangoes**  
BY KATE LOWENSTEIN AND DANIEL GRITZER

YOUR TRUE STORIES

42 **Poultry in Motion, and More**

NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF MEDICINE

44 **Home Is Where the Heart Risk Is, and More**

DEPARTMENT OF WIT

48 **"My Mommy® Is Broken!"**  
BY SHANNON J. CURTIN FROM MCSWEENEYS.NET

EVERYDAY MIRACLES

54 **Putting a Ring Back on It**  
BY BETTY JEAN ANKRUM

36



Humor

18  
Life in These United States

40  
All in a Day's Work

52  
Laughter, the Best Medicine

87  
Laugh Lines

103  
Humor in Uniform



114



The Genius Section

114 **The Art of the "Good" Meltdown**  
BY ELIZABETH BERNSTEIN FROM THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

118 **Brain Games**

121 **Word Power**

124 **Photo Finish**

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FROM TOP: JOLEEN ZUBEK, ILLUSTRATION BY MARIA AMADOR. NANTONOV/GETTY IMAGES, ILLUSTRATION BY JENNIFER KLEIN. SAM KAPLAN/TRUNK ARCHIVE

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DEAR READER

# Front-Porch News

**M**Y FIRST JOB was as a cub reporter in a pack of ten journalists at the *Gilroy Dispatch* in California. The paper came out three times a week. The town was the “garlic capital of the world,” with farmers and farmworkers, blue-collar workers, and the rare commuter. I covered school board politics, fatal crashes on the highway south, whatever was needed.

My colleagues loomed as large as the tomato trucks rolling down the 101. They were like a troupe in a loud Steinbeck novel, yoked to one little room. Every phone call was in your ear. Cigarette smoke reached eye level by noon. It was hot. We sweated through it. All that energy went toward Gilroy—honoring it, laughing about it, keeping it honest. I wasn't born to be a newsman, it turned out, but I loved being part of that group. They were part of their community, played softball with the people they wrote about. The news they brought their neighbors served as glue.

On page 104, we publish the chronicle of the final days of a paper in



For 121 years, the *Pioneer* reported the comings and goings in Warroad, Minnesota.

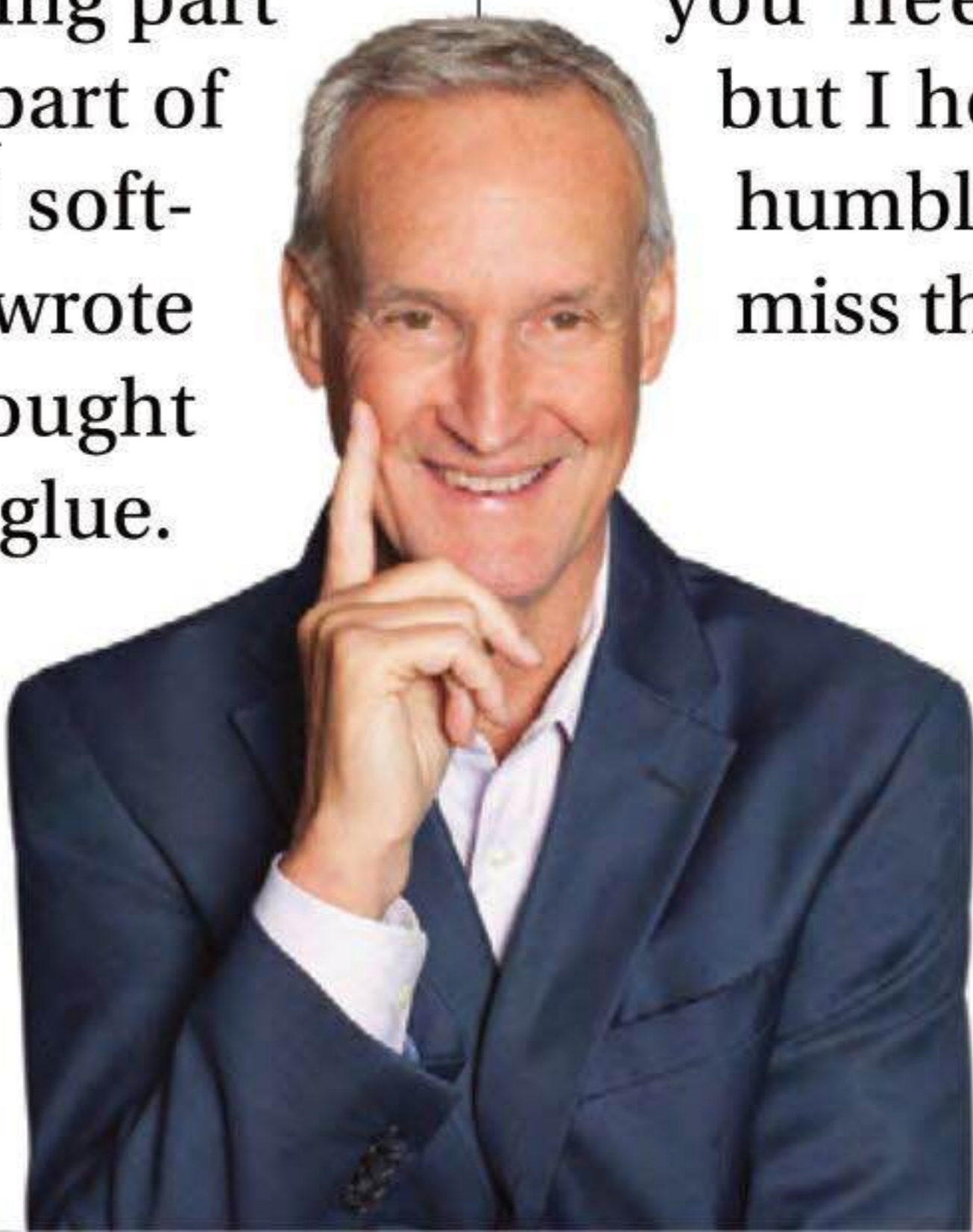
Warroad, Minnesota, just the kind of outlet a small town needs. Its police blotter report included everyone, no exceptions—not even when the editor drove drunk. Now, in one more place, that accountability is gone. About 2,000 U.S. papers have closed since 2004.

I assumed the same had happened in Gilroy. But the *Dispatch* is alive! Editor Erik Chalhoub told me that he's undaunted, though the editorial staff is down to four to put out the *Dispatch* and two other nearby papers. The *Dispatch* owns its own building, prints every Friday, and, with a couple of online stories a day, “is on top of what people want to read about.”

“Gilroy still feels like a small town,” he said, both bringing me up to speed and making me smile. “The people here care for their paper.” Not that you need my encouragement, but I hope we all do that for our humble local papers—before we miss them because they're gone.

*Bruce Kelley,*  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

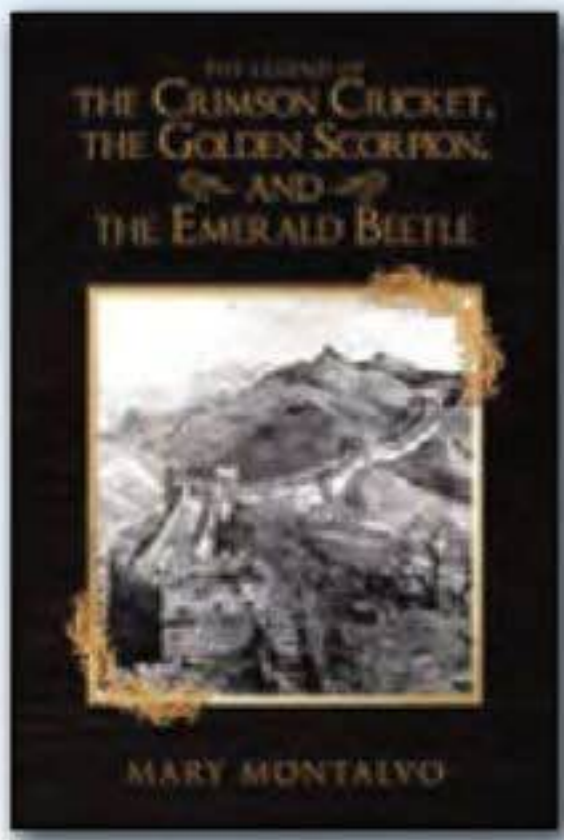
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FROM TOP: TIM GRUBER. MATTHEW COHEN



## MEET YOUR NEW OBSESSION.



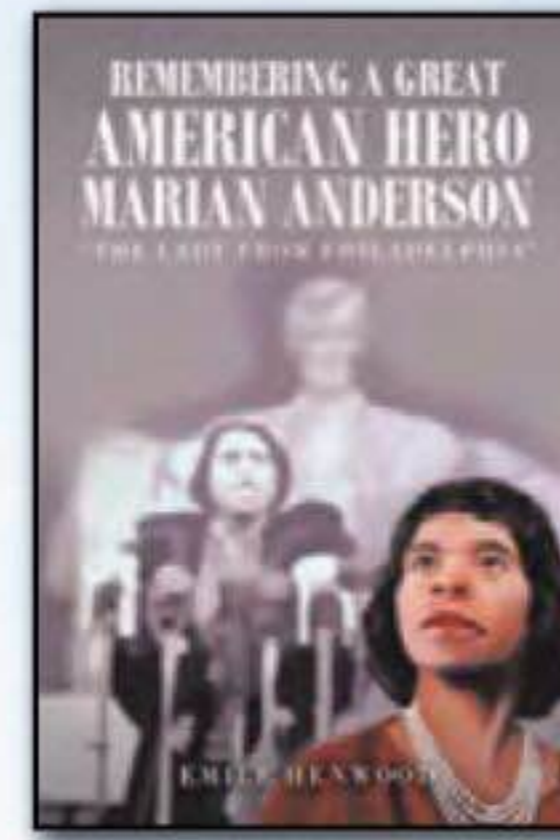
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Remembering a Great  
American Hero  
Marian Anderson

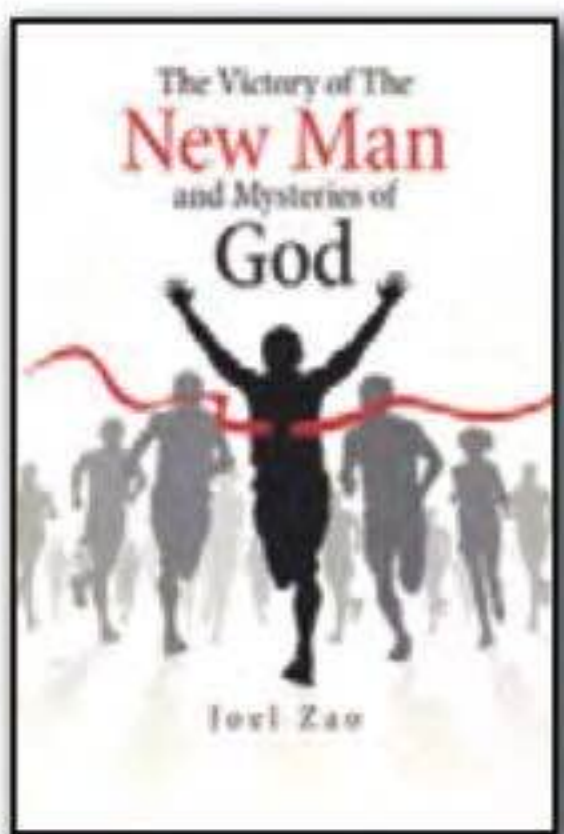
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*Remembering a Great American Hero: Marian Anderson* is a condensed chronological narrative compilation, amply illustrated by engaging photos, that shares the teachable lessons of Anderson's well-lived long life - especially important today.



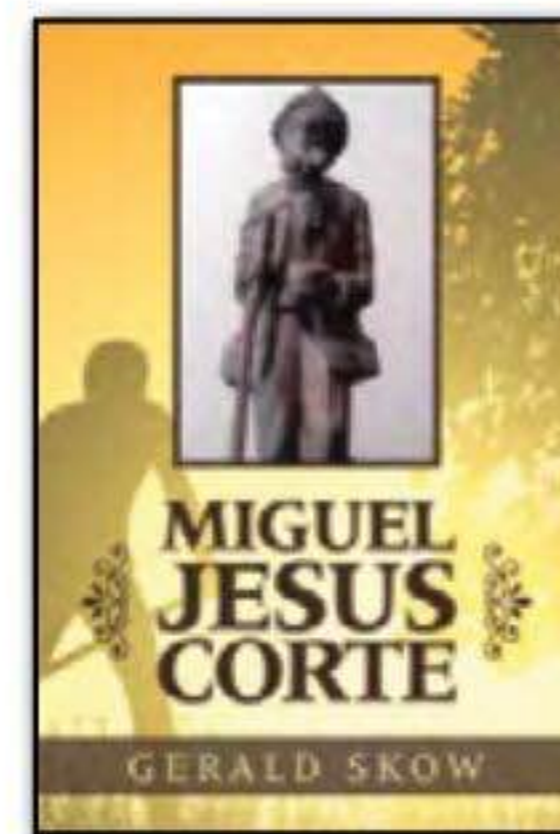
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This final installment completes a series on Paul's Letter to the Romans and discusses Chapters 12-16, which illustrates the practical application of the truths of the previous two books.



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Connie Gets More  
Than Her Backyard

Patti Whitehead-Gill

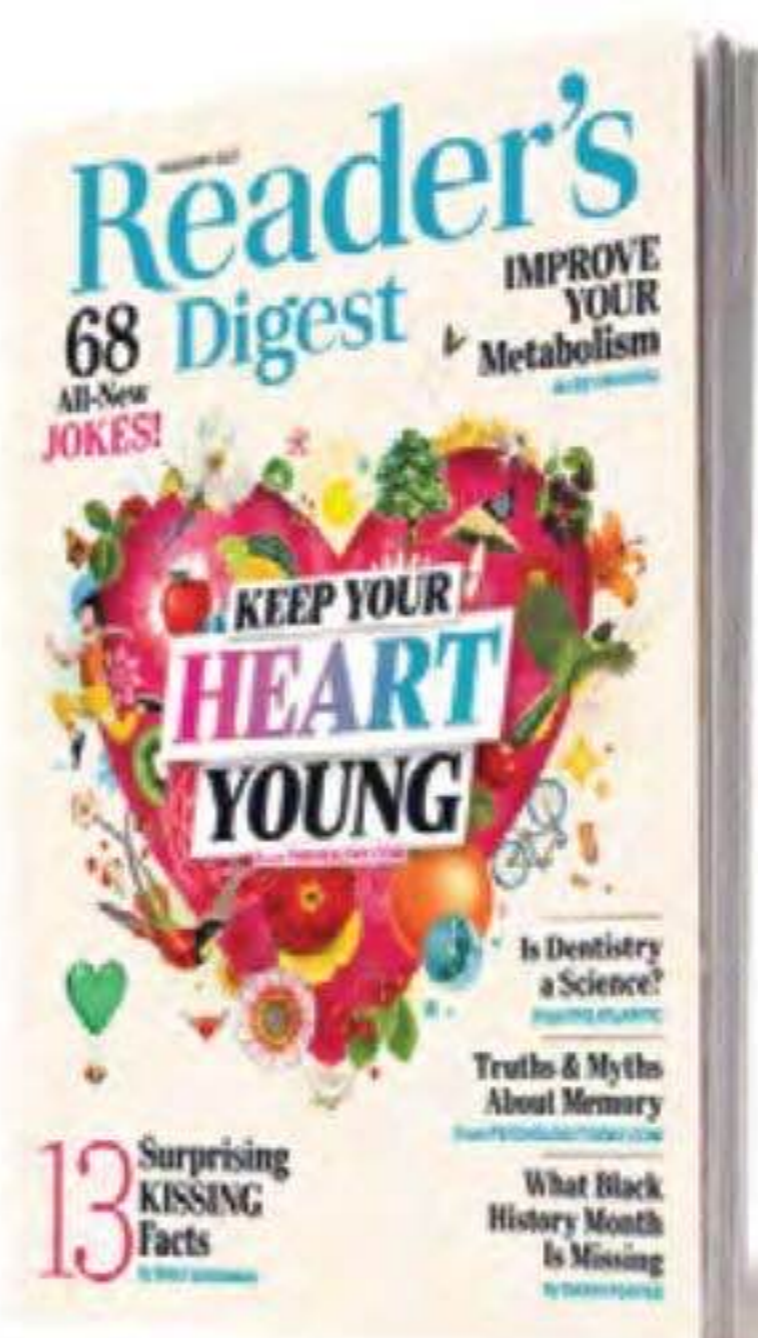
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This tale centers on six-year-old Connie who has recently moved to a town from the city. She learns she's adopted, meets her best friend and falls in love with an orphan puppy.

# LETTERS

NOTES ON THE  
*February* ISSUE



## **She Finally Said Yes**

I loved this story about the 40-year gap in Georgene and Jerry's relationship. My wife and I met in 1955 and then ran into each other for the first time in 40 years at our class reunion in 1996. We dated long-distance for a year and now have been married for 24. My advice: Don't ever give up!

—TRACY PERRY *Longmont, Colorado*

## **Can You Trust Your Dentist?**

Every industry has practitioners who take advantage of clients. Trust must be a two-way street. As a practicing dentist, I trust patients to give an accurate health history. They trust me to give the best care possible. My heart goes out to those deceived. There are great dentists out there. Please find us to receive proper care.

—ROBERT JOHNS, DDS  
*Leawood, Kansas*

## **I Think Black History Month Should Last All Year**

As I was reading, I thought that more accomplished Black Americans beyond the usual ones would finally be praised. But only a few were mentioned. What about Ursula Burns, the first Black woman CEO of a Fortune 500 company? Or Bessie Coleman, the first Black woman to hold a pilot's license?

—TARRILYNN WALL  
*Kerrville, Texas*

## **Word Power**

I was surprised to learn that *love* in tennis actually comes from “the love of the game.” Years ago, my French teacher told us the French called zero “the egg,” or *l'oeuf*, and English tennis players changed the pronunciation to *love*.

—A.S. *via e-mail*

## **You Call That a Compliment?**

I loved your story about backhanded compliments. It reminded me of an old boss. We called her the Big But because every compliment we got from her was immediately followed by “but ...”

—LAVERNE PERKINS  
*Fort Garland, Colorado*

## **True Stories**

Frank Mongiello's true story about running into a woman from his postal route and her saying she didn't recognize him with clothes on gave me a good laugh. A swim student once saw me at the

mall and ran up to say hi. When she told her mom I was her swim teacher, the mom also said “Oh, I didn’t recognize you with clothes.” Needless to say, many eyes turned our way.

—INA LOWE  
*Ramona, California*

### Brain Games

I was shocked to see my daughter’s nickname as one of the crosswords in your Brain Games puzzle: Snookums will be thrilled!

—JAY SCALESE  
*Waynesboro, Pennsylvania*

### We Found a Fix

Your tip about using your phone as a magnifying glass can be done even more quickly than

going through three different steps in Settings. Just click on your camera app, then pinch and zoom with your regular camera screen to magnify whatever you need to read.

—D.C. *via e-mail*

### 13 Things

In your kissing facts article, you mention that swapping microbes can help build new immunity against infections and even allergies. My dad used to have a honey allergy, but after he married my mom, it disappeared. Of course, he always used to say it was because her name, Melissa, comes from the Greek word for honeybee!

—BRENT MCBURNEY  
*Alexandria, Virginia*

## TRIPPING DOWN MEMORY LANE

◆ I use “secretary syndrome” to explain my own memory holes, similar to the ones described in Bruce Kelley’s editor’s note. When you’re young, the secretary in your brain files away all the information you gather and pulls it out when you need it. When you turn 50, she goes part time. The information is still filed, but it takes longer to retrieve. When you turn 60, she retires.

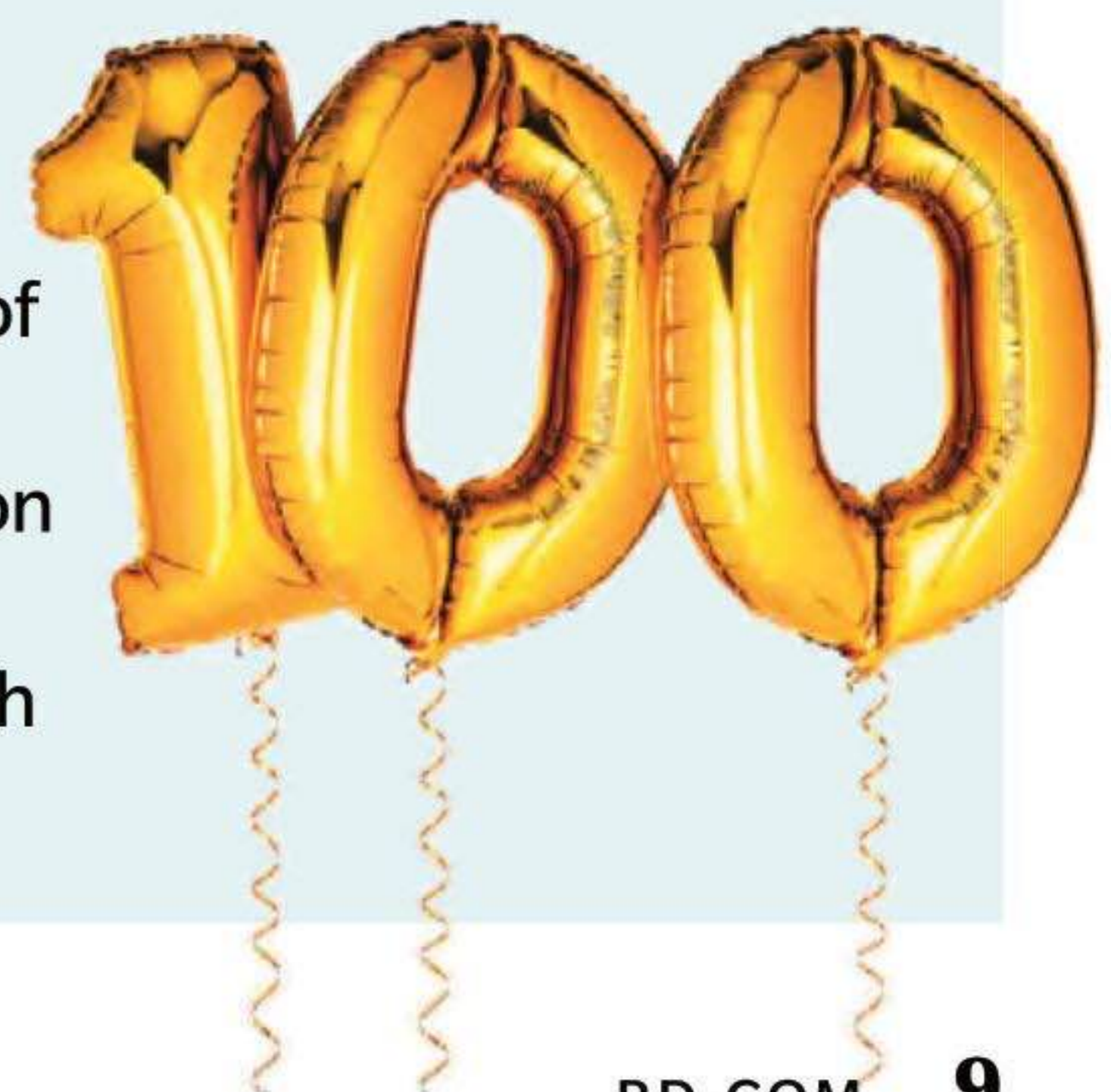
—Kim deArrillaga  
MOKELUMNE HILL,  
CALIFORNIA

◆ After a friend shared a story (long since forgotten), his wife said, “Honey, you know that’s not true.” He replied, “Well, it could’ve been!”

—Walt Meyer  
OZONA, TEXAS

## Reader’s Digest’s Very Big Year


That’s right, RD becomes a centenarian in 2022! But don’t call us old—we’re *timeless*. Kick off our celebration of 100 years of goofs, gags, thrillers, and tearjerkers by telling us the story of an RD article that made a big impression on you. Why did it stay with you? Go to [rd.com/best-storyever](https://rd.com/best-storyever) to submit and see terms, and we might publish your memory (and even the original article) next year.



For adults with type 2 diabetes (T2D), along with diet and exercise, once-daily RYBELSUS® can help lower blood sugar

# Wake Up to the Possibilities of Reaching Your A1C Goal



 If eligible, you may pay as little as \$10 for a 30-day prescription<sup>a</sup>

 Text<sup>b</sup> **RESULTS** to 44535 to learn more about RYBELSUS®



## RYBELSUS® is proven to lower blood sugar and A1C

In a 6-month study of people with an average starting A1C of 8%, the majority of **people taking RYBELSUS® reached an A1C of less than 7%<sup>c</sup>**:

- Nearly 7 out of 10 people on 7 mg of RYBELSUS®
- Nearly 8 out of 10 people on 14 mg of RYBELSUS®
- About 3 out of 10 people on a sugar pill



## RYBELSUS® may help you lose some weight

While not for weight loss, in the same 6-month study, people with an average starting weight of 195 pounds **lost up to 8 pounds<sup>c</sup>**:

- 5 pounds on 7 mg of RYBELSUS®
- 8 pounds on 14 mg of RYBELSUS®
- 3 pounds on a sugar pill

While many people in medical studies lost weight, some did gain weight.



## RYBELSUS® does not increase the risk of major cardiovascular (CV) events such as heart attack, stroke, or death<sup>d</sup>

<sup>c</sup>In a 6-month study looking at A1C with 703 adults with T2D comparing 7 mg RYBELSUS® and 14 mg RYBELSUS® with a sugar pill when both were added to diet and exercise.

<sup>d</sup>In a cardiovascular safety study, 3183 adults with T2D and a high risk of CV events were treated with either 14 mg RYBELSUS® or a sugar pill in addition to their usual diabetes and CV medications.

<sup>a</sup>Commercially insured patients only. Offer valid for up to six 30-day fills. Eligibility and other restrictions apply.

<sup>b</sup>Message and data rates may apply. Check with your mobile service provider. Message frequency will be based on your selections. Text **HELP** to 44535 for help. Text **STOP** to 44535 to quit. See Terms and Conditions of Use at RYBELSUS.com.

**See cost and savings info at RYBELSUS.com, and ask your healthcare provider about RYBELSUS® today.**



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## What is Rybelsus®?

**Rybelsus® (semaglutide) tablets 7 mg or 14 mg is a prescription medicine for adults with type 2 diabetes that along with diet and exercise may improve blood sugar (glucose).**

- Rybelsus® is not recommended as the first choice of medicine for treating diabetes
- It is not known if Rybelsus® can be used in people who have had pancreatitis
- Rybelsus® is not for use in people with type 1 diabetes and people with diabetic ketoacidosis
- It is not known if Rybelsus® is safe and effective for use in children under 18 years of age

## Important Safety Information

**What is the most important information I should know about Rybelsus®?**

**Rybelsus® may cause serious side effects, including:**

- **Possible thyroid tumors, including cancer.** Tell your healthcare provider if you get a lump or swelling in your neck, hoarseness, trouble swallowing, or shortness of breath. These may be symptoms of thyroid cancer. In studies with rodents, Rybelsus® and medicines that work like Rybelsus® caused thyroid tumors, including thyroid cancer. It is not known if Rybelsus® will cause thyroid tumors or a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) in people

**Do not use Rybelsus® if:**

- you or any of your family have ever had MTC, or if you have an endocrine system condition called Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2)
- you are allergic to semaglutide or any of the ingredients in Rybelsus®

**Before using Rybelsus®, tell your healthcare provider if you have any other medical conditions, including if you:**

- have or have had problems with your pancreas or kidneys
- have a history of vision problems related to your diabetes
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if Rybelsus® will harm your unborn baby. You should stop using Rybelsus® 2 months before you plan to become pregnant. Talk to your healthcare provider about the best way to control your blood sugar if you plan to become pregnant or while you are pregnant
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. Breastfeeding is not recommended during treatment with Rybelsus®

**Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take,** including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Rybelsus® may affect the way some medicines work and some medicines may affect the way Rybelsus® works.

**What are the possible side effects of Rybelsus®?**

**Rybelsus® may cause serious side effects, including:**

- **inflammation of your pancreas (pancreatitis).** Stop using Rybelsus® and call your healthcare provider right away if you have severe pain in your stomach area (abdomen) that will not go away, with or without vomiting. You may feel the pain from your abdomen to your back
- **changes in vision.** Tell your healthcare provider if you have changes in vision during treatment with Rybelsus®
- **low blood sugar (hypoglycemia).** Your risk for getting low blood sugar may be higher if you use Rybelsus® with another medicine that can cause low blood sugar, such as a sulfonylurea or insulin. **Signs and symptoms of low blood sugar may include:** dizziness or lightheadedness, blurred vision, anxiety, irritability or mood changes, sweating, slurred speech, hunger, confusion or drowsiness, shakiness, weakness, headache, fast heartbeat, and feeling jittery
- **kidney problems (kidney failure).** In people who have kidney problems, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting may cause a loss of fluids (dehydration), which may cause kidney problems to get worse. It is important for you to drink fluids to help reduce your chance of dehydration
- **serious allergic reactions.** Stop using Rybelsus® and get medical help right away, if you have any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction including itching, rash, or difficulty breathing

**The most common side effects of Rybelsus® may include** nausea, stomach (abdominal) pain, diarrhea, decreased appetite, vomiting, and constipation. Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea are most common when you first start Rybelsus®.

**Please see Brief Summary of Prescribing Information on the following pages.**

**RYBELSUS®**  
semaglutide tablets 7mg | 14mg

## Brief Summary of information about RYBELSUS® (semaglutide) tablets

**RYBELSUS**®  
semaglutide tablets 7mg | 14mg

### Rx Only

This information is not comprehensive.

- Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist
- Visit [www.novo-pi.com/rybelsus.pdf](http://www.novo-pi.com/rybelsus.pdf) to obtain the FDA-approved product labeling
- Call 1-833-GLP-PILL

Read this Medication Guide before you start using RYBELSUS® and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This information does not take the place of talking to your healthcare provider about your medical condition or your treatment.

### What is the most important information I should know about RYBELSUS®?

#### RYBELSUS® may cause serious side effects, including:

- **Possible thyroid tumors, including cancer.** Tell your healthcare provider if you get a lump or swelling in your neck, hoarseness, trouble swallowing, or shortness of breath. These may be symptoms of thyroid cancer. In studies with rodents, RYBELSUS® and medicines that work like RYBELSUS® caused thyroid tumors, including thyroid cancer. It is not known if RYBELSUS® will cause thyroid tumors or a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) in people.
- Do not use RYBELSUS® if you or any of your family have ever had a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC), or if you have an endocrine system condition called Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2).

### What is RYBELSUS®?

RYBELSUS® is a prescription medicine used along with diet and exercise to improve blood sugar (glucose) in adults with type 2 diabetes.

- RYBELSUS® is not recommended as the first choice of medicine for treating diabetes.
- It is not known if RYBELSUS® can be used in people who have had pancreatitis.
- RYBELSUS® is not for use in patients with type 1 diabetes and people with diabetic ketoacidosis.

It is not known if RYBELSUS® is safe and effective for use in children under 18 years of age.

### Do not use RYBELSUS® if:

- you or any of your family have ever had a type of thyroid cancer called medullary thyroid carcinoma (MTC) or if you have an endocrine system condition called Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia syndrome type 2 (MEN 2).
- you are allergic to semaglutide or any of the ingredients in RYBELSUS®.

### Before using RYBELSUS®, tell your healthcare provider if you have any other medical conditions, including if you:

- have or have had problems with your pancreas or kidneys.
- have a history of vision problems related to your diabetes.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if RYBELSUS® will harm your unborn baby. You should stop using RYBELSUS® 2 months before you plan to become pregnant. Talk to your healthcare provider about the best way to control your blood sugar if you plan to become pregnant or while you are pregnant.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. Breastfeeding is not recommended during treatment with RYBELSUS®.

**Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take**, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. RYBELSUS® may affect the way some medicines work and some medicines may affect the way RYBELSUS® works.

**Before using RYBELSUS®, talk to your healthcare provider about low blood sugar and how to manage it.** Tell your healthcare provider if you are taking other medicines to treat diabetes, including insulin or sulfonylureas. Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

## How should I take RYBELSUS®?

- Take RYBELSUS® exactly as your healthcare provider tells you to.
- Take RYBELSUS® by mouth on an empty stomach when you first wake up.
- Take RYBELSUS® with a sip of water (no more than 4 ounces).
- Do not split, crush or chew. Swallow RYBELSUS® whole.
- After 30 minutes, you can eat, drink, or take other oral medications. RYBELSUS® works best if you eat 30 to 60 minutes after taking RYBELSUS®.
- If you miss a dose of RYBELSUS®, skip the missed dose and go back to your regular schedule.
- Talk to your healthcare provider about how to prevent, recognize and manage low blood sugar (hypoglycemia), high blood sugar (hyperglycemia), and problems you have because of your diabetes.

## What are the possible side effects of RYBELSUS®?

### RYBELSUS® may cause serious side effects, including:

- **See “What is the most important information I should know about RYBELSUS®?”**
- **inflammation of your pancreas (pancreatitis).** Stop using RYBELSUS® and call your healthcare provider right away if you have severe pain in your stomach area (abdomen) that will not go away, with or without vomiting. You may feel the pain from your abdomen to your back.
- **changes in vision.** Tell your healthcare provider if you have changes in vision during treatment with RYBELSUS®.
- **low blood sugar (hypoglycemia).** Your risk for getting low blood sugar may be higher if you use RYBELSUS® with another medicine that can cause low blood sugar, such as a sulfonylurea or insulin. **Signs and symptoms of low blood sugar may include:**
  - dizziness or light-headedness
  - blurred vision
  - anxiety, irritability, or mood changes
  - sweating
  - slurred speech
  - hunger
  - confusion or drowsiness
  - shakiness
  - weakness
  - headache
  - fast heartbeat
  - feeling jittery
- **kidney problems (kidney failure).** In people who have kidney problems, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting may cause a loss of fluids (dehydration) which may cause kidney problems to get worse. It is important for you to drink fluids to help reduce your chance of dehydration.
- **serious allergic reactions.** Stop using RYBELSUS® and get medical help right away, if you have any symptoms of a serious allergic reaction including itching, rash, or difficulty breathing.

**The most common side effects of RYBELSUS® may include** nausea, stomach (abdominal) pain, diarrhea, decreased appetite, vomiting and constipation. Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea are most common when you first start RYBELSUS®.

Talk to your healthcare provider about any side effect that bothers you or does not go away. These are not all the possible side effects of RYBELSUS®.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

## How should I store RYBELSUS®?

- Store RYBELSUS® at room temperature between 68°F and 77°F (20°C to 25°C).
- Store in a dry place away from moisture.
- Store tablet in the original pack.
- Keep the tablet in the pack until you are ready to take it.
- **Keep RYBELSUS® and all medicines out of the reach of children.**

Revised: 01/2020

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## EVERYDAY HEROES

# Off the Beaten Path

*When a hiker falls 75 feet from a mountain cliff, a young stranger goes to extremes to save her*

BY *Andy Simmons*

AS MOUNTAINS GO, 1,642-foot Squaw Peak isn't particularly imposing. But its inviting views of western Massachusetts have tricked hikers into becoming complacent amid its steep, slippery cliffs, resulting in countless injuries and even deaths.

Henry Grant, a week shy of starting his freshman year at Ithaca College, respected Squaw Peak's record. As such, he stayed a good ten feet from the edge while waiting for his mother to catch up to him one day in August 2019. He watched 15 or so other hikers enjoy the vista; one hiker, around 60 and dressed in pink, was peeking over the lip of the precipice with her husband.

When Grant's mother rejoined him, the two turned to continue on their way. Suddenly, he heard a "tumbling, a thump, and another thump," he told the *Cornell Daily Sun*. Then he heard something chilling: "Paula! Paula!" a man yelled frantically. Grant wheeled around. The woman in pink was nowhere to be seen. She'd fallen off the side of the mountain.

Several hikers immediately started looking for her, but their view was obstructed by trees. Grant told his mother, "I hate to say this, but they're probably going to find a body."

Uncertain they could help, Grant and his mother headed down the trail.



**Henry Grant  
hadn't expected  
to find the woman  
in pink alive.**



But when he saw hikers still searching, he decided to lend a hand. "My young dumb brain was like, 'I can do it,'" he says. After assuring his mother that he would be safe, he trekked off the trail alone, hoping he wasn't too late.

After 15 minutes of scrambling over boulders, pushing past prickly brush, and slipping down patches of loose dirt, Grant spotted a figure about 25 feet above him. She was dressed in pink and crumpled in a kneeling position on a small rocky outcropping. The woman had fallen about 75 feet. Miraculously, she was alive.

## "MY YOUNG DUMB BRAIN WAS LIKE, 'I CAN DO IT.'"



"Paula!" Grant shouted. "Paula. Is that you?"

The woman barely responded. She was clearly hurt and delirious. Grant called 911 to report her location. He waited where he was for a bit, but she kept trying to move, and every time she moved, she slipped a little more. Afraid that in her muddled state of mind she might tumble off the outcropping to her death, Grant crawled on all fours up a tight, narrow path, gaining traction by digging into the dirt with his fingers and feet until he reached Paula.

She was moaning and barely making sense. Her head, arms, and legs

were bleeding. Though he didn't know it then, she had suffered a compound leg fracture, ten broken ribs, a broken clavicle, and a serious concussion.

Securing himself against a tree, Grant gently put her hand in his and tried to keep her mind off the pain by peppering her with questions: "Where are you from? What do you do for a living? Do you have kids?" Soon, they were joined on their perch by another hiker named Simon.

About 45 minutes later, first responders arrived on the summit. To reach them, a rescuer rappelled down and secured Paula to a stretcher. Rescuers at the summit lifted the stretcher to the top and then carried her to a waiting ATV. Eventually, Paula and her husband would be flown by helicopter to a hospital.

Meanwhile, Grant and Simon were now the ones in a tricky spot. The rescuers attached harnesses and pulleys to help them climb the 75 feet to the trail above. Five hours after the woman in pink had fallen, Grant was back on top of Squaw Peak.

Paula, who has fully recovered, is Paula Kaplan-Reiss, a New Jersey psychologist who had traveled to the Berkshire mountains of Massachusetts for some R and R following her mother's death. Instead, she met a young man who, as she stated in a letter to the *Boston Globe*, was her new hero.

"At 18," she wrote, "Henry has already participated in building the rest of my life." **R**

# Just the Ticket

BY *Marc Peyser*

**S**HETARA SIMS HAD weathered some tough years. In 2012, her eldest daughter was murdered during an argument in Kansas City, Missouri. Last year, the single mother lost her job in the recession. She had only \$7 in her pocket as she headed into the grocery store one day last July with her 12-year-old daughter, Rakiya Edmondson.

And then Lady Luck finally cut Sims some slack. She and her daughter found a dollar bill in the parking lot. Maybe this was their day, they told each other. So they bought a lottery ticket—and won \$100.

But before they could spend their windfall, Rakiya had an idea. The news in Kansas City that week had been filled with stories about a police officer, Tyler Moss, who had been shot in the head in the line of duty. He was in critical condition. Rakiya and her mother had never forgotten how kind the police had been after their own

family member was killed. “The detectives were really there for us,” Sims says. “They came to see my kids. They were fathers, therapists. They were everything.” Rakiya wanted to give their lottery winnings to Officer Moss’s family. Her mom readily agreed.

On July 10, Sims called the police and made an anonymous donation. Moved by her generous expression of thanks, the officers did what they do best—they tracked Sims down. When she explained the family’s motivation, the officers could hardly believe

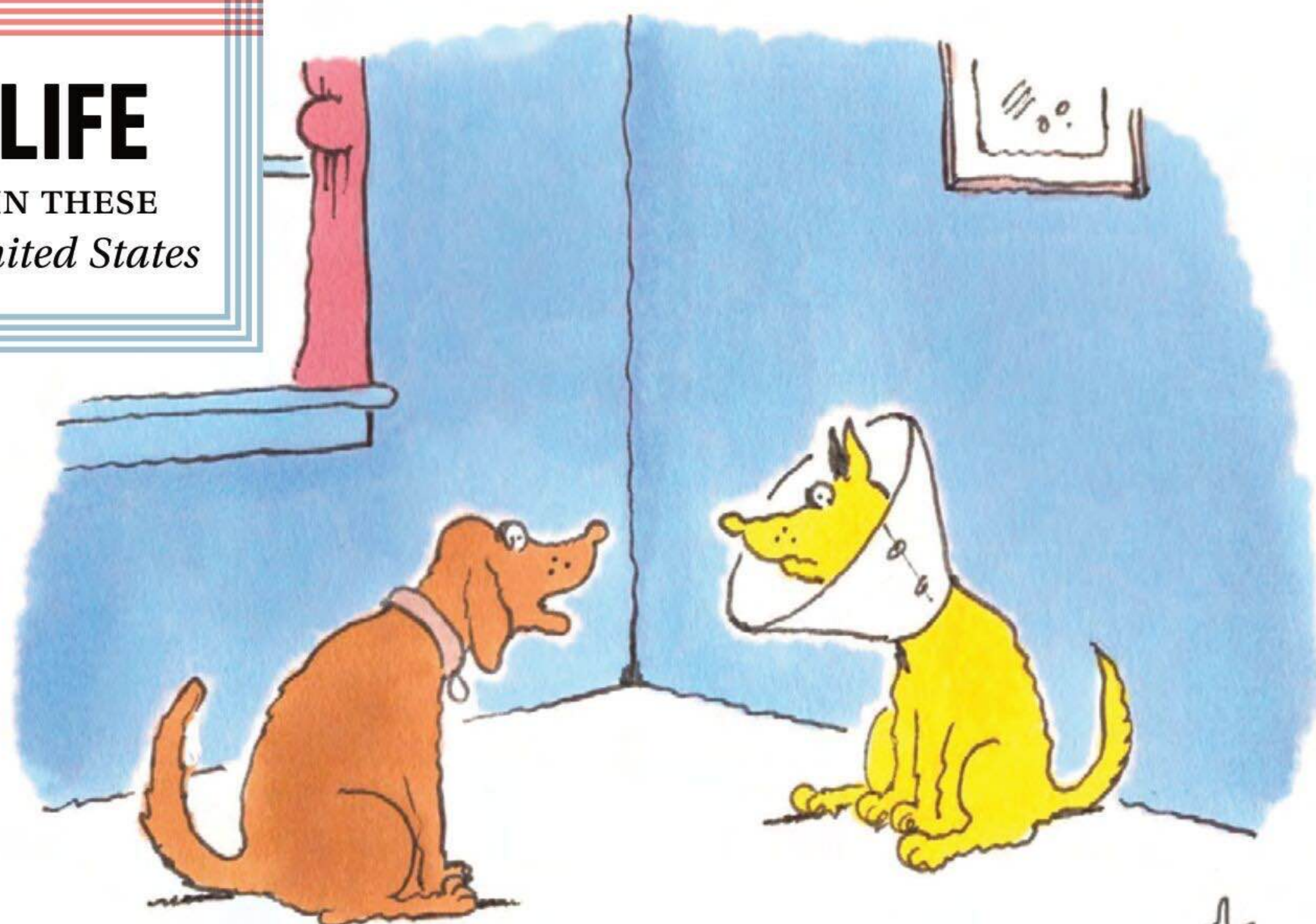
it. “With her current financial hardship, we encouraged her to keep the money,” the department later explained. “She refused, saying the officer’s family needed it and police needed to know they were supported.”

By then, that feeling of support was mutual. The police set up a GoFundMe page for Sims, whom they dubbed “The Woman with the Heart of Gold.” Their goal was \$10,000. As of January 11, 2021, they had raised \$165,405. Even better: Officer Moss, who had a 1 percent chance of survival, is out of the hospital and recovering. **R**



**Police sergeant Jake Becchina helped set up a GoFundMe page for Sims and her daughter.**

**LIFE**  
IN THESE  
*United States*



**"I don't want to add to your humiliation,  
but you have some kibble stuck in your teeth."**

**It was my** wedding day, and no one was happier than my 78-year-old mother. But as she approached the church doors, an usher asked, "Which side are you on?"

"Oh, no," she said. "Are they fighting already?"

—JOSEPH HUBISZ  
*Bradford,  
New Hampshire*

**A guy joined** our Zoom class shirtless, so the tutor told him to turn his video off. He did as told, and up popped his profile photo: a picture of him shirtless at the beach.

—[@AUDROCUR](#)

**I had to rethink** where I ranked in my family's hierarchy when my sister and I found our dad holding court amid friends at a party.

"Oh, gentlemen," he said, pointing to my sister. "Let me introduce you to my

**I don't get it when I see skinny people  
running ... aren't you done???**

—[@JACKIES\\_BACKIE](#)

daughter Terri. And this," he said, motioning to me, "is my daughter Terri's sister, Gayle."

—GAYLE SALTER  
*Surprise, Arizona*

**Looking for** the perfect Wi-Fi network name? Borrow one of these tried-and-true ones:

- ◆ I Pronounce You Man and Wi-Fi
- ◆ Wi-Fi Fo Fum
- ◆ Mom, Click Here for Internet
- ◆ Lord Voldemodem
- ◆ Vladimir Computin
- ◆ Click Here for Viruses

—RD.COM

**Recipes used to** be terse instructions handwritten on an index card. Now you scroll through a Paris engagement story before you get to how to make the soup.

—[@LIZHACKETT](#)

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**GOT A FUNNY STORY** about friends or family? It could be worth \$\$\$\$. For details, go to [RD.COM/SUBMIT](#).

**My sister** came across a movie poster online that showed a man passionately kissing a woman in the pouring rain. "How come you've never kissed me like

that?" she demanded of her husband.

He shrugged, saying, "We never get that much rain."

—YEFIM M. BRODD  
*Kirkland, Washington*

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## SCENTS AND ODD SENSIBILITIES

If you're a fan of Chanel No. 5, these five perfumes may or may not pass the smell test. But they are real. So ask for them by name, hopefully without gagging.

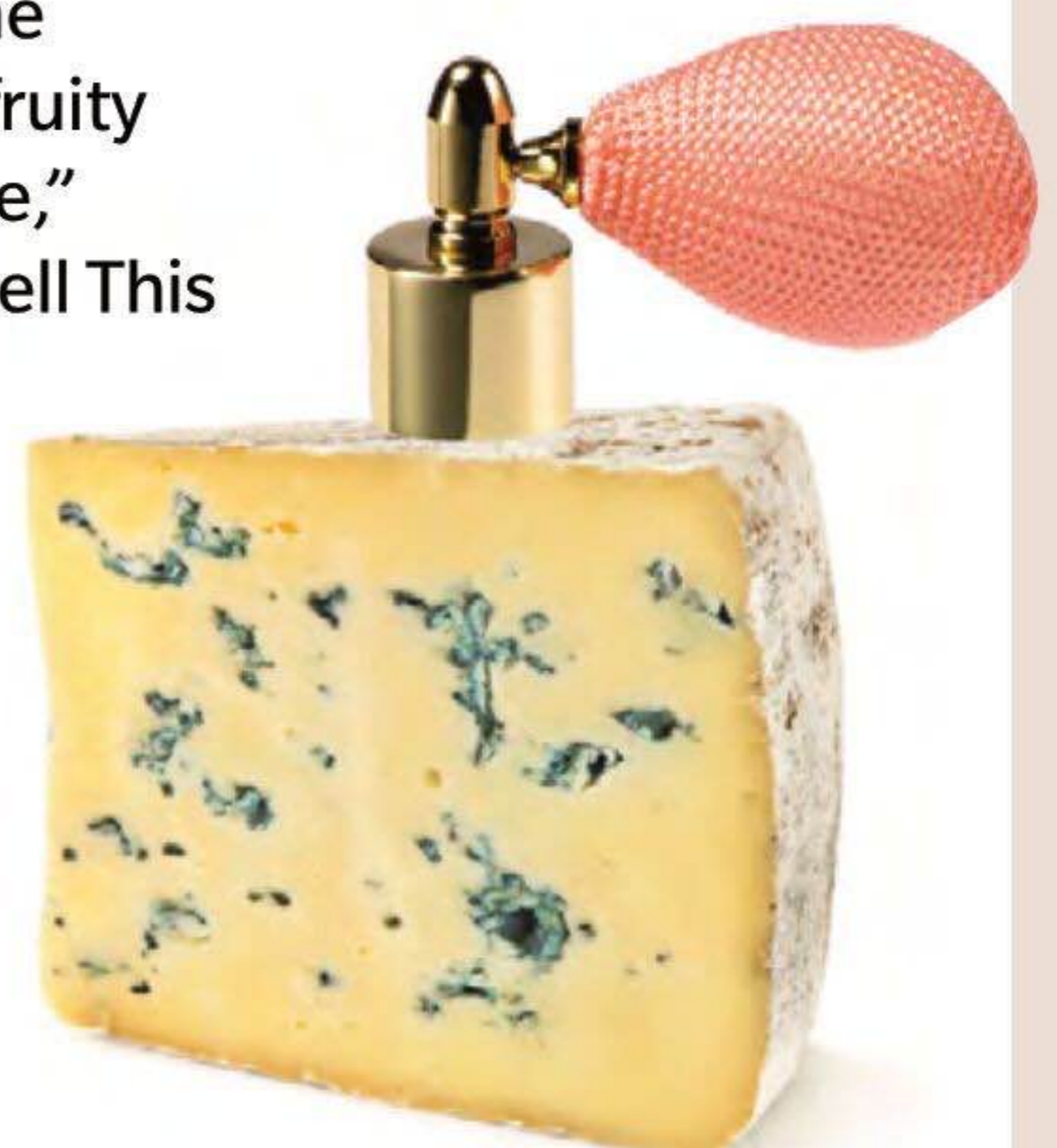
**Funeral Home:** Its manufacturer, Demeter, calls it a blend of "lilies, carnations, gladiolus, and chrysanthemums, with a hint of mahogany and oriental carpet."

**Garage Eau de Toilette:** Take a whiff of Garage, says [luckyscent.com](#), and you'll recognize traces of kerosene and leather with plastic floral notes.

**Powell's by Powell's:** Named after a famous bookstore in Portland, Oregon, it boasts hints of violet, wood, and "biblichor"—the musty smell of old books. This perfume re-creates "a labyrinth of books; secret libraries; ancient scrolls; and cognac swilled by philosopher-kings," according to Powell's.

**Eau de Stilton:** This perfume "re-creates the earthy and fruity aroma of Blue Stilton cheese," insists the website [Now Smell This \(nstperfume.com\)](#).

**Horse:** From the perfumery For Strange Women, this aroma recalls a well-stocked stable with notes of "hay, dry musk, leather, and oats," says [basenotes.com](#).



BOARDING PASS

**IS YOUR  
BLADDER  
ALWAYS  
TAKING  
YOU ON A  
TRIP OF  
ITS OWN?**



**Urgency**



**Frequency**



**Leakage**

**Take charge of your  
overactive bladder (OAB)  
symptoms by talking to your  
doctor about Myrbetriq today.**

In clinical trials, those taking Myrbetriq made fewer trips to the bathroom and had fewer leaks than those not taking Myrbetriq. Your results may vary.



\*Based on 24-month TRx shares for all branded OAB medications, IMS Health National Prescription Audit, March 2018–February 2020. THIS INFORMATION DOES NOT IMPLY SAFETY OR EFFICACY OF ANY PRODUCT; NO COMPARISONS SHOULD BE MADE.



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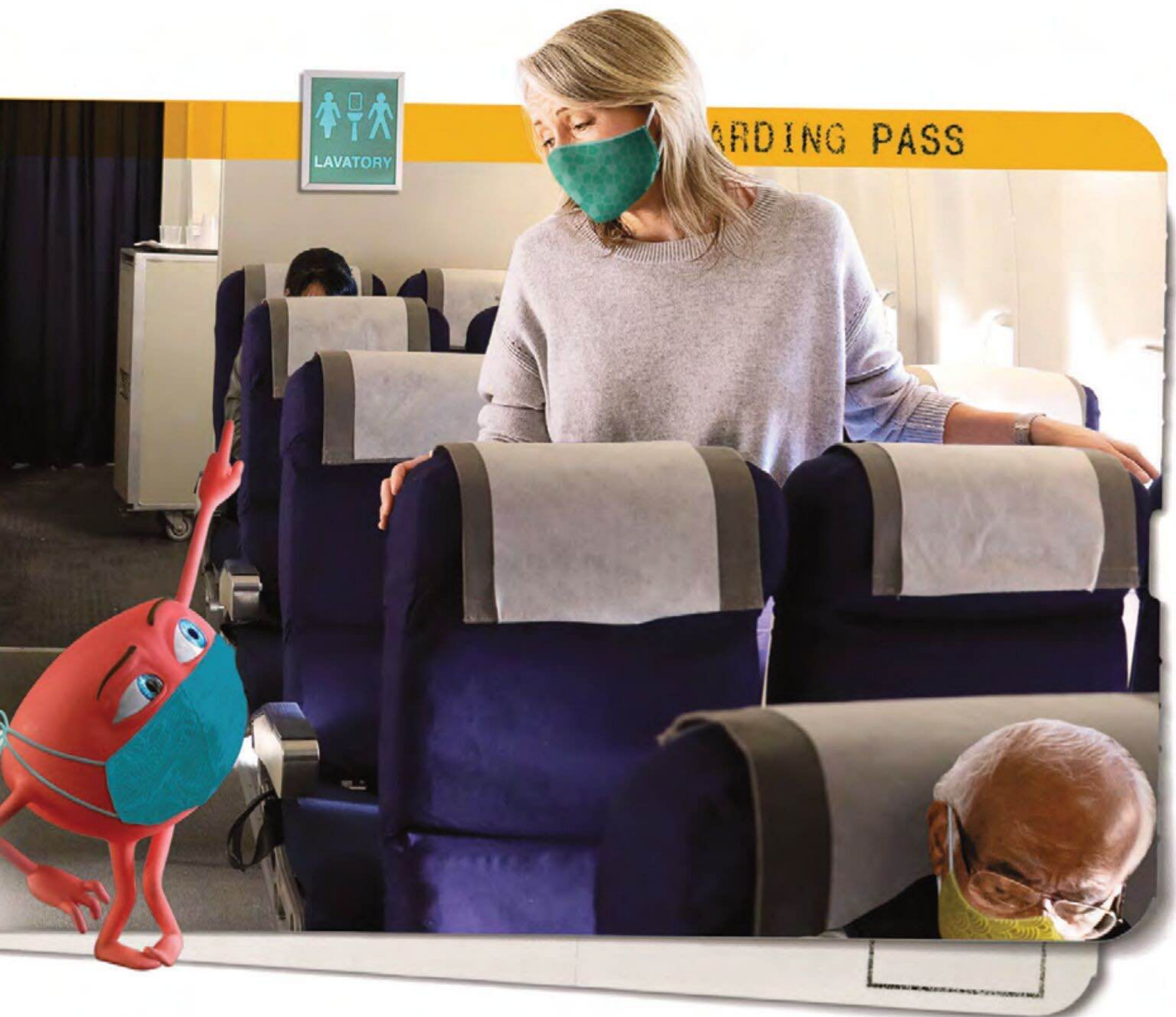
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### **USE OF MYRBETRIQ (mirabegron)**

Myrbetriq® (mirabegron) is a prescription medicine for adults used to treat overactive bladder (OAB) with symptoms of urgency, frequency and leakage.

### **IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION**

Myrbetriq is not for everyone. Do not take Myrbetriq if you have an allergy to mirabegron or any ingredients in Myrbetriq. Myrbetriq may cause your blood pressure to increase or make your blood pressure worse if you have a history of high blood pressure. It is recommended that your doctor check your blood pressure while you are taking Myrbetriq. Myrbetriq may increase your chances of not being able to empty your bladder. Tell your doctor right away if you have trouble emptying your bladder or you have a weak urine stream.



## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION (continued)

Myrbetriq may cause allergic reactions that may be serious. If you experience swelling of the face, lips, throat or tongue, with or without difficulty breathing, stop taking Myrbetriq and tell your doctor right away.

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take including medications for overactive bladder or other medicines such as thioridazine (Mellaril™ and Mellaril-S™), flecainide (Tambocor®), propafenone (Rythmol®), digoxin (Lanoxin®) or solifenacin succinate (VESIcare®). Myrbetriq may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how Myrbetriq works.

Before taking Myrbetriq, tell your doctor if you have liver or kidney problems. The most common side effects of Myrbetriq include

increased blood pressure, common cold symptoms (nasopharyngitis), dry mouth, flu symptoms, urinary tract infection, back pain, dizziness, joint pain, headache, constipation, sinus irritation, and inflammation of the bladder (cystitis).

**For further information, please talk to your healthcare professional and see Brief Summary of Prescribing Information for Myrbetriq® (mirabegron) on the following pages.**

**You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch) or call 1-800-FDA-1088.**

**Like us on Facebook**   
and visit [Myrbetriq.com](http://Myrbetriq.com)



 **Myrbetriq®**  
(mirabegron)  
extended-release tablets  
25 mg, 50 mg



## **Myrbetriq<sup>®</sup> (mirabegron) extended-release tablets 25 mg, 50 mg**

### **Brief Summary based on FDA-approved patient labeling**

Read the Patient Information that comes with Myrbetriq<sup>®</sup> (mirabegron) before you start taking it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This summary does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition or treatment.

### **What is Myrbetriq (meer-BEH-trick)?**

Myrbetriq is a prescription medication for adults used to treat the following symptoms due to a condition called overactive bladder:

- Urge urinary incontinence: a strong need to urinate with leaking or wetting accidents
- Urgency: a strong need to urinate right away
- Frequency: urinating often

It is not known if Myrbetriq is safe and effective in children.

### **Who should not use Myrbetriq?**

**Do not** take Myrbetriq if you have an allergy to mirabegron or any of the ingredients in Myrbetriq. See the end of this summary for a complete list of ingredients in Myrbetriq.

### **What should I tell my doctor before taking Myrbetriq?**

**Before you take Myrbetriq, tell your doctor about all of your medical conditions, including if you:**

- have liver problems or kidney problems
- have very high uncontrolled blood pressure
- have trouble emptying your bladder or you have a weak urine stream
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if Myrbetriq will harm your unborn baby. Talk to your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if Myrbetriq passes into your breast milk. Talk to your doctor about the best way to feed your baby if you take Myrbetriq.

**Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take**, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Myrbetriq may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how Myrbetriq works.

Tell your doctor if you take:

- thioridazine (Mellaril<sup>™</sup> or Mellaril-S<sup>™</sup>)
- flecainide (Tambocor<sup>®</sup>)
- propafenone (Rythmol<sup>®</sup>)
- digoxin (Lanoxin<sup>®</sup>)
- solifenacin succinate (VESIcare<sup>®</sup>)

### **How should I take Myrbetriq?**

- Take Myrbetriq exactly as your doctor tells you to take it.
- You should take 1 Myrbetriq tablet 1 time a day.
- You should take Myrbetriq with water and swallow the tablet whole.
- Do not chew, break, or crush the tablet.
- You can take Myrbetriq with or without food.
- If you miss a dose of Myrbetriq, begin taking Myrbetriq again the next day. Do not take 2 doses of Myrbetriq the same day.
- If you take too much Myrbetriq, call your doctor or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.

### **What are the possible side effects of Myrbetriq?**

Myrbetriq may cause serious side effects including:

- **increased blood pressure.** Myrbetriq may cause your blood pressure to increase or make your blood pressure worse if you have a history of high blood pressure. It is recommended that your doctor check your blood pressure while you are taking Myrbetriq.
- **inability to empty your bladder (urinary retention).** Myrbetriq may increase your chances of not being able to empty your bladder if you have bladder outlet obstruction or if you are taking



other medicines to treat overactive bladder. Tell your doctor right away if you are unable to empty your bladder.

- **angioedema.** Myrbetriq may cause an allergic reaction with swelling of the lips, face, tongue, throat with or without difficulty breathing. Stop using Myrbetriq and tell your doctor right away.

The most common side effects of Myrbetriq include:

• increased blood pressure	• dizziness
• common cold symptoms (nasopharyngitis)	• joint pain
• dry mouth	• headache
• flu symptoms	• constipation
• urinary tract infection	• sinus (sinus irritation)
• back pain	• inflammation of the bladder (cystitis)

Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away or if you have swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat, hives, skin rash or itching while taking Myrbetriq.

These are not all the possible side effects of Myrbetriq.

**Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.**

#### **How should I store Myrbetriq?**

- Store Myrbetriq between 59°F to 86°F (15°C to 30°C). Keep the bottle closed.
- Safely throw away medicine that is out of date or no longer needed.

**Keep Myrbetriq and all medicines out of the reach of children.**

#### **General information about the safe and effective use of Myrbetriq**

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in the Patient Information leaflet. Do not use Myrbetriq for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give Myrbetriq to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.

You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about Myrbetriq that is written for health professionals.

For more information, visit [www.Myrbetriq.com](http://www.Myrbetriq.com) or call (800) 727-7003.

#### **What are the ingredients in Myrbetriq?**

**Active ingredient:** mirabegron

**Inactive ingredients:** polyethylene oxide, polyethylene glycol, hydroxypropyl cellulose, butylated hydroxytoluene, magnesium stearate, hypromellose, yellow ferric oxide and red ferric oxide (25 mg Myrbetriq tablet only).

#### **What is overactive bladder?**

Overactive bladder occurs when you cannot control your bladder contractions. When these muscle contractions happen too often or cannot be controlled, you can get symptoms of overactive bladder, which are urinary frequency, urinary urgency, and urinary incontinence (leakage).

Marketed and Distributed by:

**Astellas Pharma US, Inc.**  
Northbrook, Illinois 60062

 **Myrbetriq**<sup>®</sup>  
(mirabegron)  
extended-release tablets  
25 mg, 50 mg

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206813-MRVS-BRFS  
057-2652-PM

## QUOTABLE QUOTES

**I want to make music that helps. 'Cause that's the way I help. I'm not a doctor. I'm not a lawyer. I don't work in government. I make music.**

—Lizzo, MUSICIAN

**Put all your eggs in one basket, and then watch that basket.**

—Andrew Carnegie, INDUSTRIALIST

**I started out reading as an escape, then a chore, then a habit, then a luxury. Only now I've realized what a necessity it is.**

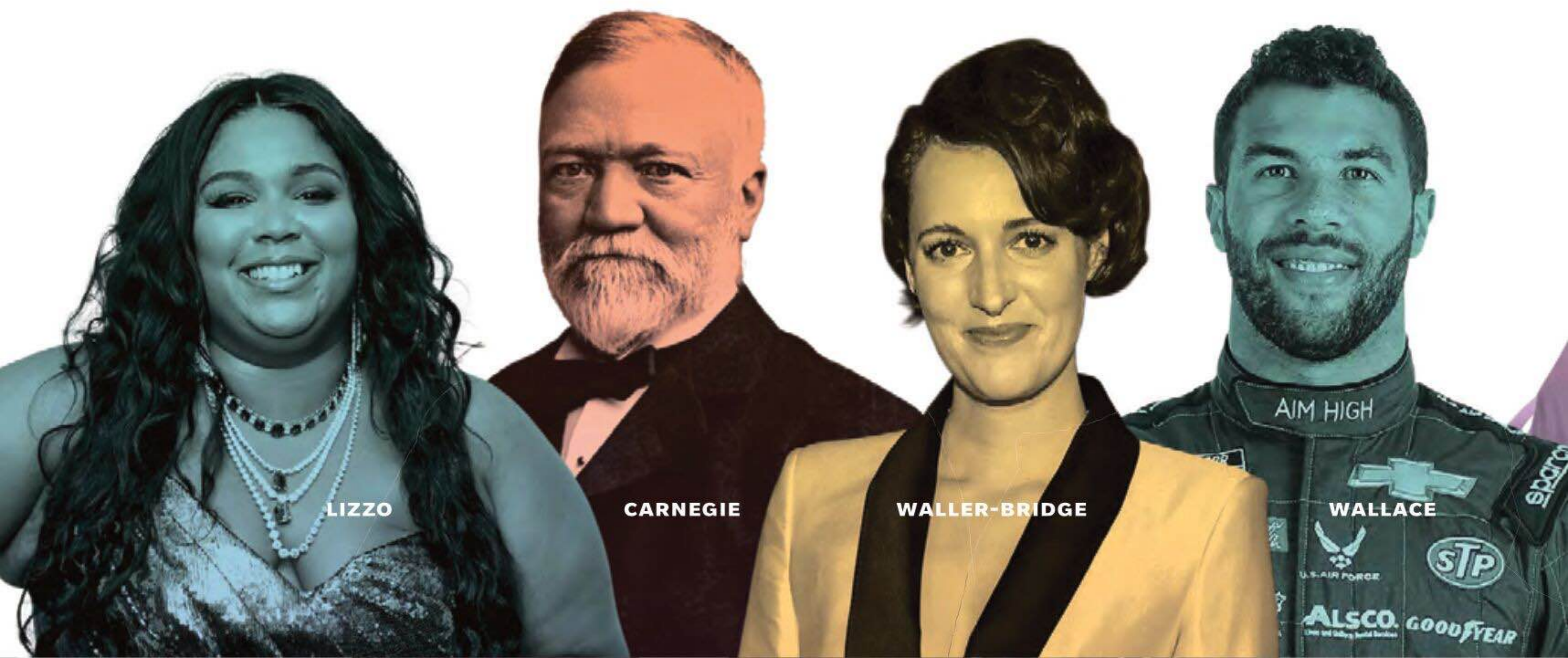
—Phoebe Waller-Bridge, WRITER/ACTOR

**We either make ourselves miserable or we make ourselves strong. The amount of work is the same.**

—Carlos Castaneda, ANTHROPOLOGIST

**I decided to learn to play the drums, which is the best medicine. For me, at least—maybe not so much for those around me.**

—Bubba Wallace, NASCAR DRIVER



LIZZO

CARNEGIE

WALLER-BRIDGE

WALLACE

Hope is bold. It can look beyond personal convenience and open us up to grand ideals that make life beautiful and worthwhile. Advance along the paths of hope.

—Pope Francis

**When I show my daughter she can be anything she wants to be, she wonders why I ever thought she couldn't.**

—Candace Parker, ATHLETE

People can't drive you crazy if you don't give them the keys.

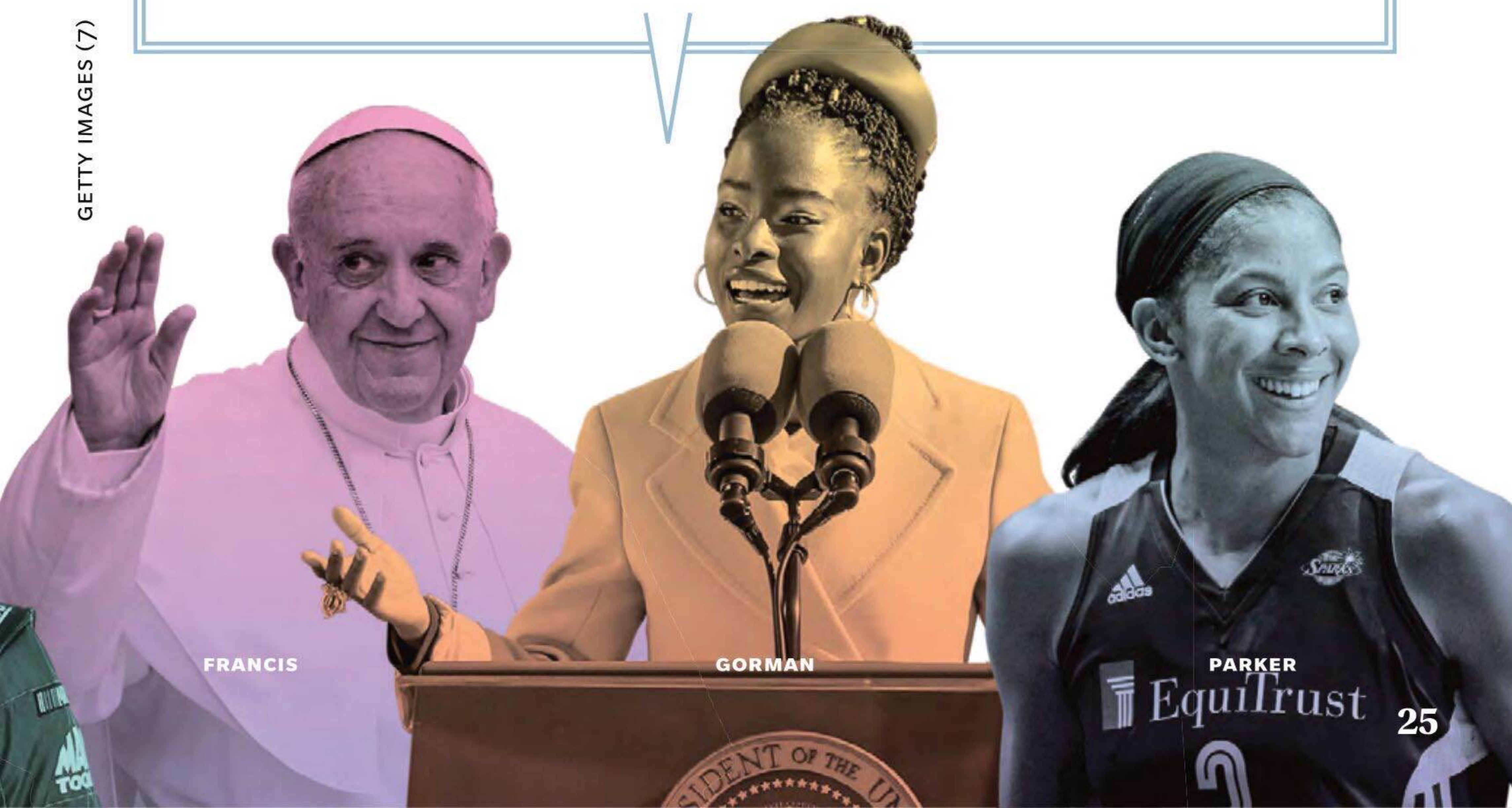
—Mike Bechtle, AUTHOR

## **POINT TO PONDER**

We lift our gazes not to what stands between us but what stands before us. We close the divide because we know to put our future first, we must first put our differences aside. We lay down our arms so we can reach out our arms to one another. We seek harm to none and harmony for all.

—Amanda Gorman, POET

GETTY IMAGES (7)



FRANCIS

GORMAN

PARKER

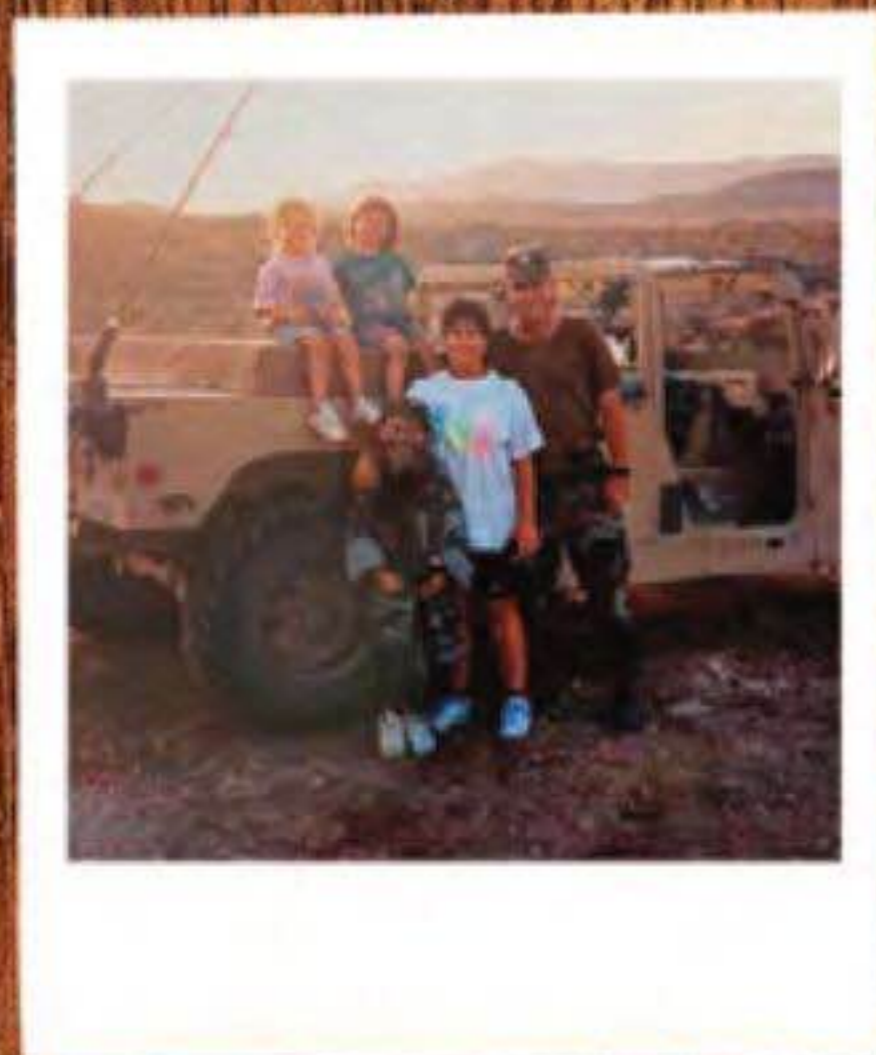
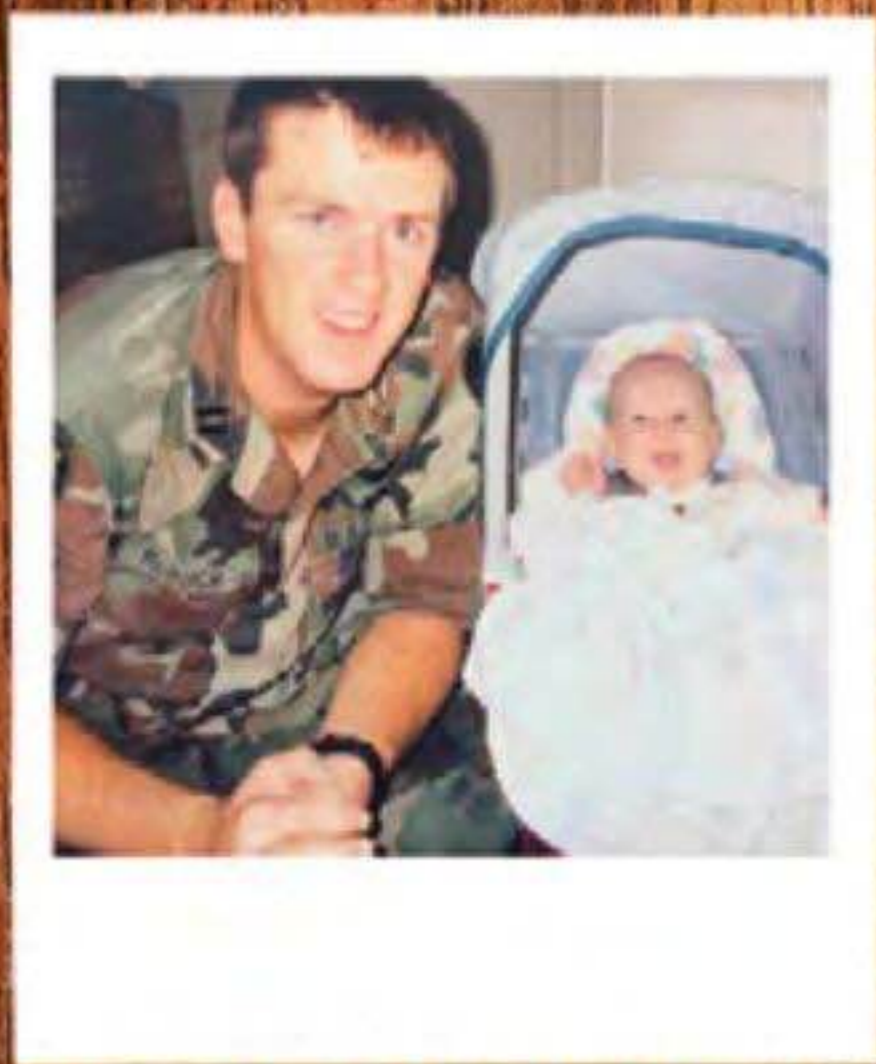
LIFE WELL LIVED

# The Taste of Home

*Nothing says childhood to me like an Army combat ration—as my husband soon learned*

BY *Kelly McHugh-Stewart*

ADAPTED FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE



**M**Y HUSBAND, MARK, looked at me, confused. “You used to like this stuff?” he asked as he dipped his brown plastic spoon into his mushy shredded barbecue beef. “You have to mix it up,” I said, “so the heat is evenly spread throughout.” I tore the top off my own meal: spaghetti with beef and sauce. The aroma—a mix of SpaghettiOs and hot Spam—rushed out of the packet and into my face. It smelled like home.

Growing up, I was obsessed with Meals, Ready-to-Eat, or MREs. The thick plastic pouches containing about 1,250 calories of highly preserved food were introduced in 1981 and marked a significant upgrade from the C ration meals of old. With their airtight, heavy-duty packaging, they can withstand just about any climate and are designed to last a minimum of three years with no refrigeration. They give troops a taste of home and the ability to maintain a high-calorie diet while away on the battlefield. In my Army household, there was always one lying around somewhere: in the back of my dad’s car, in the garage, in a closet.

Nothing beat eating dinner from those brown plastic pouches, and that’s why, when I saw MREs for sale on Amazon, I bought some for \$15 apiece. I posted a picture on social media, and my military friends laughed. But as I opened the shipment, it felt as if I’d just unearthed a box filled with childhood memorabilia. I was finally able

to give my husband a literal taste of my past.

Mark cut open his MRE and spilled its contents onto our coffee table. He held up the bag and eyed the instructions printed on its packaging. A water-activated heating packet uses a mix of magnesium metal, iron, and salt to generate the heat that warms up the meal. With the shredded barbecue beef packet tucked inside, I poured water into the heating envelope and watched as it almost instantly began to bubble. When I was a kid, this always felt like magic. The instructions call

## EATING AN MRE WAS AN ADVENTURE, AND WE SAVORED EVERY BITE.

for you to lean the package against a “rock or something.” My father used to take this part very seriously, sending my siblings and me out into our yard to find a rock big enough to get the job done. Mark and I leaned our heaters against a stack of books instead.

We’ve been together for six years, married for three, and in that time I’ve fallen in love with Mark’s hometown of McLouth, Kansas. I’ve cheered for the McLouth Bulldogs in the same high school stadium where Mark once played football as the team’s quarterback. I’ve driven down the same winding dirt roads he and his friends used

to drive, sometimes sneaking beers while parked underneath the big Kansas sky. I've slept in his childhood bedroom, the walls still plastered with clippings from local newspapers and posters of '90s sports icons such as Michael Jordan and Emmitt Smith.

The idea of growing up in the same town all of my life, let alone the same house, was foreign. During my father's 24-year Army career, my family lived in 11 different houses in five states and two countries. While I never had a hometown, I did have a culture. The Army was—still is—home to me, and MREs are a part of that.

My siblings and I weren't allowed to eat them often. My mother said they would constipate us; back then, I didn't know what that meant, so I'd just roll my eyes. They were saved for camping trips or the nights my dad

was in charge of dinner while my mom was out with other Army wives playing bunco, a dice game that was popular back then. My father could have offered us anything on these nights—pizza, Burger King, ice cream—but we would choose MREs. Eating one was an adventure, and we savored every bite. My first experiences of anxiety came when I had to choose which one I wanted. The main entree was printed in dark brown letters on the front of the pack—Menu No. 12: Cheese Tortellini; Menu No. 17: Beef Ravioli; Menu No. 23: Meatloaf with Gravy.

Staring at the packages lying on our counter, my hands would shake as they hovered over the rations before grabbing one. It was a difficult decision, and it wasn't about just the entree. It was about the extras that weren't mentioned on the outside of the package: the dry yellow cake or the brownie that crumbled into a million pieces the second the packaging was unsealed. The bready crackers with the cheese spread if you were lucky and the chunky peanut butter if you weren't. Jalapeño or regular cheddar, it didn't matter—I loved that cheese spread. There was nothing more disappointing than ripping open an MRE, seeing the peanut butter, and knowing you'd have to wait until next time to try your luck at the cheese.

There are so many things created for war that remind me of my childhood: reveille in the morning and retreat in the evening; Black Hawk



## THERE'S NOTHING LIKE A HOME-REHYDRATED MEAL

There are people who love MREs—for real. Along with giving them five-star ratings, some folks offered rave reviews on amazon.com:

- ◆ Chicken with tomatoes and feta cheese: “Excellent—very flavorful, and the chicken was quite tender.”
- ◆ Beef roast with vegetables: “Very tasty ... came with cherry-blueberry cobbler—amazing!!! I wish I could buy it in the store, it was that good.”
- ◆ Vegetables with pasta in taco sauce: “This was my first MRE ever ... Absolutely wonderful ... Everything was fresh and much more delicious than I was expecting.”
- ◆ Pork in white sauce: “Holy smokes! Came with the cracker and cheese spread, which were good. (Unfortunately, my cat thought so too. There was a bit of fighting over the custody of the cheese spread, but in the end I won.)”

helicopters and their big, echoey hangars; dusty brown boots, camouflage uniforms, and heavy flight helmets. These were just parts of the job for my father, but they defined my childhood. I grew up on post, saying “Yes, sir” and “Yes, ma’am,” using military time, and speaking in acronyms. I showed my military ID card at the shoppette when I filled my first car with gas and then again at the gym, the commissary, and the PX. These on-post amenities were created exclusively for service members and their dependents, but as a child I never knew they were unique to my community.

I’ve never served in the military myself, but I’ll always feel a kinship with those wearing a uniform when I walk by them at airports or see them on subway platforms. I’ll forever smile when I hear the familiar hum of a Chinook helicopter flying overhead. I

will continue to feel a little extra pride for the Army every year on Flag Day, the service’s birthday. Because, like MREs, these things are a reminder of my “home.”

“They’re not so bad, right?” I said to Mark with a smile, breaking my dry cracker in half and smearing the lumpy cheese spread on each piece. Growing up, I never, ever would have shared this precious MRE side dish with anyone. “This cheesy stuff,” he said, eyeing the cracker before taking a bite. “It’s not that bad.” **R**

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*Kelly McHugh-Stewart holds an MFA in creative writing from the New School and is currently working on a memoir about her father, Col. John M. McHugh, who was killed in action in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 2010.*

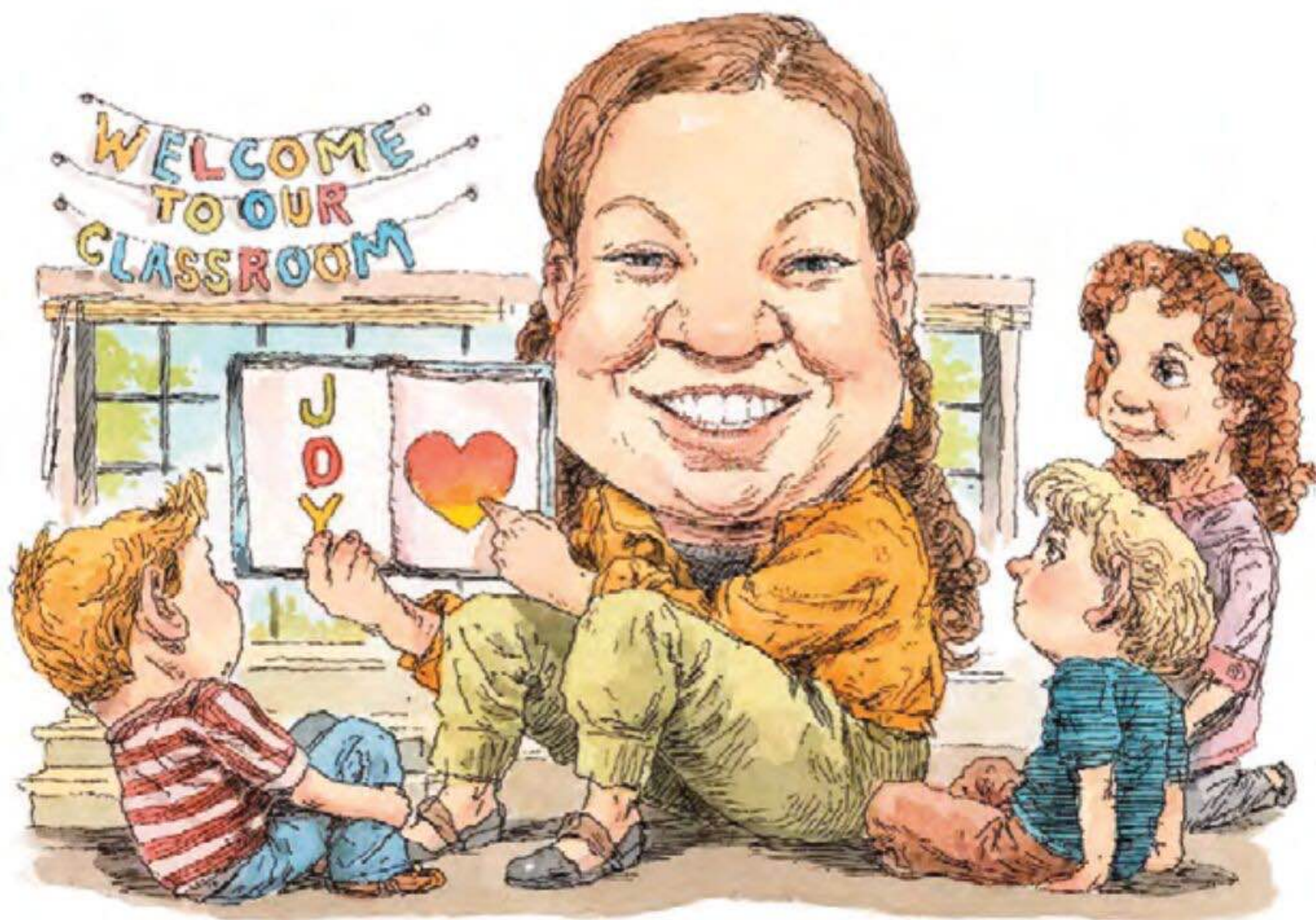
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# NATIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

**TABATHA ROSPROY,**  
age 33,  
Winfield, Kansas

---



**How long have you been teaching preschool?**

Eleven years, so this feels like a good celebration of a decade of hard work.

---

**And you teach in a rather unusual school.**

We are the first public school pre-K in Kansas housed inside a nursing home. The impact the children have on the lives of the residents is profound, as is the impact the grandparents—which is what we call our volunteers—have on my students.

---

**Lucky kids to have dozens of grandparents!** They really are. We're

big on the idea of school family as an extension of home family.

---

**Do they learn together?**

Yes. We're often working on similar skills, such as conversation and fine motor skills. So we get to target two populations with some of our teaching. I work closely with the nursing home's activities director, and I love when our objectives overlap.

---

**What's your number one goal as a teacher?**

I want the kids to understand that it's important to take care of yourself, but you also have a responsibility

to do that for others. That teaching of selflessness, I think, is missing in our society.

---

**Do you ever catch yourself speaking to adults the same way you speak to preschoolers?**

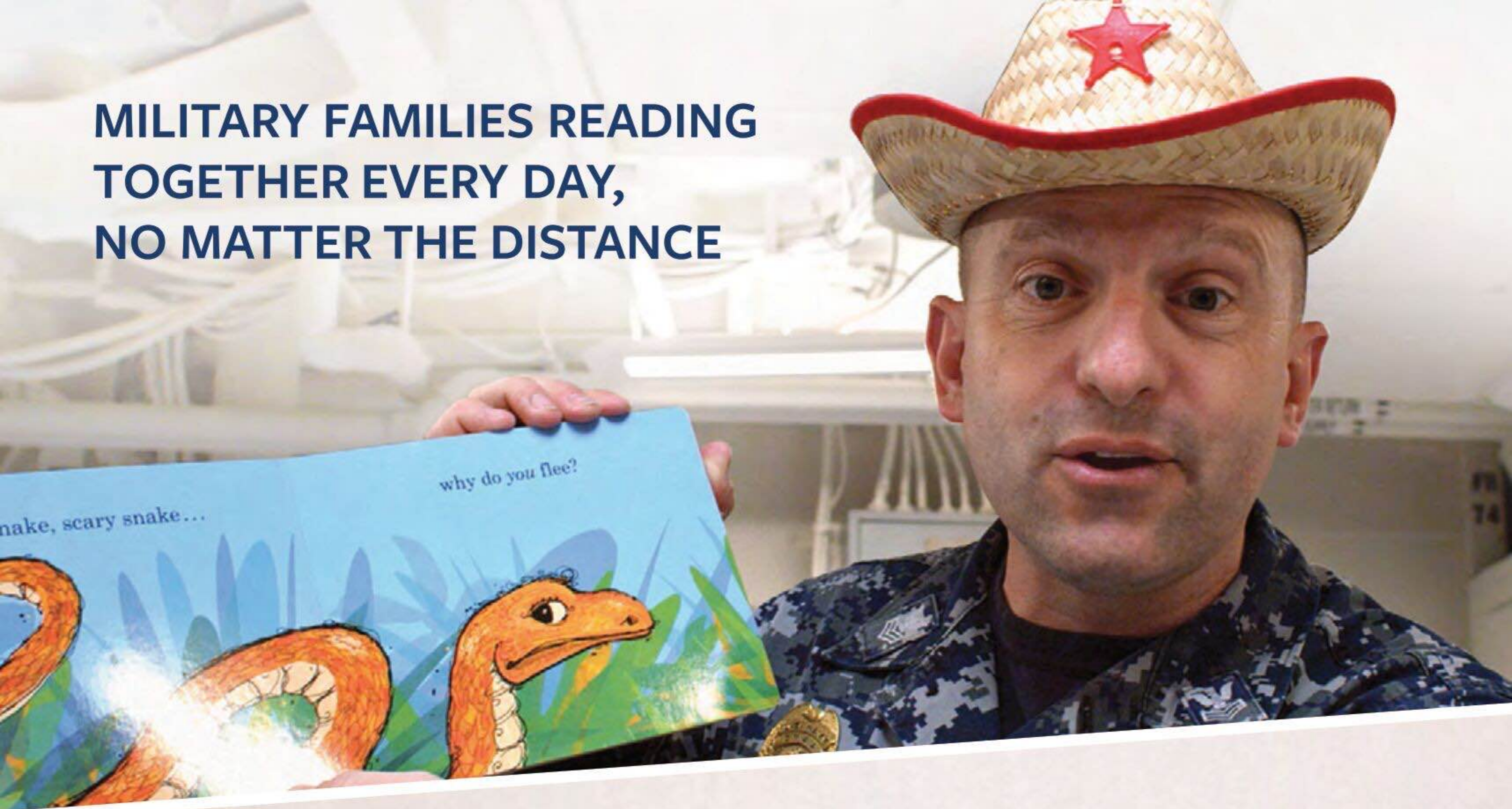
Absolutely. My husband gets upset with me for telling him to "go potty" before we leave the house. But my friends think it's really funny. **R**

---

*Rosproy is the first early childhood educator named National Teacher of the Year by the Council of Chief State School Officers.*



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# WE FOUND A FIX

9 TRICKS TO  
*Improve Your Life\**

## 1 Ant-Proof Pet Food Dishes

**PETS** Spring brings lots of nifty stuff (such as flowers and baseball), but it also welcomes seasonal pests (such as ants) that crawl toward available food sources, including your pets'. Protect your dog or cat's bowl by setting it in a pan of water. Not only will the water act as a moat that deters potential ant-invaders, but also pets can slurp away whenever they need a drink.



# 2

## One Topping for an Instantly Healthier Burger

**HEALTH** A study from UCLA found that topping a burger with half a Hass avocado helped alleviate negative effects red meat has on your heart. Loaded with omega-3s, avocado reduces the restricted blood flow in arteries and the inflammation that occur in the hours after eating red meat.



# 3

## De-Stink a Funky Wooden Spoon

**CLEANING** Do tonight's brownies taste like yesterday's stir-fry? The culprit might be the wooden spoon you're using. *Cook's Illustrated* tested several cleaning agents, including baking soda, water, detergent, vinegar, bleach, and lemon, and found that since baking soda is water soluble and easily absorbed, it's able to neutralize organic acids soaked up by wooden utensils. To protect them from lingering food residue, wipe down clean wooden utensils with olive oil and pop them into a 350-degree F preheated oven for two minutes.

# 4

## Fix Tomato Sauce with a Carrot

**FOOD** If you've already spent 30 minutes stirring Nonna's secret sauce only to realize it's a bit too acidic for Nonno's taste, peel a whole carrot and simmer it in the sauce. Carrots balance the acidity in tomato sauce by adding a subtle sweetness to the mix. Just remember to remove before serving.

# 5

## Last Call for Stimulus Checks

**MONEY** Since the \$1,200 spring 2020 stimulus payments were based on 2019 tax returns, if you didn't have updated (or any) information on record with the IRS or don't file tax returns due to low income, you may have been left out or received a check for less than the full amount. If so, the IRS announced the Recovery Rebate Credit, which you can claim this tax season using Form 1040 or 1040-SR. You'll receive the amount you missed in the form of an increased tax refund or a decrease in the amount of tax you owe.

# 6

## Keep Your Trash Bag Fitted to the Can

**HOME** Does the plastic shopping bag lining your kitchen or bathroom trash can keep falling in, no matter what? Attach a pair of plastic adhesive wall hooks (the kind you might stick by the door to hang keys) upside down outside the can. Loop the bag handles underneath to keep the bag in place. Makes for easy removal too!

# 7

## Pick the Fastest Grocery Line

**SHOPPING** Dan Meyer, chief academic officer at math software company Desmos, estimates that in a standard checkout line each item takes three seconds to scan and the rest of the transaction (niceties, paying, etc.) takes 41 seconds. So one overloaded person with 100 items will take less than six minutes to be rung up, while four people with 20 items each will take around seven. In other words, you're better off behind the one customer with the overflowing cart than behind a line of less encumbered express shoppers.



# 8

## Hide from Google Street View

**TECH** Google Street View has its perks, but the idea that anyone anywhere can get a good look at your home is a tad Big Brother. To fix, pull up your address in Street View, click the three vertical dots on the toolbar, and choose "Report a Problem." Then select the option to blur (your home, license plate, or face) and drag the red box over the part of the view you want to obscure. Submit, and anonymity is yours.

# 9

## Unstick a Bumper Sticker

**AUTO** Have you ever put a bumper sticker on your car, later realized that you are a mercurial being in a constant state of reinvention, and wanted to remove it? Then dampen a sheet of newspaper with warm water and lay it over the sticker for 15 minutes. When the paper has disintegrated, you'll be able to wipe it and the sticker away in just a few swipes.

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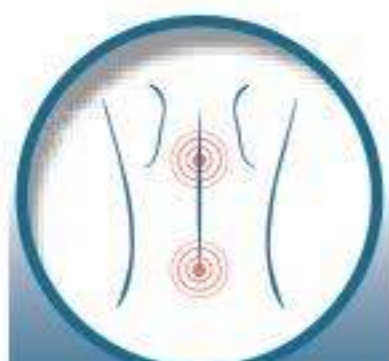
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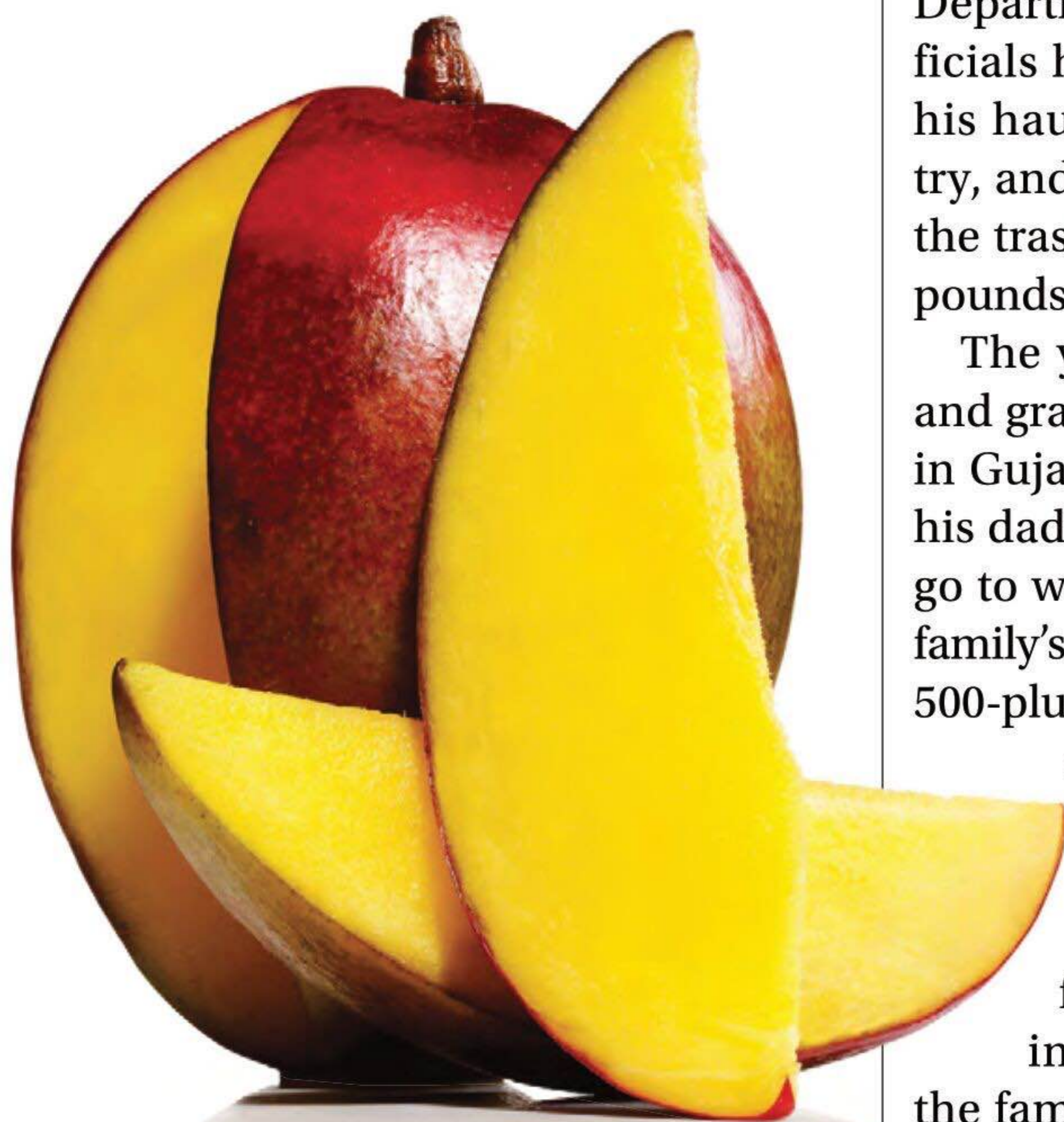
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THE  
**FOOD  
ON YOUR  
PLATE**



*I Am Mangoes ...*

# A Sweet Treat at Its Peak

BY *Kate Lowenstein*  
AND *Daniel Gritzer*

ONE SUMMER DAY in the early 2000s, Pennsylvania dentist Bhaskar Savani sat outside the arrivals gate at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport waiting for his father to emerge. Three hours after his dad's flight from India had landed, the senior Savani finally materialized, his fingers smelling of, well, me. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) officials had barred him from carrying his haul of mangoes into this country, and rather than tossing them into the trash as instructed, he ate several pounds of them right there in customs.

The younger Savani, whose father and grandfather were mango growers in Gujarat, India, wasn't surprised at his dad's refusal to let those mangoes go to waste. He was smuggling in the family's Alphonso—the most prized of 500-plus varieties of me—precisely because they were not allowed in the United States. Alphonso are so much sweeter, juicier, and more layered and floral in flavor than those you can find in supermarkets here. Indeed, the family has spent the two decades since trying to bring it and other outrageously delicious Indian mangoes into your homes.

Despite India's being the world's biggest and best producer of me, the mangoes you find stateside are almost always grown in your hemisphere. Most familiar is the Tommy Atkins, that Nerf football-sized dark red one with the splash of green and yellow.

It comes from the Mulgoba, one of six types of mango tree that an American professor in Pune, India, sent to the States in 1889—and the only one that survived the Florida climate. But give a Tommy Atkins to a mango connoisseur and you'll get laughed out of the fruit-of-the-month club. Much more worthy of your supermarket purchase is the bright yellow Ataulfo, or Champagne mango, grown in South America. Especially during its peak season of March through July, I advise you to snap some up, wait for them to ripen so that the skin wrinkles slightly, and enjoy a truly drippy, redolent treat.

Luckily, the Champagne also requires less labor from you; it's less fibrous to cut, with a thinner pit to work around. No matter the variety, to get at my flesh, poke with your knife to identify the orientation of my oblong seed, then slice lobes off both of its flat sides. Score the flesh into half-inch cubes, then slice the cubes off the skin. I suggest buying extra of me—not selfishly, but to make up for my high seed-to-flesh ratio.

Ignore my color when you're looking for signs of ripeness. I usually taste best when I'm soft to the touch, like a very ripe avocado. A  $\frac{3}{4}$ -cup serving of me will give you half your daily vitamin C and 15 percent of your daily folate and copper needs, and I may be your tastiest route to fiber.

Think of me as more than just fruit salad filler and roughage, however. I sweeten sticky rice in Thai desserts, get

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# 10 LAYERS OF WHEAT IN EVERY BITE



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## PERFECT MANGO LASSI

Using a countertop or immersion blender, combine 1½ cups yogurt (preferably whole milk), a pinch of salt, and 1½ cups canned Indian mango pulp. (You can order the Swad brand of either the Kesar or Alphonso variety from [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or [walmart.com](https://www.walmart.com)—it's worth the trouble.) Blend in milk ¼ cup at a time to reach desired thickness. Blend in 1 teaspoon sugar at a time to taste; flavor with ⅛ teaspoon ground cardamom or a few drops of rose water. Serve room temperature, chilled, or on the rocks, optionally garnished with crushed pistachios. The lassi can be made ahead and refrigerated up to one day; whisk before serving.

tossed into Jamaican mango chutney, and—drizzled with fresh-squeezed lime juice and sprinkled with chile powder and salt—make for a popular Mexican street snack. I am tasty even when unripe, dipped in a Salvadoran condiment called *alguashte* made from ground pumpkin seeds.

Over the centuries in India, I have become a national emblem, triggering

DANIEL GRITZER



## The Food on Your Plate

“mango orgies” (eating frenzies at the start of my season) and even inspiring the country’s paisley pattern whose shapes, if you look twice, resemble mine. Hence the Savanis’ quixotic mission to spread the magic. In 2006, after the junior Savani had worked for years to convince the United States to let the Alphonso in, George W. Bush sampled one and called it “a hell of a fruit.” The U.S. and Indian governments struck a deal permitting Indian mangoes to enter the States. In return, India allowed in Harley-Davidson motorcycles, previously banned on account of their high carbon emissions.

Savani imported the first load of Alphonso in April 2007. Those boxes sold out immediately, and everyone thought it was only a matter of time before they took over the U.S. market. But the cost of shipping combined with various USDA importation hurdles put the price too high—up to \$40 for a dozen. Aside from the canned pulp available online (see recipe at left), the Alphonso left America.

Yet Bhaskar Savani is his father’s son. He now sells another delicious Indian mango, the Kesar, via Fresh-Direct, and vows that it’s only a matter of time before the king of my species sits by its humbler cousins in your supermarkets. **R**

---

*Kate Lowenstein is a health journalist and the editor-in-chief at Vice; Daniel Gritzer is the culinary director of the cooking site Serious Eats.*

**NEW!**

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ALL  
in a Day's  
**WORK**

**Male teachers** at my old school had to wear suits. But one colleague always managed to subvert the dress code by wearing the ugliest ties. Every day, staff and students alike couldn't wait

to see what hideous accessory he had on. When he retired, I finally asked him, "Why the ugly ties?" He responded, "Because that way, no one would ever know I only owned one suit."  
—ROD HANSON  
*Park Forest, Illinois*

**I gave a** presentation to a small town as part of my role with North Carolina's department of

transportation. At the end, I asked whether there were any questions. There was.

"Can we move the deer-crossing sign on the state-owned road?" asked a councilperson.

"Why?" I asked.  
"That location isn't a safe place for the deer to cross."  
—SUZANN RHODES  
*Hampstead, North Carolina*

**The science test question asked:  
What is hard water?  
The student's answer: Ice.**

—WEARETEACHERS.COM

**When I worked** at an employment agency, I was interviewing a candidate for an entry-level job. I read his application as we talked: name, address, year of graduation, and so on. Then I looked at what he had written next to the box that read "Position desired."

"Near a window," it said.

—SONA DORAN  
*in the New York Times*

**My kindergarten** student needed a glue stick, so I opened my supply cabinet to see what I had. "Wow! You have a lot of stuff!" he said. "You must make a lot of money. Where do you work, anyway?"

—CONNIE GAHM  
*Chillicothe, Ohio*

**I just spent** 15 minutes liking photos of dogs

on Instagram. Time well spent.

—@JEREMYADAMROSS

**There are 68,000** medical billing codes doctors use to denote injuries and maladies for insurance purposes. These actual codes are among the more specific ones:

- ◆ W59.22XA: Struck by turtle
- ◆ Y93.D1: Stabbed while crocheting
- ◆ Z63.1: Problems in relationship with in-laws
- ◆ V91.07XD: Burn due to water skis on fire
- ◆ V97.33XD: Sucked into jet engine

—HEALTHCARE.DIVE.COM  
AND ADVANCED DATA SYSTEMS CORPORATION

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## I HATE OFFICE LINGO—AN ODE

When you say ping me I want to punch you. It's true. Bio break too. It makes me cringe. And if I'm being honest I don't care about your ducks or the row they're in. I don't know what net-net means unless it's being said by an excited tennis announcer. Come to think of it let's *not* circle back or drill down or take a deep dive or take it off-line or level the playing field or create action items and honestly I don't care if this won't scale and may I add that going forward I would like to park this project. And this job. I quit. Now. Sorry. I have a hard stop.

—JOHN KENNEY IN  
*LOVE POEMS FOR WORK* (PUTNAM)



# YOUR TRUE STORIES

IN 100 Words\*

## A New Member of Arnie's Army

When I was a student at Wake Forest University in North Carolina, I lived in a dormitory named after a famous alum, Arnold Palmer. A big portrait of the golf legend hung in the foyer. One day, a friend of mine—an international student from China who didn't know who Palmer was—came to pay me a visit. When she got to my room, she asked me, "Why is there a huge painting of George W. Bush in the lobby?"

—E.G.

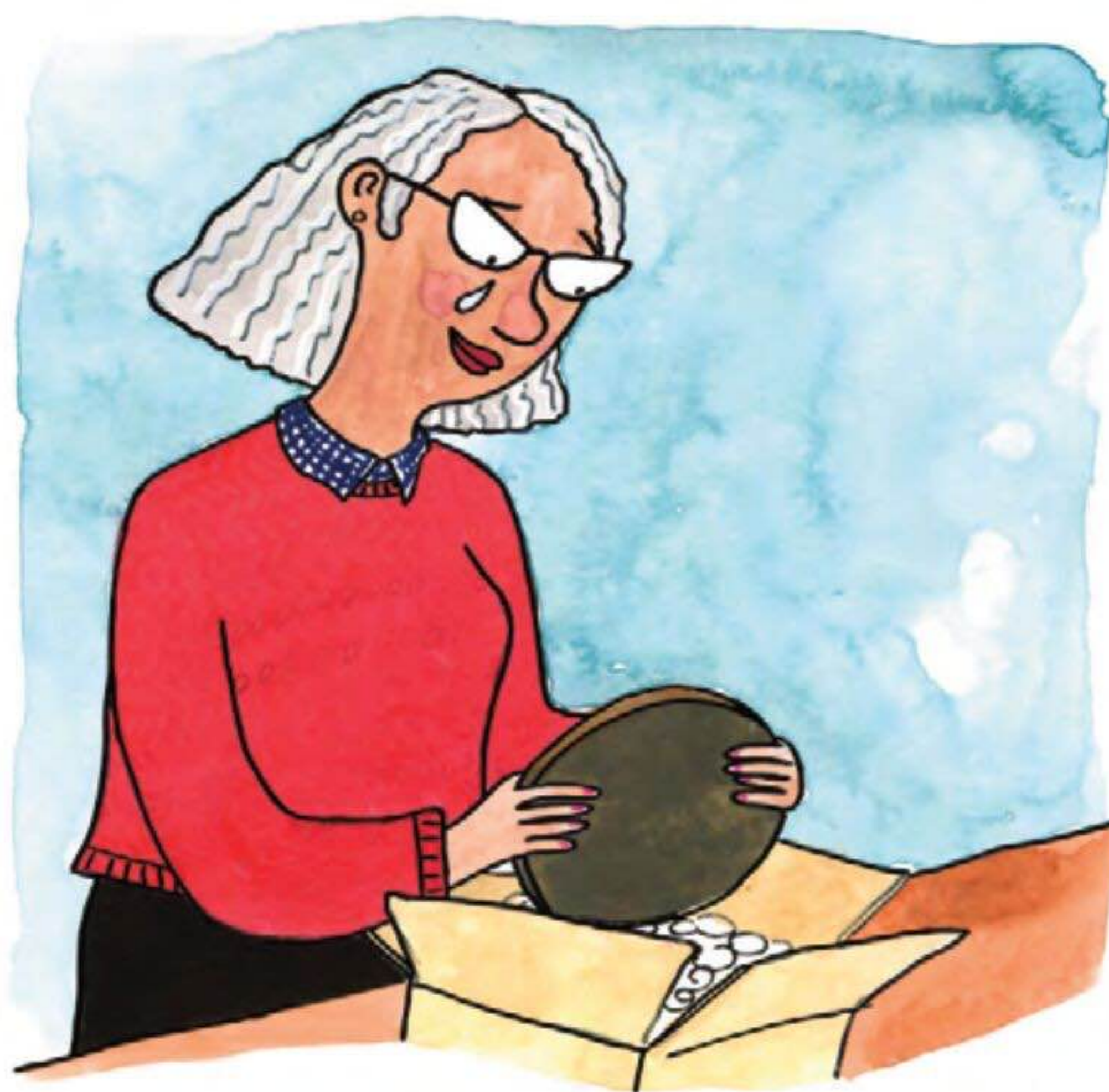
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**TO READ MORE** *true stories* or submit one, go to [RD.COM/STORIES](https://rd.com/stories). If we publish yours in the print magazine, it could be worth \$100.

## Time in Memoriam

After my husband passed away, I had no choice but to find new homes for all of his electronics. A man named Jim wanted a clock my husband had made, even though it was dusty and all the wires were hanging out of it. Weeks later, a package came: my husband's clock, gleaming and working like new. Jim's note said he had a strong urge to fix it and return it to me. I believe my husband wanted that clock to be home again.

—ELLEN HAVEMAN *Newtown, New Jersey*



## Is There a (Real) Doctor in the House?

I have a PhD in acoustics, and I spent my career working as a research physicist. On my son's 11th birthday, we invited his sixth-grade class over to celebrate. I walked into

the dining room just as my son was explaining to a classmate, whose father was a physician, "My dad's a doctor, too, but not the kind that does anybody any good!"

—Gerald Kinnison

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

# Poultry in Motion

BY *Megan Bacigalupo*

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

AS THOUGH THINGS weren't strange enough last spring, a wild turkey started showing up on my block. It's normally one of the busiest intersections in Minneapolis, but this turkey strutted down the sidewalk day after day as if she belonged. As word got out about her, more and more people came out to see her. A young woman told me that they had named her Tina—Tina the Turkey.

Tina must have been laying eggs in front of the neighbors' house. She would squat and wiggle her rump in the same place in their yard every day. One day she paraded with five other turkeys through the parking lot, up the two-and-a-half-foot cement wall, and into the yard. I watched in awe—six wild turkeys! One had her feathers ruffled; I think it must have been Tina. This was her territory now. There were many days when Tina would stand in

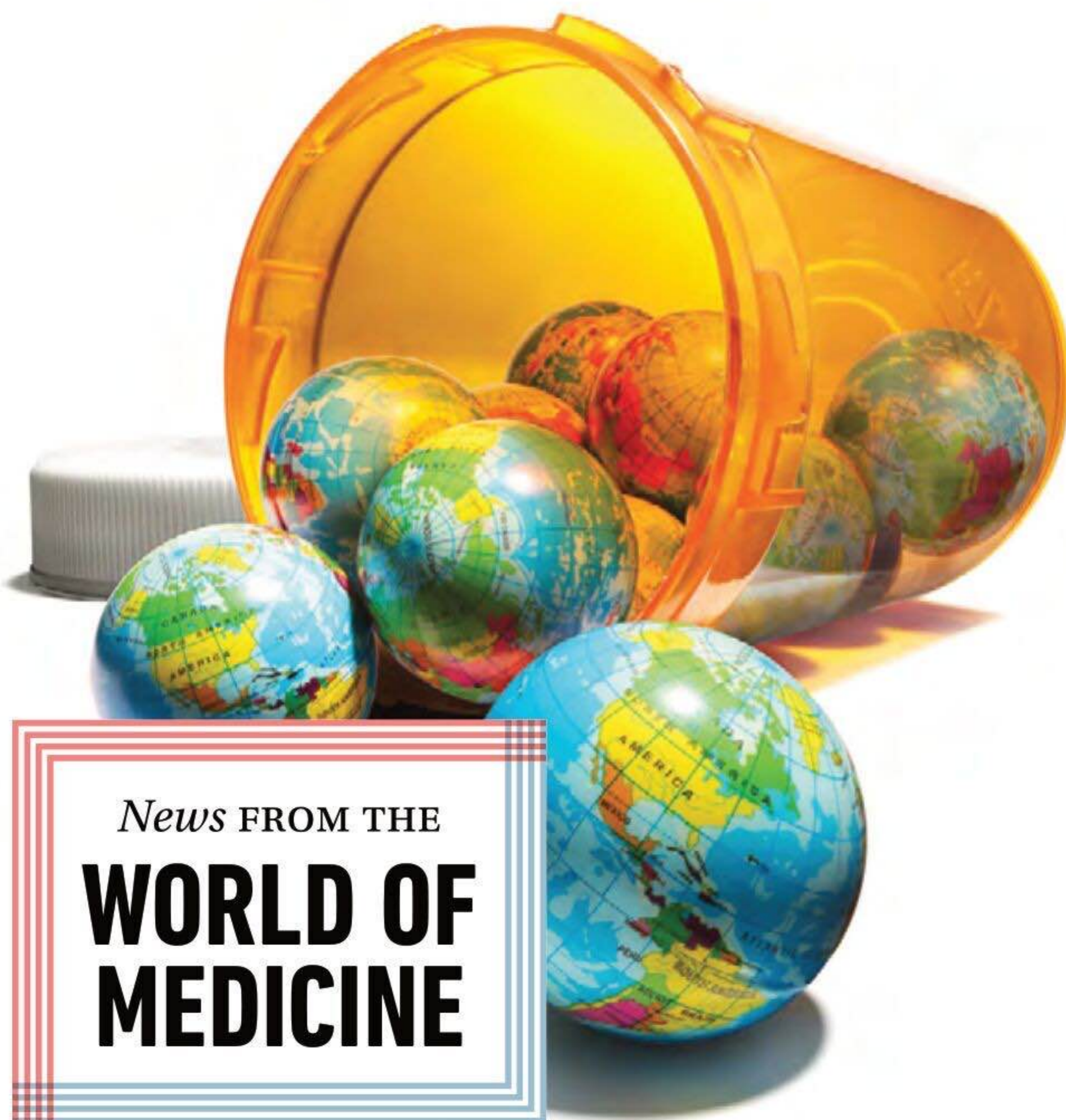
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*\*Sometimes 100 words just aren't enough!*



the parking lot—a dangerous place for a slow-moving bird—and refuse to move, blocking cars from coming or going.

This became a show with Tina in the starring role until the day a new character appeared on stage: an eerie-looking man with matted black hair. He looked homeless. He was covered in dirt, his posture stiff. He approached Tina and began to strike curious poses in a beautiful, trance-like dance. Tina engaged with him in this dance. Together, they were art in motion. And because of the stay-at-home order, I got to see them. I'll always remember this turkey when I think back on the coronavirus pandemic. She brought a lot of joy to a community at a time when people desperately needed an escape. **R**



News FROM THE  
**WORLD OF  
MEDICINE**

## HOME IS WHERE THE HEART RISK IS

Life partners share many things, and that includes similar cardiovascular health, according to a *JAMA Network Open* study of 5,364 couples. The correlation seems to occur when both partners share the same risk factors, such as high cholesterol, smoking, physical inactivity, obesity, high blood pressure, or poor eating habits. On the flip side, researchers found that partners can also have a positive effect on each other: Participants were 2.3 times more likely to quit smoking if their other halves did and 6.4 times more likely to follow the other's lead in improving their diet.

## Rethinking the Risks of Breast Cancer Surgery

Breast cancer can often be stopped through surgery—mastectomies and lumpectomies—but doctors don't always offer it to women over 70, worrying that it may do them more harm than good. However, new research suggests that while surgery is life-threatening for some, most older women tolerate it better than had been assumed. In fact, only the least fit and most frail patients didn't fare better with these procedures.

Of course, some women may still be willing to risk a shorter life if they can avoid these invasive treatments. To help with the decision, British researchers have created a tool that doctors and patients can use together to estimate survival with and without surgery. It's available at [agegap.shef.ac.uk](http://agegap.shef.ac.uk).



## How to Cook Arsenic Out of Rice

Arsenic is found in soil and water, and unfortunately, rice is good at absorbing this toxic element as it grows. The finished grain doesn't contain enough arsenic for most adults to worry about, and while no rice-related harms have been documented in children, in general their small bodies can be poisoned more easily. For families that eat a lot of the grain and want to play it safe, British scientists found a method that gets rid of more than half of the arsenic while keeping a lot of the vitamins and minerals: Parboil one cup of rice in four cups of boiling water for five minutes. Drain the water and replace it with two cups of fresh water, then finish cooking at low to medium heat.

## IN CPR, BREAKING BONES IS THE LESSER EVIL

You wouldn't know it from watching TV portrayals of people performing CPR, but nearly a third of recipients end up with broken ribs. Still, if you are working to save a life, don't worry about fractures. A recent Spanish study found that adults with CPR-related fractures had a much better chance of surviving cardiac arrest without brain damage than those who had no fractures. The American Heart Association recommends a depth of at least two inches for chest compressions on an adult.



## Nighttime Blood Pressure: Why It Matters

For most people, their blood pressure dips slightly when the body relaxes at night. But for others, it spikes—a condition called “nocturnal hypertension.” For a Japanese study, people with daytime hypertension or other cardiovascular risk factors (diabetes or high cholesterol, for example) wore ambulatory blood pressure monitors for at least 24 hours. The devices revealed that 12 percent of the participants experienced nocturnal hypertension. And these subjects had an even higher risk of developing heart disease than the others, especially heart failure.

If you're getting treated for blood pressure but check it only during the day, uncontrolled nighttime irregularities could be overlooked. Ask your doctor whether ambulatory monitoring is available.



## CHOOSE AN EXERCISE APP THAT SUITS YOUR PERSONALITY

If sticking with an exercise habit is a challenge for you, there may be an app for that. In a University of Pennsylvania trial, smartphone games helped subjects become more active.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of three versions of a game that recorded how many steps they took each week. The first version placed them in direct competition with others. In the second version, they worked as a group to gain points. In the third, players earned points on their own but were asked to designate a friend or family member to be their supporter. This person received an e-mail each week reporting on the player's performance in order to help cheer her or him on.

On average, all three groups racked up more steps than usual. That said, certain versions of the game worked better for people with different personality traits. For instance, players who were more outgoing and more motivated to persevere with their goals tended to accumulate more steps in the competitive mode. In contrast, introverts responded well to the game whether it was competitive, collaborative, or supportive. A third type, made up of those prone to taking risks with their health and safety (by not wearing a seat belt, for example), was not helped by the game at all.

So though not all of us benefit, exercise gamification can work—and work especially well when you keep your personality in mind as you choose from among the many available apps.



## The Pros and Cons of PPIs

One of the world's most commonly used drugs, proton-pump inhibitors (PPIs) bring relief from acid reflux, peptic ulcers, and indigestion. However, scientists have linked long-term use to an increased risk of kidney disease, gut infections, stomach cancer, and, recently, diabetes. If you have no choice but to rely on PPIs for two years or more, ask your doctor about getting monitored for side effects regularly.

## Exploring, Even Close to Home, Is a Mood Booster

COVID-19 curbed the joy that can come from travel, but it doesn't have to end it. A *Nature Neuroscience* study showed that simply exploring near where you live brings novel experiences that can lift your mood. **R**



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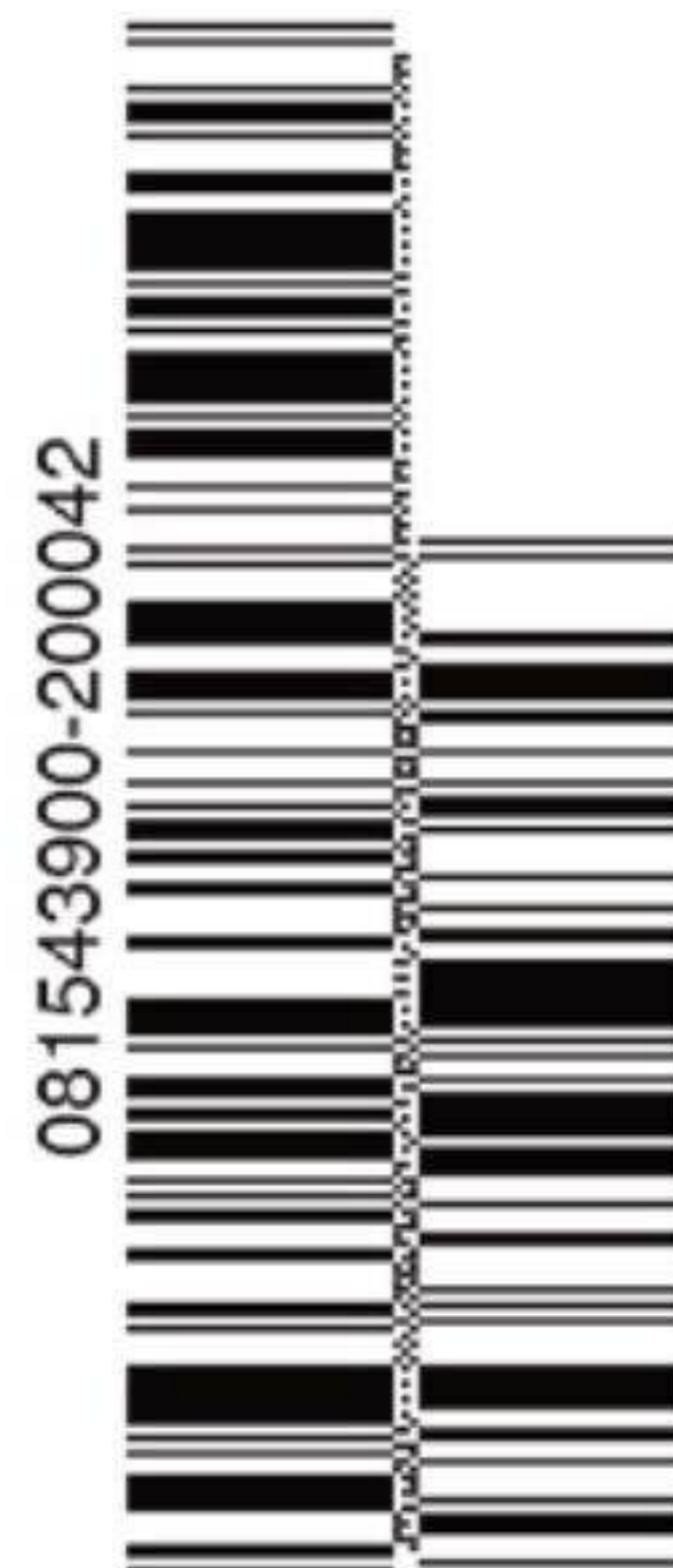
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# “My Mommy<sup>®</sup> Is Broken!”

*A toddler e-mails a complaint to customer service*

BY *Shannon J. Curtin*

FROM **MCSWEENEYS.NET**

ATTN: Customer Service

I am writing to you seeking assistance with my Mommy<sup>®</sup>. I received my Mommy<sup>®</sup> in 2019 and was immediately pleased with the model. The first year, she worked great. She was attentive. She satisfied my needs and rarely caused me any grief. However, over the last year, I’ve noticed incremental changes in her quality.

For example, she used to jump to rescue me from my prison whenever I whimpered, and we’d retire to her room until morning. Now I receive a stern “Go back to sleep!” yelled from somewhere in the darkness. I understand that routine use of the big bed is an introductory offer, but I thought it was automatically extended until

year three. Did I misunderstand the contract?

I’ve also noticed an increasing lag in my Mommy<sup>®</sup>’s responsiveness during daylight hours. Whereas before a tearful shriek would invoke an immediate response and impressive checklist of possible solutions, including snacks, cuddles, and various funny faces intended to make me laugh, now she only sighs and rolls her eyes when I throw myself on the floor. In fact, there seems to be an inverse relationship between her level of concern and the caliber of my dramatic performance. Have you found this to be a problem with continued use?

Another cause for concern is my Mommy<sup>®</sup>’s translation feature, which I find is increasingly glitchy. She will

ask me questions such as, “Are you ready to wash your hair?” and I’ll always say, “No,” and still, I end up with a face full of shampoo every time. It’s very frustrating. I’ve lost days of cereal-encrusted hair and painstakingly applied marker tattoos because of this issue. It seems to be more of a problem with understanding my negative responses, which is curious. I haven’t once answered affirmatively about wanting a diaper change, yet they continue to happen.

But of all my issues, the most concerning is this: As I discover new and exciting things, I prefer to fully immerse myself in them, and this Mommy® seems to struggle with the concept of repetition. I know this Mommy® was rated highly for her adherence to routine—she has never once faltered at making coffee at dawn or declaring “BEDTIME!” at precisely 7 p.m. So then why does she seem to tire of “Baby Shark” after the tenth or eleventh viewing?

Clearly, I’ve raised serious issues. As such, I suggest that you take the



time to expand your research and development to improve the Mommy®. I would be happy to provide a list of ideas I’ve been workshopping, including the eradication of some of the Mommy®’s most hurtful phrases, notably “Just a minute,” “You need to wait,” and “Don’t eat that.” Just let me know.

I anxiously await any information you may have about automatic updates that might remedy these issues.

Sincerely, Reese

MCSWEENEYS.NET (JULY 7, 2020), COPYRIGHT © 2020  
BY SHANNON J. CURTIN, MCSWEENEYS.NET.



## **Something (Doesn't) Smell Fishy**

Researchers have long known that humans’ ability to detect the smell of rotting fish is located on a gene named TAAR5.

What they didn’t know until a study was conducted in Iceland in October 2020 is that about 2 percent of the population there have a mutation on the gene that makes them immune to that singular olfactory experience. For people with the broken gene, rotting fish smells as sweet as flowers or a sugary dessert.

# WEALTH PRESERVATION

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# LAUGHTER

THE BEST *Medicine*

**God is speaking** to Moses.

**God:** I've got good news and bad news.

**Moses:** Give me the good news first.

**God:** The good news is that you have been chosen to deliver my people from bondage. I will force the pharaoh to free the people by sending plagues of locusts, frogs, darkness, devastation, and more. The pharaoh's armies will chase you all the way to the Red Sea, but don't worry. I will help you part the waters to aid your escape.

**Moses:** So, what's the bad news?

**God:** You have to prepare the environmental impact statement.

—Submitted by  
ROBERT STRAND  
*Springfield, Missouri*



"I like a man with a good firm elbow bump."

### The opposite of ...

◆ ... mermaid is landlady.

—[@CALBO](#)

◆ ... formaldehyde is casualdejekyll.

—[@BROWTWEATEN](#)

◆ ... Iceland is water water.

—[@HOTBITHORAN](#)

**A husband and wife** go to see a marriage counselor. At the start of their session, the

counselor asks them what the problem is.

The wife starts listing every issue the couple had ever had in the 15 years they've been married. She goes on and on.

When she's finally done, the counselor gets up, embraces the woman, and kisses her passionately. The woman is stunned.

The counselor then

## Did you hear about the Energizer Bunny? He got arrested for battery.

—WIDEOOPENPETS.COM

turns to the husband and says, "That is what your wife needs at least three times a week. Can you do that?"

The husband thinks for a moment before he replies. "Well," he

says, "I can bring her here on Mondays and Wednesdays, but on Fridays, I golf."

—BOULDERTHERAPIST.COM

**I finally make** enough money to be able to

put a television in each room of my home. I live in a studio apartment.

—Submitted by

LOUIS SAPIA

*Weehawken, New Jersey*

**GOT A FUNNY JOKE?**

*It could be worth \$\$\$.*

*For details, go to*

**RD.COM/SUBMIT.**

## NATURE'S BLOOPERS

The Comedy Wildlife Photography Awards recognize nature's silliest moments, captured for posterity. We wrote equally silly captions for these recent finalists.



"Talk to the hand, sweetheart."



"Can you believe what he's wearing?"



"Mom, this is so embarrassing!"



"I've got to be me!"

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: PETR SOCHMAN/COMEDY WILDLIFE PHOTO AWARDS 2020. BERNHARD ESTERER/COMEDY WILDLIFE PHOTO AWARDS 2020. KRANITZ ROLAND/COMEDY WILDLIFE PHOTO AWARDS 2020. MAX TEO/COMEDY WILDLIFE PHOTO AWARDS 2020

## EVERYDAY MIRACLES



# Putting a Ring Back on It

BY *Betty Jean Ankrum*

IT WAS JULY 2014. We were building a smaller house and getting ready to move when my husband became very ill. He had to spend nine weeks in assisted living, leaving me to do everything in our new home. By nighttime, I felt as if I was moving in slow motion.

One such evening, as I reached for some lotion for my aged hands, I noticed that my Bluebird diamond wedding ring—which I had worn for more than half a century—was missing.

My finger was naked. I was devastated.

I looked in every drawer, every closet, and the car. No luck. My family told me to retrace my steps. That would be a task, for that day I had closed a bank account, taken my car in to get it fixed, and gone for an eye exam (only to find out I needed cataract surgery).

I sat, feeling numb. My mind wandered back in time to when I had caught my first glimpse of the man I married. I was five years old. There



wasn't any kindergarten in those days, and my mom often encouraged me to tag along with my dad. That particular day, he was going to get freight at the depot in Highmore, South Dakota, a "city" of only a few hundred people. As we drove down in our pickup truck, we came upon a large herd of Black Angus cattle being driven near the roadside. They were going from West River to New Underwood near Rapid City for water and pasture, the man in charge told my dad as we passed them.

I was looking at the youngest rider. He seemed to be about nine years old. I waved to him, but he just tended to the cattle. Perhaps he was shy.

Next my memory traveled to my senior year in high school. The most exciting thing to do in those days was to dress up and walk the streets of Highmore with my classmates. It was on such a day that a black hardtop car went by real slow. A passenger yelled, "Girls, do you want to ride around with us?" I could hardly believe it: Among the people in the car was the young cowboy who hadn't responded to my wave 13 years before! But he wasn't ignoring me now.

So, our love affair began. He offered the ring a few months later. The diamond was small, but my future husband chose it for its perfection and shine.

The daydream passed. My daughter Jan called.

"Mom, I'm coming this weekend to see you and Dad. You should shop

for a new ring." She was determined. "Where do you want to go?" she asked.

"A pawn shop," I said. I told her there was one close by.

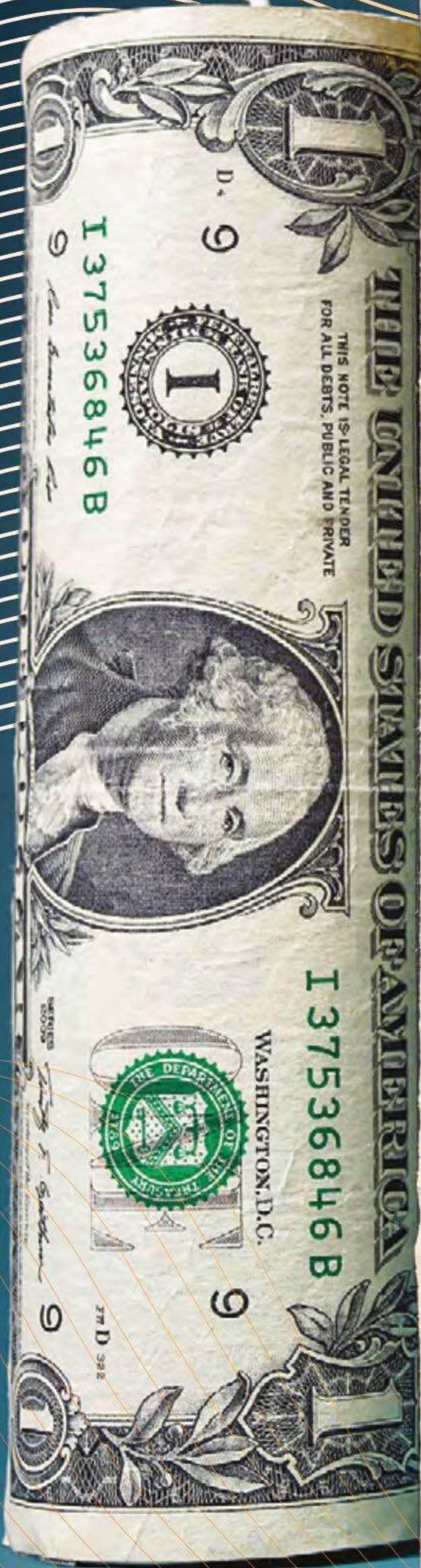
At the shop, we found five jewelry cases to look through. This would be an exercise in patience. We picked out three rings from the first case. One was too big, another too small, and the third too expensive. So we continued to the next case, and this time I chose two more rings. I picked up the first. As I slipped it on my finger, I shouted, "Here's my lost ring! My Bluebird

## HOW DID I KNOW TO GO TO THAT PAWN SHOP? INTUITION? THE WORK OF ANGELS?

---

diamond! See how it just fits." Everyone in the store turned to the young man helping us. He got a magnifying glass out and said, "It is a Bluebird." I wanted to know how my ring had ended up there, so the police had to get involved. Weeks later, I got a call from an officer who told me that a girl had found it in the mall parking lot.

I'm still in awe that I found my ring. How did I know to go to that pawn shop? Was it intuition? The work of angels? Just curiosity? I'm not sure I'll ever know. But I did learn that sometimes things are gone for a while before they reappear to be claimed. Just like my man. And just like my ring. **R**



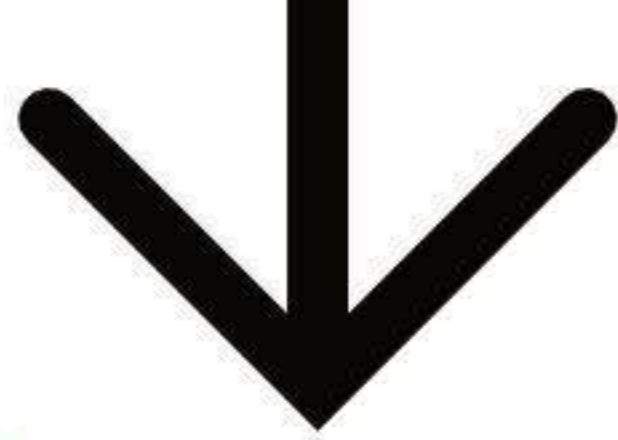
# Don't Waste Your Money

on

THESE 23 THINGS

**AVOIDING  
UNFORCED SPENDING  
ERRORS WILL LET YOU  
SAVE FOR THE STUFF  
YOU REALLY WANT**

BY *Jody L. Rohlena*  
AND *Amanda  
Walker*



# It's easy to get into a spending rut, buying the same stuff you've always bought out of habit or just because your mom always had that kind of soup in her pantry.

But sometimes the same old, same old can cost you, whether we're talking everyday purchases, monthly bills, or occasional big-ticket items. In many cases, making a simple swap can save you money, time, and even headaches. We checked with experts in more than a dozen fields to find out what you should stop wasting your money on—and what to spend it on instead.

## **RUNAWAY AC AND HEAT**

According to [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov), a typical U.S. household spends more than \$2,200 a year on energy bills, with nearly half going to heating and air conditioning.

“A programmable thermostat can save you 10 percent a year on your cooling and heating bills,” says Mary

Farrell, senior editor at *Consumer Reports*. Set your thermostat seven to ten degrees higher on warmer days and the same amount lower on chilly days and see whether the money you save doesn't feel better than being slightly warmer or cooler than you're used to. Even easier, make these adjustments when you plan to be out of the house.

## **SUPERMARKET FLOWERS**

They might look pretty, but resist the temptation to buy bouquets kept in buckets of water near the produce. Some fruits and vegetables give off ethylene gas, which can shorten flowers' lives, says Amy Stewart, author of *Flower Confidential: The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful*. “Instead of lasting a couple of weeks,



The easy-to-grab flowers near the produce section won't last. Buy the refrigerated ones instead.

unrefrigerated flowers near the produce section are only likely to last a few days," she says. If you want flowers that will stay fresh longer, buy blooms that have been kept in a refrigerator. Skip gerbera daisies, hydrangeas, dahlias, gardenias, and sweet peas, which will probably start wilting within five days. Instead,

choose Oriental or Asiatic lilies, chrysanthemums, garden roses, gladiolas, or sunflowers.

### **FANCY SHEETS**

A high thread count—and the accompanying high price tag—doesn't necessarily mean the softest or best-sleeping sheets. According to the

## LARGE RUGS

A lot of work goes into weaving good-quality handmade rugs, and the price can skyrocket when you go up in size. For example, a four-by-seven-foot Turkish rug might be \$300, while an eight-by-ten version could cost \$2,000. To save money but get the look, Rebecca Hawkins, president and head buyer for furniture retailer Celadon Home, suggests trying a decorator's technique called layering. Buy a large rug in an inexpensive material such as sisal, jute, or seagrass for around \$200. Then place a smaller, more expensive rug on top, like that four-by-seven Turkish model. Result: You've spent \$500 instead of \$2,000. "Designers and home stagers use this a lot to save a bundle," Hawkins says.

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Layering will get you a premium-priced look for less.

product-testing group Wirecutter, sheets with thread counts in the 200 to 300 range should be plenty soft and durable. Its top pick for bargain-priced sheets is Target's Threshold line, which costs \$50 for a queen set—far less than the hundreds or even thousands of dollars you can pay for premium bed linens.

## A NEW STICKER-PRICE CAR

You should get a good discount on a new car without having to rely solely on your negotiating skills. One secret is timing: Watch for low- or zero-percent interest on loans, cash-back offers, and special lease terms. "Cash-back offers can even be as high as \$10,000," says Ivan Drury, senior manager of insights at the automotive research site [edmunds.com](https://www.edmunds.com). "Every month, there are new incentives available from

every automaker," he says. "It's pretty rare that someone looking for a car has no incentives available." You can check current rebates by make and model at [edmunds.com](https://www.edmunds.com), [jdpower.com](https://www.jdpower.com), and [nadaguides.com](https://www.nadaguides.com).

The best time to buy a new car is at the end of the model year (usually August or September) or at the end of the calendar year. The regular deals didn't happen in 2020 because of the pandemic and the resulting auto shortages, but generally, "buying at the end of the month does yield a bit better deal," says Drury. The reason: Many dealerships receive monthly volume bonuses, meaning they get additional money back from the automaker if they sell a certain number of vehicles in a month. You probably won't get a giant discount, but you can likely get another \$200



or so knocked off the sticker price.

Don't be lured by a holiday sale at the beginning or middle of the month, says Drury. "Those holiday deals are usually the incentives you can get all month, so it still makes sense to wait until the end of the month to save a bit more."

### **TRAVEL REWARDS CARDS**

If you've historically put all of your charges on a credit card that pays you in travel rewards, you might want to use another card right now, while you are probably traveling less or not at all, says Loretta Nolan, a financial planner in Old Greenwich, Connecticut. If you pay an annual fee for that card, call to see if the company will waive it, or consider canceling the card.

"Every credit card in your wallet right now should be earning its keep, and if you're not traveling like you used to, you might do better putting charges on a card that's going to, say, pay you three percent cash back on the money you spend at grocery stores and drugstores," Nolan says.

### **HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE ...**

One with a low deductible, that is. Raising a \$500 deductible to \$1,000 can cut your annual premium up to 25 percent, says Mark Friedlander, director of corporate communications for the Insurance Information Institute, a nonprofit consumer education group. Have a monitored burglar alarm or fire alarm system? Some



insurers will knock 10 to 20 percent off your annual homeowners premiums for that. Ask your agent about any other discounts you might be missing.

### **... AND CAR INSURANCE**

There's a similar savings step with your car: Increase the \$250 deductible to \$1,000 and you could save

up to 40 percent on your premiums. At the same time, sniff around to see whether you have earned any discounts that could save you even more. "If you're driving less than you used to due to the COVID-19 pandemic, ask your insurer whether you qualify for a low-mileage discount, which might cut your auto premiums by 10 to 15 percent," says Friedlander.

Bundling your home and auto policies with the same company, if you haven't already, could save you an additional 15 to 20 percent on each policy. Then pay your premiums in full up front instead of using a payment plan, and you might save another 10 percent.

Even if you are maxing out all your available discounts, it still pays to



shop your insurance coverage around every year or two, getting at least three quotes, to see if you can get a better deal. In a study by the Texas Insurance Department, people saved an average of \$125 per year on auto policies just by comparing rates.

An independent agent can help you with those comparisons; find one through the Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America, or check comparison-shopping sites such as insure.com, netquote.com, and selectquote.com.

### **SPRING FLOWERS**

"When you buy in the spring, you're paying full price for all your plants," says Renee Marsh, a designer and teacher at the New York Botanical Garden. "Buy in summer or even fall because nurseries don't want to manage those plants through the summer heat or have to overwinter them." By waiting, you can easily save 20 to 50 percent or more. "Don't get carried away by the spring flower bling," Marsh says.

### **SUPERMARKET STOCK**

In the kitchen, try this easy cooking hack: Save your chicken, beef, and pork bones to make your own nutritious bone broth. Put bones and vegetable scraps in a big pot, cover with water, bring to a boil, then simmer for a few hours, or all day if you can. A splash (about an ounce) of vinegar helps draw nutrients from the bones. Your homemade creation will be tastier and contain more vitamins and minerals and less sodium than store-bought stock. Research has shown that bone broth protects bones and joints, fights inflammation, and promotes better sleep. It also will save you money, as store-bought stock





Chances are you're being sold faster Internet than you need.

typically costs \$2 to \$3 per quart. Use your homemade broth as a flavorful base for soups, sauces, and gravies and as a cooking liquid for rice or quinoa.

### **EXTRA-FAST INTERNET**

Companies such as Xfinity and Google offer home Internet speeds of up to 2,000 Mbps (or 2 Gbps), but unless you are a hard-core online gamer, that blazing-fast service is probably a waste of money. The Federal Communications Commission recommends Internet speeds of 12 to 25 Mbps for most families, even those who stream games or videos. You won't see a big difference in your everyday browsing speed, but you will see a difference in

your bank account. For example, for service in White Plains, New York, where the *Reader's Digest* offices are located, Xfinity charges as little as \$40 per month for download speeds of 100 Mbps, \$80 for 1,000 Mbps, and a whopping \$300 for 2,000 Mbps.

### **A REPAIR-PRONE AUTO**

Before you choose your next ride, check the True Cost to Own calculator at [edmunds.com](http://edmunds.com) to find out how much different models would cost you over time. Information includes purchase price, repairs, depreciation, insurance, fuel, and more based on your ZIP code and five years of ownership. For example, Houston buyers purchasing a 2020 Honda Civic two-door LX coupe can expect to pay \$12,339 over those five years (\$4,541 for fuel, \$7,127 for insurance, and \$671 for repairs), while a BMW 330i could run \$17,444 (\$6,584 for fuel, \$8,275 for insurance, and \$2,585 for repairs). Of course, check with your insurer to see rates for particular models.

### **ENERGY-GUZZLING APPLIANCES**

Older dishwashers, refrigerators, and other essential appliances use a lot more energy and water than newer models, especially those with an

Energy Star certification from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). For example, a dishwasher with an Energy Star label uses 3.5 gallons of water or less per cycle, compared with the more than 10 gallons used by some older models. Energy Star-certified washing machines clean clothes using 33 percent less water and 25 percent less energy than standard washers, while certified clothes dryers use 20 percent less energy than other models. So if your existing model is on its way out or you're looking to upgrade, choose an energy-efficient replacement for long-term savings.

### ONE-JOB KITCHEN GADGETS

Tempted as you might be after watching that infomercial, most of the kitchen tools that do just one job are not only a waste of money but also wind up taking up precious drawer or counter space. Think avocado slicer, banana slicer, garlic peeler, etc. To do most food prep, say the professional foodies at *Food & Wine*, all you need are three good "gadgets": a chef's knife, a paring knife, and a serrated knife.

### INVESTMENT FEES

"Because interest rates are so low, you're not making much on your money market funds or bank accounts now," says financial planner Nolan. "To help make that up, make sure you're paying the lowest fees possible on investments like mutual funds and

ETFs [exchange traded funds]." A simple way to do this is to check the expense ratios—the amount of a fund's assets that goes toward administrative and management costs—of the holdings in your 401(k), IRA, and other investment accounts. Then see whether similar funds charge less.

For example, Vanguard's S&P 500 Index Fund (VFIAX) and Invesco's S&P 500 Index fund (SPIAX) both mirror the performance of the S&P 500 index. But the Vanguard fund has an expense ratio of 0.04 percent, while the Invesco fund charges 0.54 percent.



### A BIG LAWN

Spend a lot less on yard care by getting rid of some of your

lawn or never growing one to start with. By growing native plants instead of the usual grass, you can save two kinds of green. "After they're established in your garden, they don't need constant watering, they don't need any fertilizers, and they're more pest- and disease-resistant, so you save on pesticides," says Kim Eierman, a certified horticulturist and the founder of [ecobeneficial.com](http://ecobeneficial.com), a gardening education website. One study by the EPA found that

---

Less lawn to mow = more green  
in your pocket



If you invested \$10,000 in each for ten years, earning an average of 9.8 percent a year, you'd have \$2,590 more using the lower-cost Vanguard choice.

To research your fees and find funds with lower ones, consult a financial website such as [morningstar.com](http://morningstar.com). If you have a 401(k), ask the employee relations department for that information.

### **CREDIT-REPAIR SERVICES**

Don't fall prey to sales pitches from companies that promise they can fix your credit score for you. "There are

all kinds of services out there that claim to have ways to get negative information removed," Andrew Pizor, an attorney at the National Consumer Law Center, told *Money* magazine. But there are only a few legitimate repairs that can be done, such as updating old information or correcting errors on your credit reports—all things you can do yourself, for free.

To improve your score, you should also try to pay down any debt you're carrying, such as credit card balances, and pay all your bills on time, says Keith Gumbinger, vice president

the costs of maintaining one acre of native prairie or wetland plants such as grasses totaled about \$3,000 over 20 years. Maintaining

the same size lawn covered in traditional turf would set you back around \$20,000—and even more for a larger lawn.



of hsh.com, a mortgage information website. That will get you a better FICO credit score in a few months—and a better interest rate on a mortgage, a credit card, or any loan.

“Someone with a fair credit score of 640 might pay about a full percentage point more for a mortgage than someone with a very good credit score of 740 or more,” says Gumbinger.

### **STORAGE BINS**

Organizing guru Marie Kondo suggests using shoeboxes to organize items such as T-shirts, socks, and tools in your drawers and closets. If you're decluttering, these freebies can save you quite a bit, considering that shoebox-sized bins from the Container Store cost \$5 (or more) apiece.

### **NAME-BRAND PET MEDS**

Buying generics can save you as much as 85 percent on prescription drugs—and the same goes for your furry family members. Ask your veterinarian whether a generic substitute might work for a drug your pet needs. Ideally, get a written prescription and compare the amount your vet charges with the prices you find at drugstores and big-box stores. Many pharmacies fill pet prescriptions if they stock the same medication for humans.

Discount programs, including those offered at most big chain stores, may also help. GoodRx says using one of its coupons may save you as much as 80 percent off the retail price of



Smart tricks  
can save you  
up to 85 percent  
on pet meds.

pet prescriptions. For instance, gabapentin, a medication used to control seizures, costs about \$10 for ninety 300 mg capsules with GoodRx, whereas the average cash price is more than \$70.

### **FULL-PRICE FURNITURE**

The biggest sales at furniture stores typically take place on certain holidays—Presidents' Day, Memorial Day, and Labor Day—and also at the end of the year, says Chris Gaube, head of brand marketing at the home furnishings retailer Raymour & Flanigan. A smart strategy is to shop before those holidays to check prices and then wait to buy at the holiday sales, when much of the inventory could be at least 10 to 20 percent cheaper.

And if you want to save even more,

ask about buying floor samples. Says Gaube, “Typically our floor samples are discounted 30 percent to 50 percent during holiday sales.”

### **LARGE OUTDOOR PLANTS**

“A plant in a three-gallon pot looks nice and big, but it has usually been repotted a number of times, so the root structure has been compromised,” says Marsh of the New York Botanical Garden. When you’re looking for plants to grow in your yard, think smaller. “A one-gallon potted plant has a healthier root system that will allow it to catch up to the bigger plants in a season or two, plus it is a fraction of the cost.”

Or go even smaller and buy plant plugs—tiny plants with deep root systems. “Within a growing season or two, they will be the equivalent in almost every case of a plant you paid five times as much for that comes in a one-gallon pot,” says horticulturist Eierman. For example, a *Lindera benzoin*, or northern spicebush shrub, can cost \$29 in a one-gallon pot, while five plugs of the same shrub cost \$25.

### **REPLACEMENT TIRES IN PAIRS**

Tires don’t usually go flat in pairs, but the salesperson at the tire store will tell you that you need to buy them two at a time. Unless the tire on the opposite side of the one being replaced has less than 75 percent of its tread, say the experts at *Family Handyman*, you don’t necessarily have to change it at the same time.

### **BOX SPRINGS**

If you’re shopping for a new mattress but your box spring isn’t broken, don’t let the salesperson talk you into buying one. That’ll save you roughly \$150 to \$300 if you’re buying a queen mattress, the most popular size, according to *Consumer Reports* testers.

Those testers also say that you should be able to get a good quality mattress for less than \$700, including innerspring models, which tend to be more popular than cheaper foam mattresses—and cost far less than the thousands of dollars many brand-name manufacturers charge for some models. **R**



## **Pint-Sized Food Fights**

**My toddler just spent five minutes explaining that he can’t use his imagination because he traded it to a kid at day care for some fruit snacks.**

**🐦@HENPECKEDHAL**

**My nine-year-old didn’t want to try my lemon loaf, but when I rebranded it as “lemonade cake,” he was interested.**

**🐦@ANNE\_THERIAULT**

GOOD DEEDS

# THE BIKER WHO

A male cyclist is shown riding a road bike on a paved road at dusk or night. He is wearing a white and blue cycling jersey with 'FLEET' and 'FACTORY TEAM' visible, blue shorts, a white helmet, and blue shoes. The background features power lines and a sunset sky.

Her son's organ donation saved his life. So he rode 1,426 miles to meet her.

BY *A. C. Shilton*

FROM BICYCLING MAGAZINE

# WITH A BIG HEART

Mike Cohen, left,  
with Christine and  
David Cheers



# IT TOOK SEVERAL

drafts to get the letters right. To distill her boy's life into the two dimensionality of words on paper. To paint a picture of someone so full of energy and love so that the beneficiaries of his death, the recipients of his organs, would know just how lucky they were.

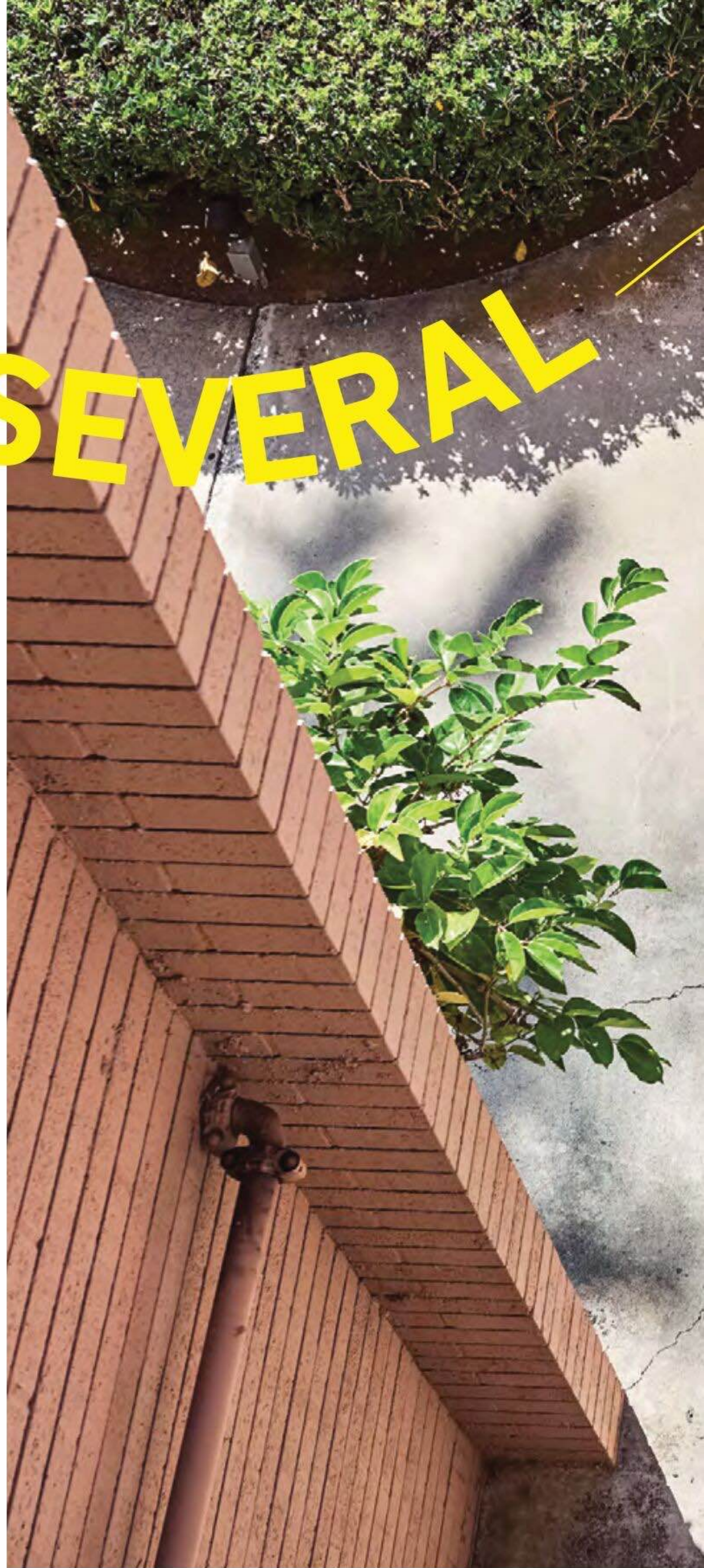
Three weeks earlier, the thread that held Christine Cheers's world together had been ripped clean away. On February 21, 2018, someone on the other end of the phone had said the words that bring parents to their knees: "There's been an accident."

Her son, 32-year-old Navy flight surgeon James Mazzuchelli, had been injured in a helicopter training mission at Camp Pendleton. If she wanted to see him while he was still alive, she needed to get on the next flight from Jacksonville, Florida, to San Diego—and she needed to pray.

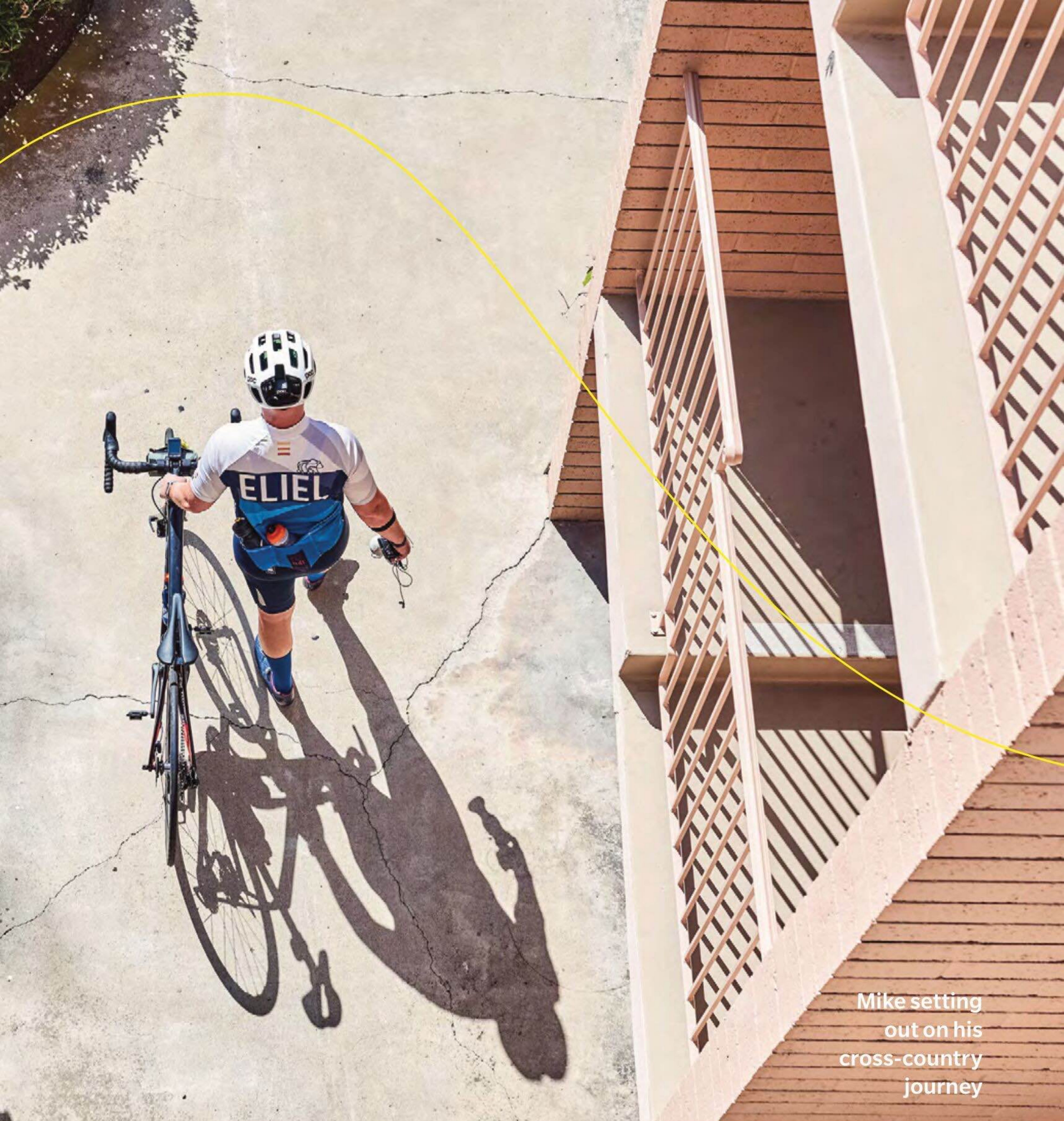
James was still breathing when Christine and his stepfather, David Cheers, arrived at Scripps Memorial Hospital in La Jolla, California, the next morning. Machines were keeping him alive, and the doctors told Christine that what she was seeing was likely his future—that her scuba-diving, world-traveling, overachiever of a son was never going to wake up. He would never breathe on his own.

He would never smile at her again. It was time for Christine to honor the spirit of a man who had switched his major from commerce engineering to premed because he wanted to help people. It was time to make her very worst day some stranger's best one.

PREVIOUS SPREAD: JOHN FRANCIS PETERS (LEFT), CHARLOTTE KESL (RIGHT)







Mike setting out on his cross-country journey

JOHN FRANCIS PETERS

Christine instructed the hospital to begin the organ donation process. These few words, as hard as they were to say, would soon ripple outward, allowing a man to return to work, a veteran to get his health back, and an ailing cyclist to get back on his bike.

**Mike Cohen was just 18** when he'd been diagnosed with an aggressive form of leukemia in 2004. Doctors warned him that the treatment protocol could cause lasting damage to his heart. At the time, surviving cancer seemed like the more pressing concern. He took

his treatment seriously, doing the radiation and chemo and even moving from New York to San Diego for his last year of chemo because his oncologist felt that mild weather would be easier on his body. The risk had paid off—two years after his diagnosis, he was cancer-free. And the move had been a good fit too. As soon as he was healthy enough to get outside, he was hiking or riding his bike. A casual cyclist as a kid, Mike became bike-obsessed.

To celebrate his sixth year without cancer, Mike decided to ride his bike cross-country to New York. From the get-go, it was a grind. Somewhere in eastern Arizona, Mike was so over it he nearly threw his bike into oncoming traffic.

What he didn't know during that ride was that his heart was beginning to fail, and in the years that followed, his health continued to deteriorate. Even on days he didn't ride his bike, he always felt tired. Then one evening in 2017, he started having chest pains.

His brother, Dan Cohen, rushed him to the emergency room, where doctors discovered a golf-ball-sized clot lodged in his left ventricle. They tried blood thinners, but the clot wouldn't budge. Soon hospital staff were preparing him for open-heart surgery to install a left ventricular assist device (LVAD), which would do the pumping that his heart couldn't accomplish.

The implanted LVAD required constant access to an electrical outlet, which meant Mike was literally

tethered to the indoors by a cord that ran out of his abdomen. Even with an emergency backup battery pack, "You couldn't go out in public because you couldn't trust that someone wouldn't knock into the cord," he says. His old active life seemed like a thousand lifetimes ago.

Doctors had told him the device could work for eight months or eight years. Six months later, though, Mike was back in Sulpizio Cardiovascular Center at UC San Diego Health with another clot. His heart was failing. He would need a new one.

Heart transplant priority lists are tricky. You have to be sick enough to truly need the new organ but not so sick you can't withstand the lengthy surgery or the immunosuppressant drugs heart transplant patients take

**"THE OLD HEART  
WAS LIKE A TWO.  
THIS HEART  
IS A TEN."**



for the life of the new organ. Mike fit those parameters and was at the top of the list. Now he just had to hope he survived waiting for a new heart.

On the plus side, Mike's blood work showed the clot had dissolved enough that he could safely go home. As he packed his bag on February 24, a nurse walked in. "I have good news and bad news," she said. Mike asked



**James Mazzuchelli loved adventure, serving in the Navy, and helping others.**

for the bad news first. “You’re not going home today,” she said. The good news? They’d found him a heart.

The next morning, Mike woke up in a hospital bed with a new heart beating in his chest. His energy seemed to improve immediately: He took his first steps around his hospital room just five days later and was walking the hallways shortly after. “The old heart was like a two. With the LVAD my energy was like a five,” he says. “This heart is a ten.”

After two weeks, he was sent home with instructions to report to cardiac rehab, where he was limited for the first few days to slow walking on a

treadmill. Across the room he spied a stationary bike. He knew he wasn’t ready yet, but it became a beacon. And two weeks later, with his doctor’s OK, he threw a leg over and soft-pedaled.

**Christine Cheers wasn’t leaving** the hospital until every last one of her son’s organs left the building.

She and David watched hospital employees carry coolers from the operating room: his left kidney and pancreas en route to a man in San Diego; his right kidney to a veteran at Walter Reed Medical Center. James’s liver headed to the Bay Area. His corneas went to the San Diego eye bank. Tissue and bone went to nearby tissue and bone banks. All that was left was his heart.

“That was the one I cared about most,” Christine says. As a serviceman and physician, James embodied the ideals of bravery and altruism. “James had such an amazing heart,” she says.

When a hospital representative delivered the news that James’s heart was headed out of the hospital, David ran into the hallway. He could see the image of someone holding a cooler reflected in a curved safety mirror. David yelled for Christine. The pair watched through the mirror as James’s heart left the building.

In the ensuing weeks, Christine descended into a grief so deep that climbing out seemed impossible. Her lone consolation, she knew, would be to find out that James’s organs had helped people. That the recipients

were doing all right. So she wrote each recipient, at least the four she knew of, a letter.

The one part Christine wanted to get right was the part about what organ donation had meant to her son. How glad he would be that his heart and kidneys and tissue were helping others. She didn't want the recipients to feel guilty about the heft and gravitas of the gift they'd gotten. On March 19, Christine put the final copies of her letters in the mail.

**Two months after** his surgery, Mike Cohen got a call from the organization that had coordinated the transplant. They had a letter for him. When he got it, he unfolded the typewritten pages and took a breath.

Christine described her son's love for serving his country and the fact that he considered everyone a friend and never judged a soul. He was selfless, she wrote, had a quirky sense of humor, and was a brilliant and gifted doctor. She described his love for scuba diving, snowboarding, and motorcycles. His slogan: "Go big or go home."

As he read Christine's letter, Mike began to understand just how special his new heart was. Eager to know more about James, Mike googled him. Save for the fact that Mike shaved his



head and sported a beard—James had had a full head of hair and was clean-shaven—they had a lot in common. They were both athletic and practically the same age. James was 32 when he died, while Mike, coincidentally, had turned 33 on the very day of James's accident.

Another thing he learned about James: He was buried in Jacksonville.

Back in rehab, Mike had hatched a plan to take another cross-country trip as soon as his doctor gave him the OK. The end point of that ride now came into focus. He wanted to pay his respects in person. It seemed fitting to make the journey by bike—to show just how transformative

COURTESY MIKE COHEN



**Left: Mike recovering from the operation.**

**Right: Mike and Seton (left) on the road beside the RV that trailed them.**

letter subtly hinted that the thank-you note was all the contact he wished to have.

Mike's letter was a balm for a wound that Christine felt would never heal. And so began the e-mails and texts, which proved comforting to her. She even began avidly following Mike's Instagram posts. "Knowing he was doing well really helped," she says.

By September 2018, Mike was back to riding and

the heart was. Go big or go home.

He took his time before responding to Christine: a week to process her letter and another week to compose his own. He wanted to get the tone just right, to accurately express how grateful he was for James's heart and how he was determined to keep it beating for years to come. He communicated his desire to stay in touch with James's family, if that's what they wanted.

Of the four letters Christine had sent, she got a response from two. The first was from the man who got James's kidney and pancreas. He thanked her, saying how the organs had changed his life—that he could go back to work and provide for his family. But his

building up his mileage. His physicians were impressed by his progress and his cautious approach, so much so that they ultimately gave their blessing for the cross-country ride he was planning for the following year.

The trip would be slow in order to not overstress his heart and immune system: four hours of riding a day max, keeping his heart under 150 beats per minute—doctor's orders.

Mike recruited Dan (who had become certified as a medical assistant so he could care for Mike after his first open-heart surgery) to tag along in an RV as support. Then Mike asked his friend Seton Edgerton to ride with him. They figured the trip from the



**“As cliché as it sounds, I wanted her to know that James’s heart was in a safe place,” says Mike, shown here with Christine.**

cardiac ward at UCSD to James’s grave, roughly 2,300 miles, would take just under two months with them biking most of the way and riding in the RV only on the busiest highways.

When Mike announced on social media that he was riding to his donor’s grave site, the Cheers family decided they would meet him there.

**It was day one** of what would end up being for Mike a 1,426-mile journey on his bike, and, as with his first cross-country trip, his heart was not cooperating. Perhaps he hadn’t eaten enough or hydrated properly. Whatever the cause, it didn’t really matter. What mattered was that he had to keep his heart rate under 150 beats per minute and the steep Cuyamaca Mountains east of San Diego were sending it sky-high.

Seton had rigged Mike’s heart rate monitor so he could see the read-out on the computer attached to his bike’s handlebars as they rode. He watched helplessly as the beats-per-minute number shot up. Both men were thinking to themselves: This is just the first day. Should we even be attempting this?

But on they rode. Across Arizona and then on to Texas, Mike and Seton rolled along in matching blue jerseys, the struggles of that first arduous day behind them as Mike’s heart rate settled down. Somewhere in the desert, they took a wrong turn and ended up slogging through deep sand. Somewhere in Texas Hill Country, they got barbecue they still talk about. In the first 1,000 miles, they got a combined 24 flat tires.

From Florida, Christine and David followed along on social media, worrying about traffic and dogs and all the things that can befall a rider in the middle of nowhere. A few times, when Mike and Seton couldn’t find roads suitable for riding, they detoured onto an interstate, causing Christine to wince at the thought of semis whizzing by those boys—and that heart. If it had been her son, she might call him and dress him down. But Mike wasn’t her son; he was a stranger with her son’s heart.

On November 20, 2019, Mike and Seton left the Flamingo Lake RV park in Jacksonville and pedaled the last dozen miles of their trip. All Mike could

think about was what a gift it was to be healthy. He'd doubted his body for so long, but now he finally felt that there could be a normal life ahead.

As he got closer to the cemetery, Mike grew nervous, unsure what kind of emotions may be attached to meeting strangers who had already come to mean so much to him. "It's just such an intense moment to share with someone I've never met," he says.

**"KNOWING MIKE WAS DOING WELL REALLY HELPED," SAYS CHRISTINE.**



Christine and David Cheers got to the grave site early. They wanted some time alone with their son before Mike arrived. It was a perfect Florida autumn day: sunny with a high of 72. They heard the whir of hubs as Mike and Seton coasted into the cemetery and rode toward the couple at James's grave.

Mike unclipped from his pedals, handed his bike to Seton, and walked straight to Christine. At a loss for words, he managed a quiet "Hi."

In that moment, Christine felt a deep sense of calm, as if she'd known Mike her entire life. They folded into a deep hug. Then came the tears. They weren't the deep weeping tears of grief. They were the tears of relief from a mother who knew she'd done right by someone she loved and from a grateful man who'd been accepted, or at least forgiven, by the family whose worst day was his best.

The two released and together walked the few steps to James's headstone. Mike squatted down and took a deep breath, feeling the strong pulse of James's heart in his chest. Silently he told James how thankful he was for his sacrifice and how sorry he was they'd never get to be friends. He promised to take care of his heart.

Someone ran back to the RV to grab the stethoscope from Dan's medical kit. Christine slid the cold metal head underneath Mike's blue jersey and listened. She shifted the instrument up and then down and a little to the left.

And there it was, loud and clear. The best part of her son, still very much alive. **R**

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## Going for Gold, He Wound Up with Porcelain

When German luger David Möeller chomped down on his silver medal at the 2010 Winter Games in Vancouver, he chipped his front tooth.

Lucky for him, his mom is a dentist.

MENTALFLOSS.COM



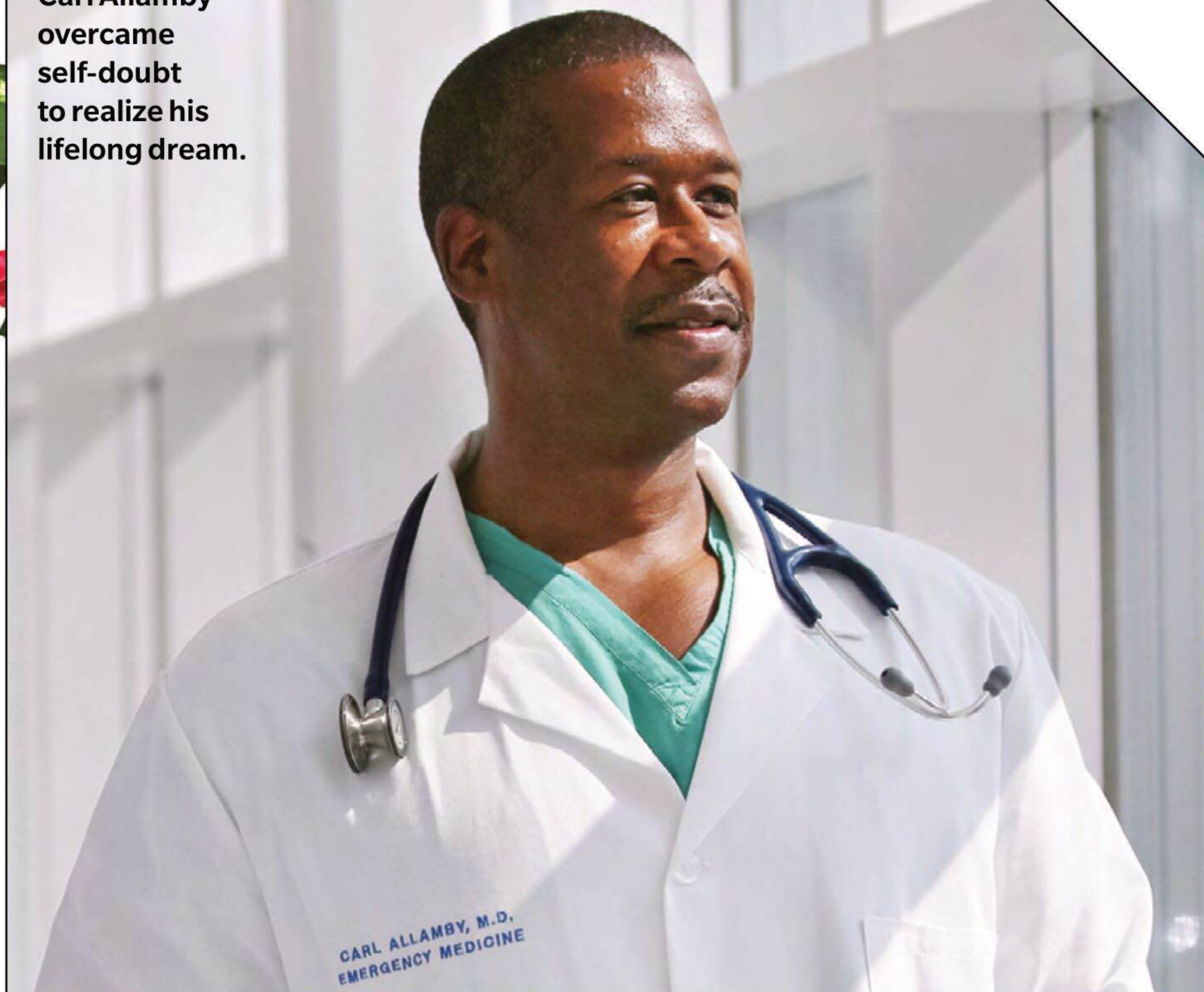




# Starting a New Chapter

*Some people don't  
find their true direction  
in life until they  
are halfway through it*

Carl Allamby  
overcame  
self-doubt  
to realize his  
lifelong dream.



# From Car Doc to People Doc

—  
BY *Andy Simmons*

**C**ARL ALLAMBY HAD A PROBLEM. It was his auto-repair business. He'd started it at the tender age of 19, working alone out of a rented bay in a friend's garage. Over the

years it had grown into two shops with 11 employees, but Allamby had become antsy, yearning for something more. At first, he thought it must have to do with growing his business even

PREVIOUS SPREAD: ANNA KNOTT. THIS PAGE: GUS CHAN

further. So at the age of 34, the Beachwood, Ohio, resident decided to go for his bachelor's degree in business management.

There was a wrinkle, however: After taking classes part-time over the next five years, Allamby was told he had to take biology to get his degree. The last biology class he had taken was in ninth grade. What do I need to take biology for, thought Allamby.

Turns out, it was the best thing to have happened. Biology class rekindled a childhood dream that he had tucked away somewhere deep within himself. "After the first day, I remembered this feeling of wanting to be a doctor back when I was younger," Allamby says. "I kind of lost that dream somewhere through high school and through life. When you're young, you feel you can be anything, and then the world teaches you much differently."

Born in East Cleveland, Ohio, Allamby and his five siblings were raised by their stay-at-home mother and a father who sold home goods door-to-door. "As you can imagine, that didn't pay so well," Allamby says.

Growing up in a poor African American neighborhood, he faced low expectations and numerous barriers to pursuing his dream. His school didn't offer the advanced science classes that might have led him on a premed path. Even if it had, doing well in school could prove dangerous. "You could get into a lot of trouble just for being the class nerd," Allamby

says. "There were often times you wouldn't carry your books home due to the threat of being jumped." So he set aside thoughts of becoming a doctor in favor of a more realistic career path—fixing cars.

But a different Carl Allamby walked into that biology class at age 39. The world may have knocked him around once or twice, but it hadn't flattened him. He was ready to live his dream. With the support of his wife and family, he soon decided to skip business

## **"I REMEMBERED THIS FEELING OF WANTING TO BE A DOCTOR WHEN I WAS YOUNGER."**

school in favor of the science classes he'd need for a second career as a health-care worker. Becoming a doctor when he would be approaching the age of 50 was clearly insane. He would instead become a nurse, a physician assistant, or a physical therapist like his wife, he reasoned.

But Allamby's chemistry professor at Cleveland State University stopped him after class one day. "Carl," he said, "you're like the oldest guy here. What's your end game?"

Allamby went through the spiel he'd developed about how he'd like to become a doctor but it would be more practical to aim lower.

“Why *not* a doctor?” the professor asked. “You have a great intuition for the work. You will go a long way.”

He was right. Allamby aced all his courses. “It took someone standing

## “HOW MANY PEOPLE CAN HAVE SO MUCH STIMULATION AT SUCH A LATE STAGE IN LIFE?”



on the outside to tell me what I didn't even see in myself,” he says.

And so in 2015, Allamby cut ties with his past. He auctioned off his two

shops and everything that was in them. “I sold my whole life in a matter of hours,” he says. “It was liberating.” Then he started at Northeast Ohio Medical University.

In 2019, at the age of 47, Carl Allamby became Carl Allamby, MD. He took a job in emergency medicine at Cleveland Clinic Akron General. Now that Allamby is a second-year resident, his fellow residents never let him forget that he is the old man in the room. “Some of my jokes from the '80s don't go over so well,” he says, laughing.

It's a small price to pay for the life he now gets to lead. “How many people can do something so brand-

new and have so much stimulation and responsibility at such a late stage in their life?” he says. “My kids look up to me, my community looks up to me. I fit so many demographics that say you shouldn't be a doctor. Whether it's because of my age, my race, my upbringing, my past career—these are all good reasons why I shouldn't be here. And yet, here I am.”



Allamby graduating from medical school. “My new life feels like the life that I've lived for so long,” he says. “It just so happens that instead of fixing cars, I'm fixing people.”



Bobbie Floyd  
(center, in pink)  
surrounded  
by her eight  
children



# The Family That Grew from Grief

BY *Emily Goodman*

**O**N OCTOBER 19, 2016, 41-YEAR-OLD Bobbie Floyd went to Penn's Landing in Philadelphia and released dozens of balloons. The occasion was more somber than celebratory; she was honoring her late husband on the two-year anniversary of his death. As she and her two sons,

ages 8 and 13, watched the colorful balls float up to the heavens, they thought of the missing member of their family and of the motorcycle accident that had taken him away from them.

Later that same day, Floyd's phone rang. It was a social worker asking whether she'd be willing to foster two

sisters, ages 7 and 11. Floyd and her husband had talked about adding to their family, a dream she had initially thought had gone with him. But about a year later, she had reconsidered and signed up to become a foster mother. "I was lonely," she says. "And fostering is not adopting. That was my mentality. I'm just fostering these kids, loving them and then giving them back." And now, at last, the call had come.

## WHEN ONE OF THE THREE GIRLS ASKED THAT SHE ADOPT THEM, FLOYD COULDN'T SAY NO.

Floyd was happy to take in both girls, but when she opened her door to greet them, there were three children, not two. The girls' brother, Lysander, 9, also needed a foster family. Floyd agreed to take him in as well. Siblings often get separated in the foster care system, and she wanted to prevent that, even if she had only three bedrooms.

Per her fostering agreement, Floyd took the kids every three months to family court in case their biological parents were ready to take them back. Each time, the judge extended the foster agreement for another three months. Meanwhile, the longer the kids stayed with Floyd, the more they grew to trust her. "They wrote notes saying that they wanted to stay

here," she says. Months turned into a year. When Floyd learned that "her" three kids had three more siblings (a sister and two brothers) in the foster system, she decided to make room for them. "We started adding bunk beds and making lofts," she says. For some of the siblings, Floyd's house was their ninth foster home. "I just kept seeing this family getting tossed around in the system," she says. "So I figured, why not take them all?" When Serenity, one of the three girls, asked that she officially adopt them, Floyd couldn't say no. Her two biological sons were on board.

Last year, the adoption became official for four of the six kids, and it's almost complete for the other two. Then Floyd will be the mother of eight, ages 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, and 17. "We're like a well-oiled machine," she says. "In the kitchen, we're sliding and grooving. We glide in and out of bathrooms. We make it work."

Just a few years ago, Floyd was a lonely widowed mother of two. She can't help but think that her late husband had a hand in her life's transformation, especially since the phone call from the social worker came on the anniversary of his death. "I feel like he was saying, 'Here, take these kids. Get busy. Stop crying.' And I *was* busy, but I was still crying. Then he was like, 'Here's three more kids. Take them.' Now I have no time to cry, so I just laugh and play and yell all day. Then I wake up and do it again." **R**

# Readers Share Their Second-Act Stories

## **I'm with the Band Now**

My 50th birthday made me stop and examine my life. With no great accomplishments behind me other than raising a wonderful son and showing up for work each day, I needed a new life adventure, one that would be creative and bring me joy. So I told my husband I was going to start a rock band. I got a bass guitar and, after some lessons, advertised for other musicians to join me. Nineteen years later, our band, Friends in Sound, still performs in venues all over New York City. My band has made my life complete.

—Nancy Lenart

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

## **I Confronted My Addiction**

My wife and I are in our second marriage—with each other. On Friday, September 29, 2017, I came home from work to discover that my wife had left me. I never saw it coming. As I would soon realize, I was the problem in our marriage. That acknowledgment was my first step toward admitting I had an Internet pornography addiction. If I wanted to save our relationship, I pretty much had to change everything

about myself. The first step was to seek counseling.

Today, I have over three years of being porn-free. My wife and I were reunited after a two-month separation, but there was still a long road of reparations ahead. Our first marriage had to be burned down to the foundation. There are no more lies or secrets between us, just the bold, honest truth, even if it hurts. Our second marriage is characterized by an incredible intimacy that did not exist before.

—James Devine

GLENDALE, ARIZONA

## **The Children Made Me an Author**

In my 20s, I moved into a trailer park after fleeing an abusive, childless marriage. As I cleaned my trailer and spruced up the landscape, children kept stopping by, curious about the newcomer. They clearly craved attention, not to mention shoes, warm clothes, and reading material. I couldn't fulfill all their needs, but I did buy an old bookcase and some used children's books and set up a lending library in my home. On cold afternoons, kids stopped by for homemade bread and glasses of milk, which they enjoyed while coloring,

reading books, and asking questions about school, God, prison—things that had an impact on their daily lives.

Those precious days helped my heart heal and allowed me to eventually find love without abuse and have children of my own. In January 2021, my ninth novel, *Night Bird Calling*, was released from Tyndale House Publishers. It's about a woman who runs away from an abusive marriage and responds to an 11-year-old girl's plea to open a community library in her new home. Gee, I wonder how I came up with that idea.

—Cathy Gohlke  
LEESBURG, VIRGINIA

### **My Second Act Was a Lifesaver**

How many people can say that their second chapter literally saved their life? After 20 years in the health-care field, I left the corporate world to become a special education teacher. At the required physical, the doctor mentioned that I had a lump on my thyroid. That led me to a surgeon who, upon examining me, noticed a birthmark on my neck that concerned him. Although I'd had it since childhood, he decided that it needed to be removed. The birthmark turned out to be a malignant melanoma.

This is my 15th year teaching, and every day I am grateful for my second act.

—Stacey Zegas  
LAWRENCEVILLE, NEW JERSEY

### **Goodbye to Bad Choices**

My first act was a tragedy. In my youth, teachers, peers, and family would describe me as intelligent and kind. Unfortunately, I had a knack for making poor decisions, resulting in my being arrested for robbery at 17. Four years later, I was released, only to be arrested for robbery again when I was 22. This time, I was sentenced to 11 years. It took me a few years behind bars, but at age 26, I realized what I had lost—time with my loved ones—and I regretted the pain I'd caused them. I needed to change. Fortunately, I still had an insatiable hunger for knowledge. I became certified in asbestos abatement, learned the basics of working in a machine shop, and enrolled in college through the Cornell University Education Program. Today, I live to learn. I'm still incarcerated, but, at 30, I've developed a mind-set that will not allow me to fail myself or the people I love.

—Jon Nikiteas  
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK



## **Paging Julia Child**

**I picked a heck of a time to have not learned how to cook for the past 29 years.**

 @ALYSSALIMP



# LAUGH LINES

**I'm afraid** of being murdered only because they would record my stomach contents.  
—[@elunatyk](#)

Saw some idiot at the gym put a water bottle in the Pringles holder on the treadmill.  
—[@MIKhanX](#)

**Fries should be** offered more often, like, Yes, your mortgage was approved. Would you like fries with that?  
—[@SentenceReduced](#)

**Doctor's orders** say 30 crunches a day... That's an awful lot of chocolate, but I guess I can give it a shot.  
—[@wx388](#)



**Once heard** a guy climbed Everest "because it was there" and just feel like the reason for one of the most strenuous feats in existence should be different than the reason I ate an entire gallon of ice cream.  
—[@TheAndrewNadeau](#)

**If I eat** healthy today, then I can have one piece of candy as a reward. If I eat unhealthy, I can have the whole bag.  
—[@gigglegirlnoel](#)

## In the Junk Food Folder

NANTONOV/GETTY IMAGES, ILLUSTRATION BY JENNIFER KLEIN





DRAMA IN REAL LIFE

# A GRIZZLY ENCOUNTER

On a trail near a mountain named for his grandfather, a lone hiker crosses paths with a bear three times his size—and with one enormous appetite

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BY *Omar Mouallem*

ILLUSTRATION BY *Ryan Garcia*



**EVER SINCE HE WAS A KID** growing up on Quadra Island in western Canada, Colin Dowler had pushed himself to do more, go faster, and scale bigger heights, despite having a small physique and a nagging congenital knee disease. When he skied, he raced the double-black diamonds. When he rode his mountain bike, it was on the bumpiest terrain. If he wasn't a little scared doing something, he didn't think he was doing it right. Jenifer Dowler, his wife of 16 years, often found herself telling him to slow down.

To celebrate his 45th birthday in July 2019, Colin took a week off from his job as manager at a health-care facility in Campbell River, a small town on Vancouver Island's east coast, where he lived with Jenifer and their youngest daughter, Sadie. He planned to spend two days on his own, scouting a route he planned to use later to

summit Mount Doogie Dowler with his older brother, Paul. The peak, which rises to about 6,500 feet in the Coast Mountains of southwest British Columbia, was named after Colin's late grandfather. It had always been a point of pride for their family that Grandpa Doogie, a prominent community member who once owned the Heriot Bay Store, a local hub, was immortalized in nature. But none of the Dowlers had ever climbed to its summit. Colin had tried once in his 20s and made it within a thousand feet of the peak before getting rained out.

Jenifer didn't like the sound of her husband's latest plan. She was used to Colin going on solo adventures, but this time he'd be boating to an obscure bay, biking an unpopulated road, hiking through grizzly country, and camping overnight alone. There was too much room for disaster.

"If I'm not home by eight o'clock Monday evening, you should start to worry," he said.

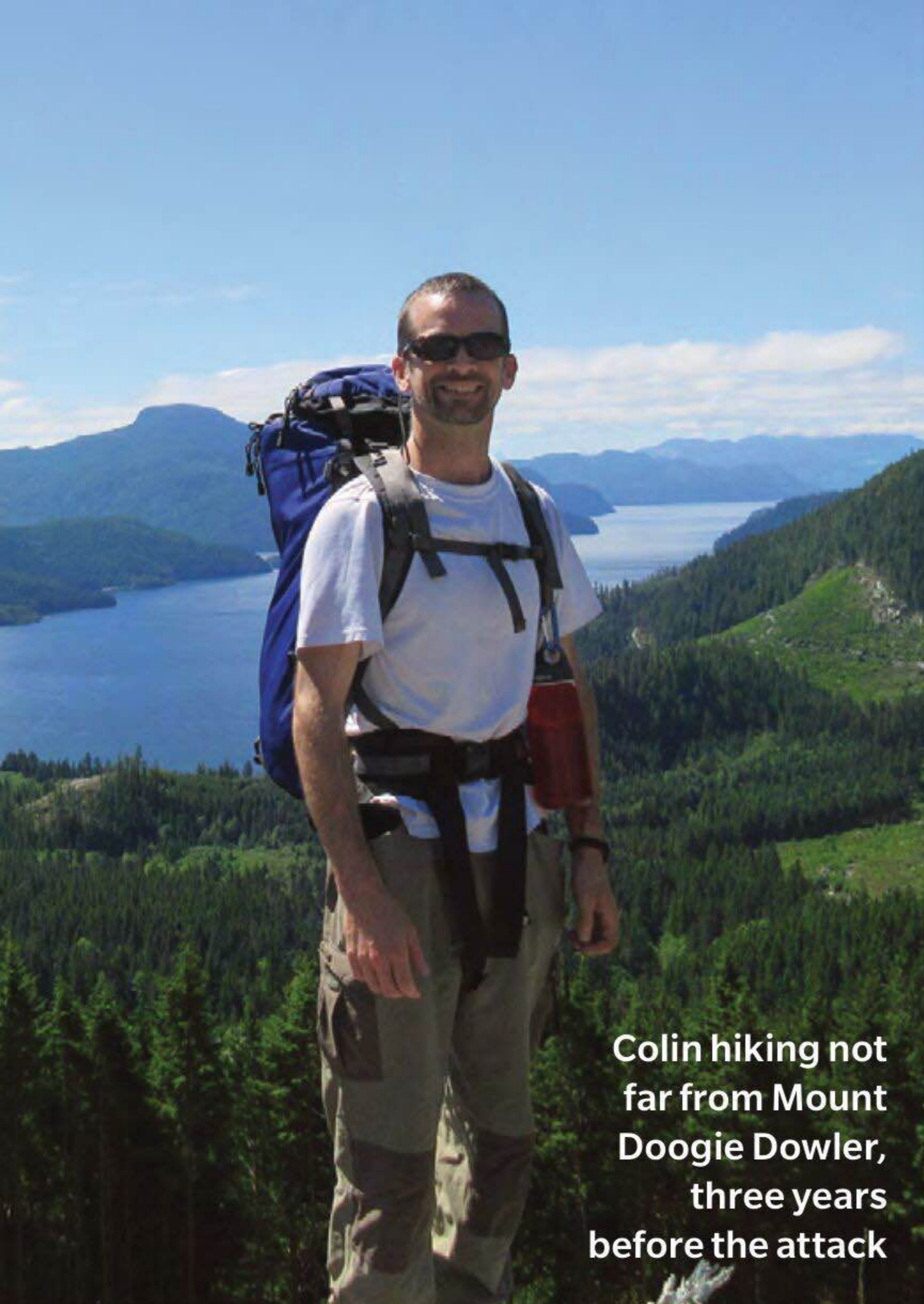
Jenifer laughed. It was practically her husband's motto.

Technically, he said, she'd have to wait until the morning if she wanted search and rescue to take his disappearance seriously.

"So," she said, "I should just sit all night worrying until I can call authorities and say my husband is missing."

He shrugged. Pretty much.

The night before his journey, Colin packed sparingly. He ditched his usual tent to experiment with a bivy



Colin hiking not far from Mount Doogie Dowler, three years before the attack

bag—a person-sized portable shelter. He filled the remaining pockets of his bag with a handheld GPS, hiking poles, his homemade venison pepperoni, and a few other essentials. Instead of his usual Swiss Army knife, he took a three-inch stainless steel pocketknife given to him by his dad.

**JENIFER AND SADIE** were still in bed when Colin left at 7 a.m., his bike and boat in tow.

Colin had intended to stop at a tackle shop for bear spray, but the gorgeous weather meant the parking spots at the city's boat launch would fill up fast. So as he added up the minutes, he drove past the store, deciding

the small likelihood of a bear attack wasn't worth delaying his mission. He recognized he couldn't completely rule out the possibility, though. He'd had two grizzly sightings and countless black bear encounters in the area in the past, but he'd always escaped unscathed.

Colin pulled into the Campbell River port and quickly set off in his motorboat. More than an hour later, he arrived at Ramsay Arm, an inlet on the mainland, and found a spot to tie the vessel near a logging camp.

As a former worker in the logging industry, Colin knew it was good practice to check in at the mess hall. "Is there anything you need?" Vito Giannandrea, the camp cook, asked him.

"Bear spray," said Colin.

After finding a can, Giannandrea offered him a ride. They trucked along an overgrown logging road until the forest got too thick. As Colin leaned his mountain bike against a bush to retrieve on the way back, Giannandrea took a picture of him with his phone. "So we have something to put on the milk cartons if you don't come home," he joked.

With Giannandrea's bear spray in one pocket and the knife from his dad in the other, Colin started hiking. After traversing steep terrain and thick forest for about an hour, he started marking his trail with blue ribbons. He made lots of noise to ward off any curious creatures. Near the end of the

day, he realized the canister of bear spray was gone. It must have slipped out of his pocket when he rested during a navigation stop.

Colin didn't want to risk getting caught in the dark looking for the spray. Instead, he spent an hour searching for a place to camp, eventually settling on a flat, dry spot with branches low enough to set up his bivy bag. He strung his food and clothes high up in a nearby tree and crawled into the bivy by 9:30 p.m., satisfied with what he'd accomplished that day. With his scouting done, he would return home after a night's sleep.

**THE NEXT MORNING,** Colin tried without luck to locate the spray on his way down the mountain. He gave up by the time he recovered his bike, and as he pedaled, he daydreamed about getting home early to enjoy some family time and a beer or two.

As he passed a marker showing four miles to the logging camp, he came around a bend and suddenly hit his brakes—a mangy grizzly stood in the middle of the narrow road, a hundred feet away. Colin paused on his bike, calculating his chances of turning around for a quick escape. The bear could easily tackle him by the time he picked up speed. He opted to try to scare the bear away. “Hey, bear,” he bellowed.

It didn't work. The animal looked from him to the bush, back and forth,

and then began heading in his direction. Colin flung his backpack off his shoulders, snatched a hiking pole, and extended it in front of him. As the bear approached, Colin started to make out its features. About five years old and nine feet from tail to snout, it was nearly three times Colin's body weight—and though it showed no signs of aggression, its curiosity was piqued.

The bear walked along the opposite side of the road, coming closer and closer. The gap between them closed to 30 feet. Colin carefully stepped off his bike, which seemed to startle the animal. It shuddered from its paws up to its rump and then continued to stalk nearer. Colin pivoted his bike, shielding himself with it. The bear passed by. Then, suddenly, it stopped, turned, and looked right at him.

Colin calmly raised the hiking pole and pushed it against the bear's big forehead, right between the eyes. This seemed to hold the bear in place, until the rubber tip rolled off his muzzle. Before Colin could try again, the bear chomped on the pole. “Oh, come on now, we don't need to do this,” he said, careful not to react aggressively with the animal so close. “I'm your friend.”

Colin let the pole drop. He tossed his backpack beside the bear, hoping the pepperoni scent would entice it away. The bear took one sniff and then turned back with his paw in the air and delivered a light swat

## ***THE BEAR SHUDDERED FROM ITS PAWS UP TO ITS RUMP AND THEN CONTINUED TO STALK NEARER.***

that Colin blocked with his bike. He dodged a second, heavier swat, and another and another, each stronger than the last.

When the bear raised another threatening paw high in the air, Colin threw the bike at it, but the creature barely stumbled. Instead, it lunged forward and snatched Colin up in its mouth with one swift chomp to his abdomen. Colin was flung sideways, draped across the bear's muzzle. The animal's canines sank deep as it carried him to the edge of the road. Colin felt no pain, just warmth. He didn't resist, thinking only that if it carried him into the bush, he would be too incapacitated to get back to the road and would die before anyone found him.

The grizzly placed him by a ditch at the side of the road and lifted its head for another bite. There was no roar, no growl, just huffing while it chewed Colin's flank. Colin tried to gouge its eyes, grabbing at the fur on its face and poking as hard as he could into the bear's left eye. Agitated, the bear swung him 180 degrees, hoisted itself high, and chewed into his upper leg. Over and over, the bear lifted his head and bit into him.

Thoughts of leaving behind his family, of missing every part of his daughters' lives, raced through Colin's mind. He regretted that he'd put himself in such a dangerous position—and that he'd lost the bear spray.

As he tried to pry the animal's jaws open, saliva trailed off its yellow teeth. It chomped through his hand. "Stop!" he screamed. "Why? Stop!" It didn't make sense. He knew that grizzlies typically attack only briefly and then leave humans alone. When would this end?

The bear moved on to taste his other leg. As he heard the sound of his femur grating in its teeth, Colin remembered the knife in his pocket. He reached for it just as the grizzly hit a nerve. Colin arched and yelped.

OK, he thought, I'll play dead.

But then the bear hit another leg nerve, and Colin screamed even louder. I can't play dead while I'm screaming; I have to get the knife, he said to himself.

The weight of the grizzly's chest was on his stomach, pinning his arms to his left side, opposite the knife. Unable to feel his right arm, Colin wiggled his left hand between their



Colin being attended to by paramedics at the logging camp (left) and recovering in the hospital



bodies and into his pocket. He opened the blade with both hands and inadvertently sliced the bear's chest as he pulled his left arm out.

Colin stabbed the bear's neck as fast and hard as he could. Blood gushed from the wound. Even the grizzly seemed surprised.

"Now you're bleeding, too, bear," said Colin.

The bear stepped off him and walked slowly away, trailing blood on the gravel. As it disappeared into the forest, Colin assessed the damage to his body. His sides and legs were riddled with cavities. A femoral artery wound drenched his lower half

in blood. Colin cut his left shirt sleeve with his knife and tied it around his left leg. Once it was tightly knotted, he flopped onto his backside, scooted to his bike, pulled himself onto it, and concentrated on resting his feet on the pedals. He collapsed off the bike after one push.

Colin fought to remount and take off, keeping a tight grip on his knife. He felt his seat warming as blood from his wounds flowed down his back. Focusing on his breathing, he felt his odds improve.

He pushed ahead for 30 minutes until the road sloped toward the logging camp. He bounced painfully over



the bumps all the way to the mess hall railing and then fell on his side.

Colin flung himself onto the landing, legs flopping on the stairs. "Help! Call a helicopter. I've been mauled by a grizzly," he yelled through a screen door. Five men, including Giannandrea, found Colin streaked with blood and dirt, smelling like an animal.

They kept him talking for 40 minutes until a medevac finally arrived. He received two units of blood at the camp and was eventually airlifted to Vancouver General Hospital. His younger brother, his cousin, and his sister were already waiting for him there. But Jenifer, herself on a camping trip, was unreachable.

**IT WAS EVENING** when Jenifer returned home. She and Sadie had gone the day without reception and hadn't turned their phones back on. "Look, it's almost eight o'clock," said Jenifer, driving into their neighborhood. "It's almost time to start worrying."

Their house came into view, and Jenifer immediately noticed her brother-in-law's truck in the driveway

instead of Colin's. She saw him pacing outside on a call.

He hurried over. "I don't want you to panic," he said. "He's stable, but Colin was attacked by a grizzly bear."

At first, Jenifer thought it had to be a joke and expected her husband to jump out from behind a tree.

It was too late for her to catch the last ferry to the mainland. She finally arrived at the hospital late the next morning, just as Colin woke up from six and a half hours of surgery. Doctors had had to make an eight-inch incision to repair an artery wound and treat more than 50 gashes and bite wounds. In all, Colin needed close to 200 staples and stitches. He was groggy, equally confused by the sight of his family and all his bandaged limbs.

The news was as good as it could be. The grizzly's teeth had mostly bounced off his hips and ribs. Had Colin been any larger, there would have been more room for the bear to sink its teeth into his internal organs.

In the end, the wiry physique he'd tried to defy all his life had saved him. **R**

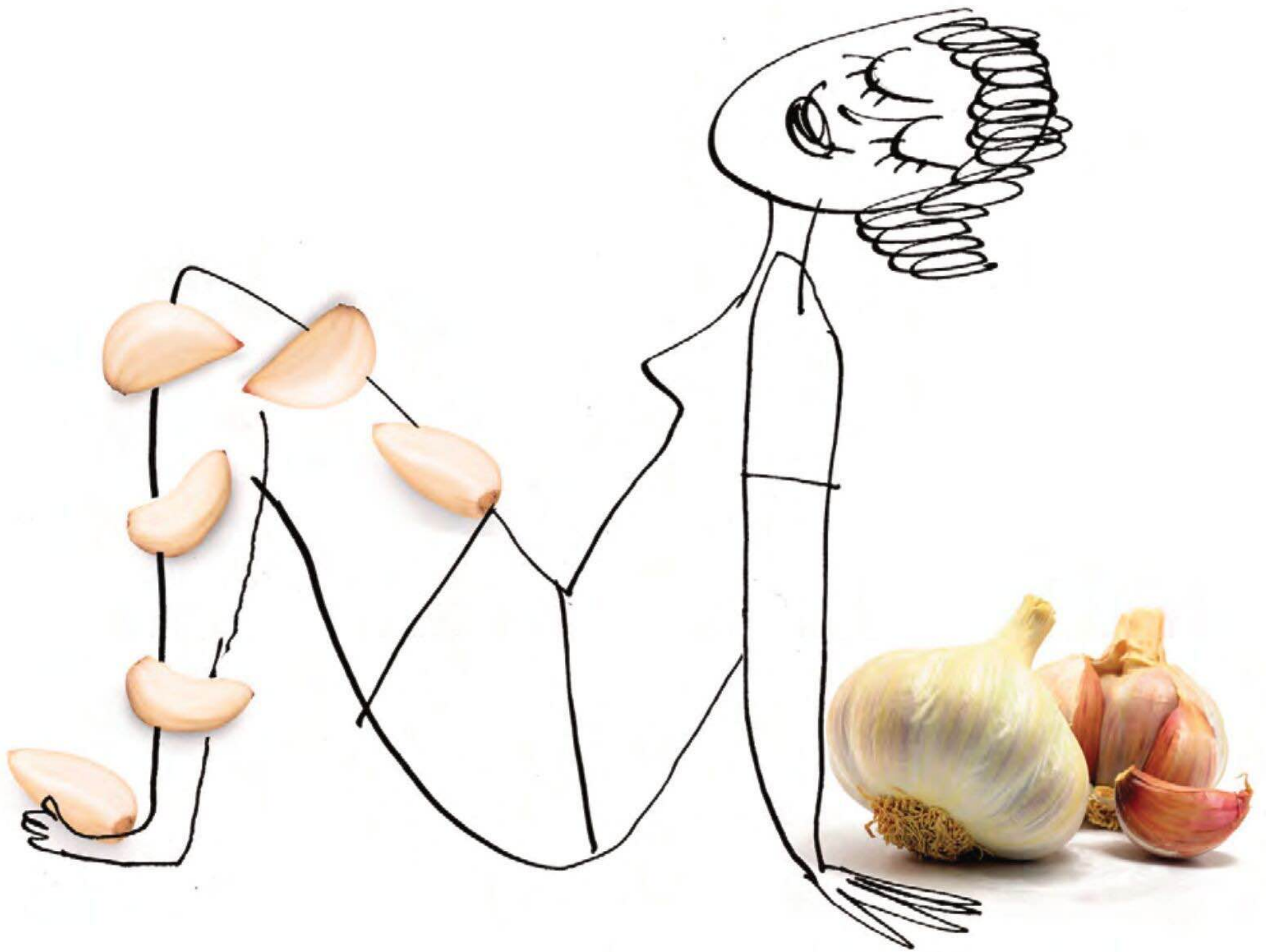


### Here, Quaidy, Quaidy

Dennis Quaid, the actor, now shares a home with Dennis Quaid, the cat. When the performer learned last year that his namesake, a six-year-old black cat, was awaiting a new family at the Lynchburg (Virginia) Humane Society, he reached out about adoption. "I had to," said the actor.

"I'm out to save all the Dennis Quaid's of the world."

PEOPLE.COM



# ¡FANTÁSTICO! Top Folk Remedies from Around the World

*We asked Reader's Digest editors at our international editions to share their popular home health treatments. Here are the ones that check out with scientific research.*



## 1 PORTUGAL

### Garlic for Warts, Corns, and Calluses

In Portugal, garlic isn't just for flavoring food. Many people use it to get rid of corns and calluses (the thickening and hardening of skin at pressure points on the hands and feet) and warts (the small growths caused by the human papillomavirus, or HPV, that can occur anywhere on the body). In fact, research from 2005 published in the *International Journal of Dermatology* showed that all warts treated with garlic extract disappeared within two weeks, and corns disappeared for 80 percent of subjects after three weeks. Garlic capsules could also provide some overall antibiotic protection.

**Evidence It Works:** The main component of garlic, allicin, is said to have topical antibacterial effects. But be careful not to allow raw garlic to touch healthy skin for prolonged periods, as it can cause burning and irritation.

## 2 FRANCE

### Vinegar to Aid Digestion

French folklore has it that during a plague in the 17th century, a gang of four thieves would rob corpses yet never catch the plague themselves. Supposedly, rubbing a concoction of vinegar and herbs (including garlic, rosemary, sage, cinnamon, mint, camphor, and more) on their heads and hands protected them. Today, the French *vinaigre des*

*quatre voleurs* ("four thieves' vinegar") has many uses, including as a type 2 diabetes treatment and an appetite suppressant.

**Evidence It Works:** Though more research is needed, studies have shown that vinegar can affect blood sugar levels by delaying the rate at which the stomach empties, which reduces the blood sugar spike after a meal. But if you have type 2 diabetes, talk to your doctor first, as the vinegar could drop your blood sugar too low.

Vinegar may also prevent overeating. A small Swedish study found that individuals who consumed vinegar with a meal reported feeling more satiated than those who didn't. However, it's best not to drink vinegar straight, as its acidity could damage tooth enamel. Instead, add one or two tablespoons to water or tea.

## 3 GERMANY

### Marigolds for Inflammation

Not only do Germans use marigolds (called calendula) as a topical treatment for insect bites, acne, and dry skin but they also have their own recipes for balms. Popular formulas include combining the flowers with warm pork fat, petroleum jelly, beeswax, or olive oil and allowing the mixture to steep for a day or more.

**Evidence It Works:** High levels of antioxidants in the dried petals help prevent infection and reduce cell damage caused by free radicals. For people with venous leg ulcers who



were treated with either calendula ointment or saline solution dressings, the marigold-infused treatment helped ulcers heal faster. Laboratory and animal research has shown that the flowers contain anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial components and that they heal wounds by helping form new blood vessels and tissue.

## 4 NETHERLANDS

### Licorice for Sore Throat

Licorice-based candies called *dropjes* are as Dutch as wooden shoes, but while few farmers still wear wooden shoes, everybody eats dropjes, especially in the winter. They come in all shades of brown and black and can be sweet or salty.

**Evidence It Works:** A 2013 randomized double-blind study of 236 people by the Medical University of Vienna found that patients who gargled with a licorice solution before being intubated for surgery had fewer sore throats afterward.

## 5 FINLAND

### Sauna for Circulation

Saunas are a way of life in Finland. In a country of 5.5 million people, there are an estimated 3.2 million saunas. Last year, UNESCO added Finnish saunas to its list of Intangible Cultural Heritage markers. Not bad for a 150-degree F (and higher!) room designed to make you sweat.

**Evidence It Works:** Finnish research published in *JAMA Internal Medicine* in 2015 showed that sitting in a sauna two to three times a week lowers the risk of dying from any cause by 24 percent. Another study showed that 15 minutes a day in a sauna five days a week may help ease mild depression.

Sauna newbies should start with five or ten minutes; 20 minutes is the maximum. If you have heart disease or high or low blood pressure, speak to your doctor about whether a sauna is safe.

## 6 SLOVENIA

### Saint-John's-Wort to Soothe Skin

Saint-John's-wort is a plant with yellow flowers that's native to Europe and other parts of the world. Slovenes mix it with olive oil to treat sunburn, insect bites, and bruises.

**Evidence It Works:** A 2010 Iranian randomized double-blind clinical trial of 144 women published in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* showed that those who had undergone cesarean sections and applied a Saint-John's-wort ointment three times a day for 16 days had improved wound healing and less pain and scarring than those in the placebo and control groups. Animal studies out of Turkey in the past few years have shown that the plant heals wounds and burns; rats treated topically with Saint-John's-wort four times a day experienced more rapid healing than those that weren't.

## 7 SPAIN

### Olive Oil to Soften Earwax

Spain produces more olive oil than any country in the world. Among its nonculinary uses, the Spanish (and others) warm it and use it to dissolve earwax.

**Evidence It Works:** A University of Southampton review of 26 clinical trials found that earwax softeners, including olive oil, are effective, and that side effects are rare. Nevertheless, it's recommended that you check with your doctor before attempting self-treatment of ear issues.

## 8 BRAZIL

### Marcela for Cough

Marcela (*Achyrocline satureioides*) is a plant in the daisy family. Brazilians steep it to make a bitter tea.

**Evidence It Works:** A review of several studies published in 2014 in the *Brazilian Journal of Pharmacognosy* found that marcela appears to be anti-spasmodic and helps relieve coughs.

## 9 & 10 MEXICO

### Arnica for Bruising; Aloe Vera for Burns

Arnica, from the sunflower family, is sometimes called a mountain daisy and is a popular anti-inflammatory in Mexico. For burns, Mexicans have long turned to aloe, or *sábila* in Spanish, which grows in the wild there.

**Evidence It Works:** A 2013 review of 174 people with hand arthritis found that arnica gel improved pain and

function in the hand as effectively as ibuprofen gel. As arnica can be poisonous, it should not be taken by mouth.

A review of four studies from Asia published in the journal *Burns* concluded that the gel inside aloe leaves can accelerate healing of minor burns several days faster than conventional medication.

## 11 MALAYSIA

### Papaya for Digestive Health

Tropical papayas are very popular in Southeast Asia—and so popular in Malaysia that they are an unofficial national fruit. They are also prized as an aid to digestion, for everything from an upset stomach to constipation to food poisoning.

**Evidence It Works:** A study from Obafemi Awolowo University in Nigeria published in the *Journal of Medicinal Food* found that papaya fights

intestinal parasites. When researchers gave a papaya seed preparation to children who tested positive for intestinal parasites, it was shown to have antimicrobial activity and treated parasitic infections without harmful side effects.

A double-blind placebo-controlled trial, published in the journal *Neuroendocrinology Letters* in 2013, showed that volunteers with digestive complaints such as bloating and constipation had significant improvements after ingesting a papaya pulp supplement. The fruit is also rich in vitamin C and high in water and fiber content, which regulates bowel activity.

## 12 NEW ZEALAND

### Manuka Honey for Almost Anything

For centuries, the Maori community of New Zealand has relied on the leaves and bark from the manuka

## HEALING STORIES FROM EDITORS

In addition to pinpointing popular remedies in their home countries, *RD* editors shared some of their memories about them.

**Luis Eduardo Pineda Rosales, Mexico City** “I played basketball when I was a kid, and sometimes my fingers would get painfully bruised. My mother would rub

them with arnica balm, and in a few days the bruising would be gone.”

**Tanara Vieira, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil** “When we were kids,

if we had a cough, my grandmother would whip one egg yolk with sugar and, when it had whitened, combine the mixture with a cup of marcela tea.



tree—which is native to New Zealand and sometimes called a tea tree—for its antibacterial and wound-healing properties. Today, Kiwis use manuka honey to boost their immune systems and for more specific ailments such as sore throats and general inflammation. Manuka’s curative properties have become so highly touted that there’s a thriving industry for fake manuka honey. (The genuine product is labeled UMF for Unique Manuka Factor.)

***Evidence It Works:*** Research at Cardiff University showed that components of manuka honey can stimulate immune cells, increasing

It tasted so good that my sister, my cousins, and I used to pretend we were coughing so she would give it to us.”

***Paul Robert,***  
***Amsterdam*** “When I was a child, the best thing about having a cold was that I’d get

a whole bag of dropjes. Once, I gave them to an American friend, who told me they tasted just as terrible as the raw herring and smoked eel I’d given her earlier!”

***Bonnie Munday,***  
***Toronto*** “When my husband got food

poisoning while traveling in Malaysia, we didn’t have any medicine for tummy troubles, but our hotel manager advised eating ripe papaya. An hour or two after my husband ate it, he felt so much better.”

our ability to fight bacteria and viruses. It's especially effective against a strain of streptococcus. Other studies have shown that its antimutagenic, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory qualities may improve dental health and help prevent or treat some cancers.

## **13 AUSTRALIA** Eucalyptus Oil to Clear Sinuses

If you've ever walked through a eucalyptus grove on a rainy day, you know that the trees give off a distinctive, almost medicinal scent. The tree is native to Australia, where its oil was first used to alleviate nasal congestion and other mild respiratory ailments. Aussies add a few drops to steaming hot water and inhale the fumes when they have a cold, and it's a common ingredient in over-the-counter cough drops.

**Evidence It Works:** In a randomized double-blind trial of 152 people published in the *Laryngoscope* in 2009, German researchers found that the main component of eucalyptus oil—1,8-cineole, or eucalyptol—was effective and safe for treating sinusitis, helping clear mucus and nasal blockages. A South Korean study published in 2016 found that essential oils, including 1,8-cineole, alleviated symptoms of respiratory disease and inflammation. Of 54 people aged 20 to 60, those who inhaled the oils for five minutes twice daily over seven days also had better sleep versus those who inhaled a placebo.

Don't ingest eucalyptus oil, though, and avoid applying it directly to your skin; if it's undiluted, it could cause irritation. **R**



### **How Is Mother Earth Still Single? She's ...**

Natural

Well-rounded

Magnetic

Thicker in some places

Hard-core

Always down for another round

Worldly

Getting hotter by the decade

*(Items Borrowed from My Dating Profile)*

SARA K. RUNNELS ON MCSWEEENEYS.NET



HUMOR *in*  
**UNIFORM**



PAUL NOTH

**My brother-in-law** Dayton, a Marine Corps captain, was invited to a reception hosted by his commanding officer and his wife. Dayton was new to the base, so the CO's wife took it upon herself to introduce him to other officers. However, she was having trouble remembering his first name.

"It's Dayton," my brother-in-law said. "Just like the city in Ohio."

That helped tremendously, because the next person she introduced him to, she said, "I want you to meet Akron."

—JAN ALDERMAN  
*Greenville,  
South Carolina*

**"Well, if your allies said that about you, then they're not your allies."**

**In boot camp**, we're trained to respond to a sergeant with such phrases as, "Here, sergeant. Yes, sergeant. No, sergeant." Well, maybe not all of us.

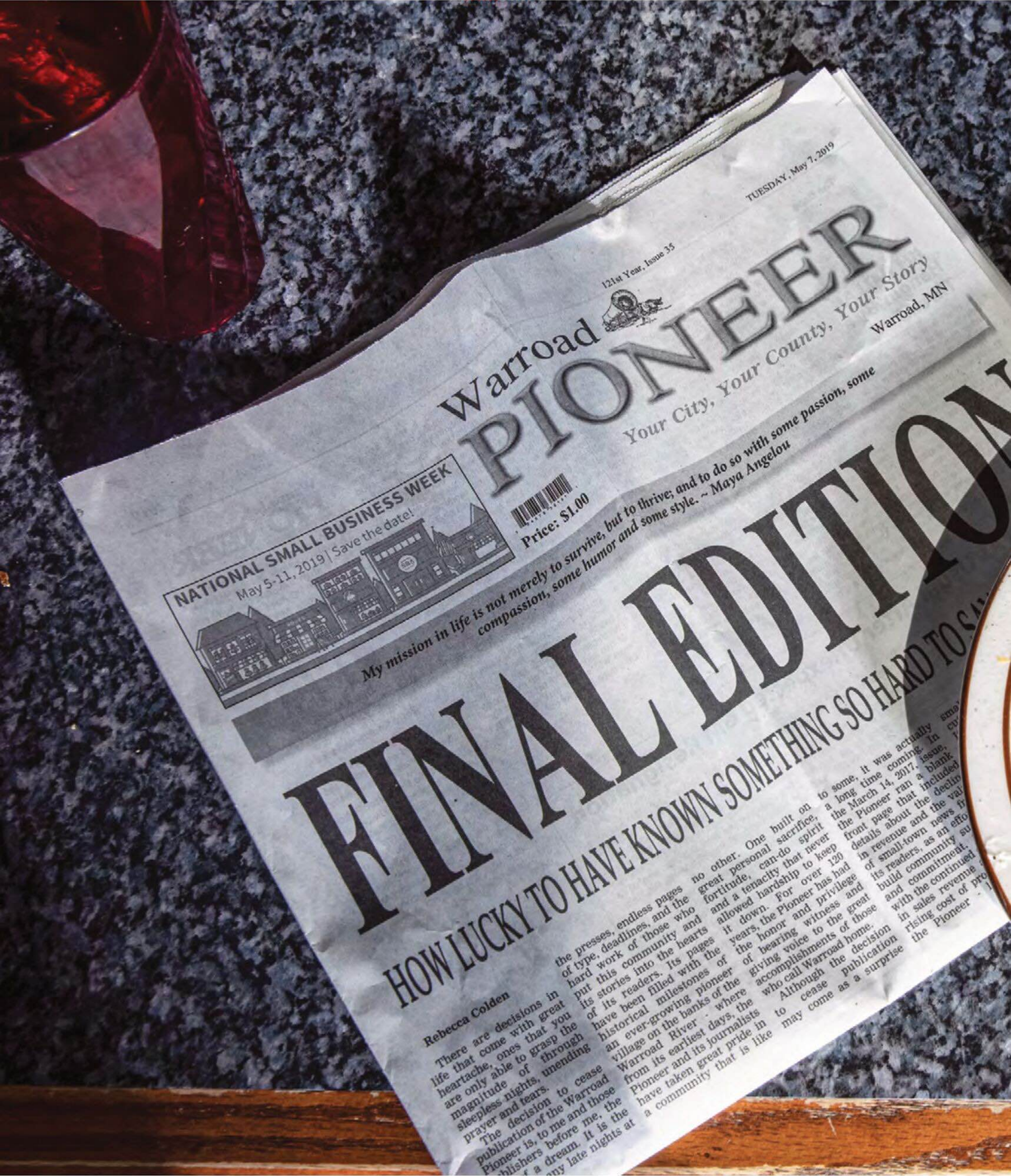
One day in formation, after the sergeant yelled one recruit's name, the recruit responded with a simple "Here!"

"Here what, recruit?"

the sergeant shouted back.

The recruit answered, "Here I am!"  
—RICHARD GURO  
*Kaneohe, Hawaii*

**GOT A FUNNY STORY** about the military or your military family? It could be worth \$\$\$.  
For details, see page 4 or go to **RD.COM** /SUBMIT.



# The Last Days of the *Pioneer*

*After printing the local farming, sports, and civic news for 121 years, another small-town paper faces the end of a noble enterprise*

BY *Richard Fausset*

ADAPTED FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES



Owner Rebecca Colden and the paper she ran for 11 years

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## WHENEVER SHE THOUGHT HER SMALL STAFF WOULD BE FACING A PARTICULARLY STRESSFUL DEADLINE DAY, REBECCA COLDEN DECLARED A BLOODY MARY MONDAY. THIS WAS

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definitely one of those Mondays—indeed, the last of them. The *Warroad Pioneer*, the weekly newspaper that Colden published and which had served its tiny Minnesota town

just below the Canadian border for 121 years, was one issue away from certain death.

When Colden woke up that day, she listened to a Christian hymn that had



buoyed her spirit of late: “This is my story, this is my song/Praising my Savior all the day long.” Now she was trudging into the newsroom on a cold May morning with vodka, olives, and tomato mix. A mock-up of the front page greeted her on the newsroom printer, screaming out a bold, striking headline: FINAL EDITION. She sat at a desk and opened some bills, one of them stamped “past due.”

“I don’t want to feel like I’m letting the community down, but I also know I’m a small business, and it’s dollars and cents,” says Colden. “I’m broken with the decision. I’m just broken with it.”

**W**ITH THE DISTRIBUTION of its final issue on May 7, 2019, the *Warroad Pioneer*, which had printed about 1,100 copies per week, joined roughly 2,000 newspapers that have closed in the United States over the last 15 years, according to a study by University of North Carolina researchers soberly titled “The Expanding News Desert.” Today in many American communities, the researchers noted, “there is simply not enough digital or print revenue to pay for the public service journalism

that local newspapers have historically provided.”

In Warroad, the *Pioneer* was full of photos of fishermen with their outsize catches, news of awards won by children and Shriners, and stories about city officials, the school board, and local sports.

This, then, was what the desert might look like: No hometown paper to print the obituaries from the Helgeson Funeral Home. No place to chronicle the exploits of the beloved

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## ROUGHLY 2,000 NEWSPAPERS HAVE CLOSED OVER THE LAST 15 YEARS.

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high school hockey teams. No historical record for the little town museum, which had carefully kept copies of each issue of the newspaper in boxes going back to 1897.

And what about the next government scandal, the next school funding crisis? Who would be there? Who would tell those stories?

It was easy to imagine the news moving instead from person to person, unchecked, on social media networks. “A lot of it is going to be word of mouth through kaffeeklatsches,” says Todd Miller, a former county commissioner. “And who knows what variant of bull gets passed around there.”

**A**T THE *Warroad Pioneer*, it had been a death by familiar cuts. Hardly anyone took out a classified ad anymore. Storefront retail has suffered. Doug's Supermarket, the only grocer in town, preferred to put its color shopping inserts inside a fat, free, ads-only mailer called the *Northland Trading Post*.

Colden had announced the paper's demise—one of about 65 to close in Minnesota since 2004—in a letter to community leaders. Warroad's "dire retail reconfiguration and exodus,"

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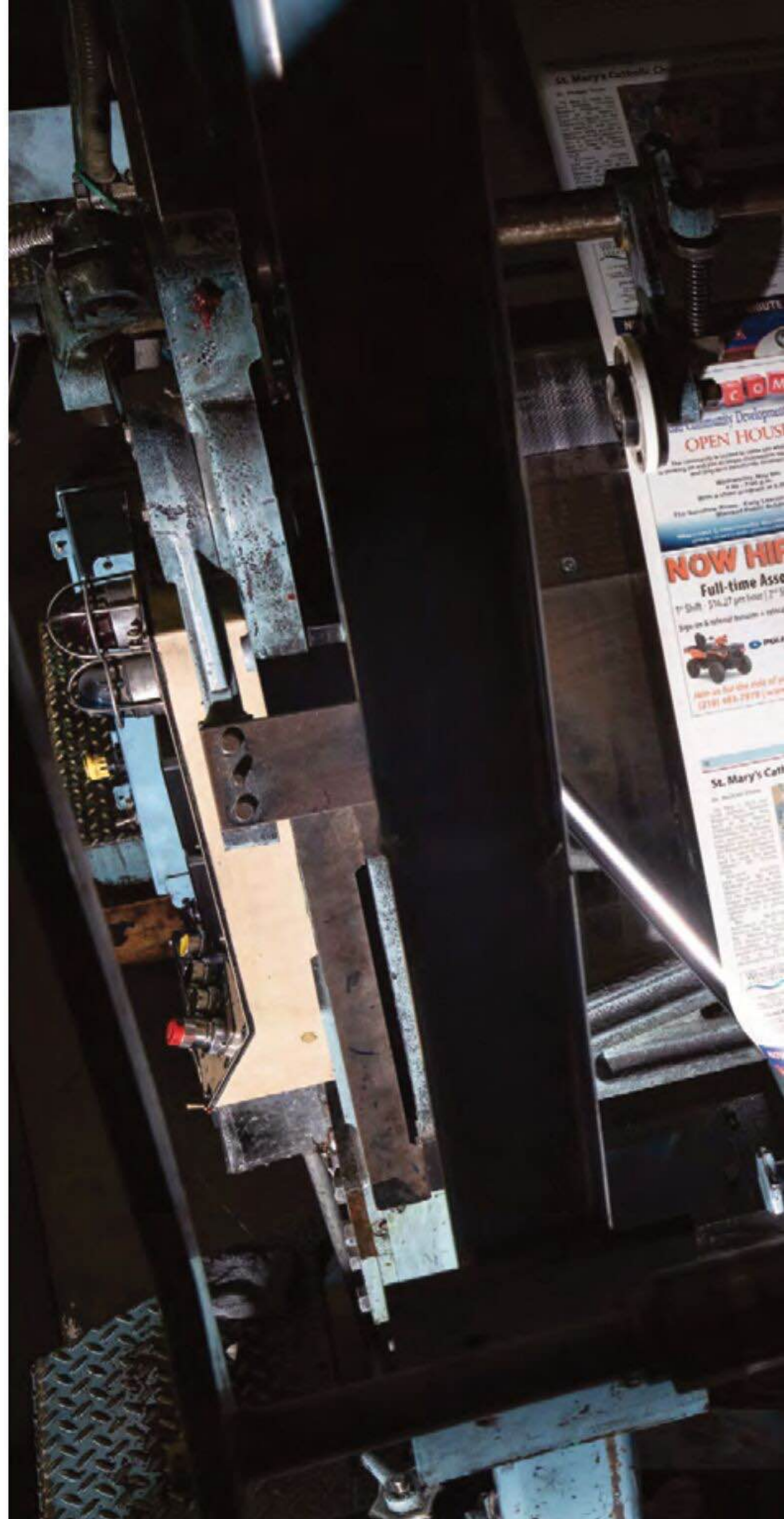
## WHAT ABOUT THE NEXT SCANDAL? WHO WOULD TELL THE STORY?

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she wrote, "has had a catastrophic impact on this community newspaper."

But what could be done? Mike Kvarnlov ran the local GM dealership for years before recently selling it to his son. He thought it was a tragedy that the paper would be folding, but the new world was what it was. "Fifteen years ago, we were 50 percent paper and 50 percent radio," he said of the dealership's advertising budget. Now most of the money goes to the Internet.

**I**T WAS AFTER 9 a.m. when the paper's remaining staff—Koren Zaiser, the editor, and Jenée Provance, the page designer—rolled into the



newsroom. Shelley Galle, the office manager, had already taken a job at the Seven Clans Casino across the river.

Provance mixed the Bloody Marys. The women hoisted their plastic cups. "We're going to get this done," Colden told them. "We're going to get it out, and we're going to do it well."

Outside, there was no grand rally to save the *Pioneer*. It was another day in Warroad, population 1,880, in



The last edition, like all the others, rolled off the presses in nearby Grafton, North Dakota.

a remote stretch of Minnesota where winter temperatures can dip to minus 35 degrees F. Farmers gossiped over breakfast at the Daisy Gardens restaurant. Workers trudged by the hundreds to their factory jobs at Marvin, the big window and door manufacturer that dominates the town.

Part of the problem, Colden suspected, was that no one could imagine Warroad without the paper that had been publishing since the McKinley

administration. “There’s that complacency,” she says. “With a 120-year-old paper, they are just so sure we’re always going to be there.”

There was also the reality that truth telling in a tiny town, while generating good copy, does not always generate love for the newspaper. On that Monday morning, Zaiser took her drink to her computer and formatted the Court Report, the *Pioneer’s* unflinching weekly roll call of anyone who had



The paper was a team effort. Editor Koren Zaiser (seated, right) sometimes got help from her husband, Rick Zaiser (standing).

recently run afoul of the law. Everyone read the Court Report. Over the years, people had tried to bribe their way out of it, Colden says, to no avail. If you messed up, you were going in. In fact, Colden herself had made the Court Report for speeding, as had Provance, for driving with expired tags, and Zaiser, for driving while drunk.

It was the truth at its most raw, and Colden believes it served an essential small-town function: “Accountability,” she says.

After her appearance in the Court Report, Zaiser wrote a confessional column, acknowledging that her drunken driving could have killed somebody. The experience, she says, set her on a path to a renewed Christian faith.

“It’s one of those things that shows us that all of us are fallible,” says Wayne Maxwell of Woodland Bible

Church, Colden’s preacher, who had been counseling her through the paper’s last days. “That nobody is above anybody else.”

COLDEN BOUGHT THE *Warroad Pioneer* in December 2008. Her background was in marketing, but she discovered her inner assignment editor, incessantly scouring the town for story ideas.

She soon found herself swimming against the current of the Great Recession. Like other publishers, she introduced a website, but it did little for her bottom line. The paper never had more than four full-time employees during her tenure and had always relied on freelancers for much of its coverage. At a point, Colden had been forced to lay off her sole freelance local government reporter. The desert was creeping closer, and people felt it.



“Definitely, it got slim,” says Bill Boyd, a Marvin employee. “Even the ads—if you wanted to get a snowblower, you used to look at the paper. Now all of that’s on Facebook.”

ON THE WEDNESDAY before the final edition, Colden returned from a meeting with an entrepreneur whose business acumen she valued. She had hoped it would generate some ideas that might save the paper. It had been held at Warroad’s small-business incubator, the Discovery and Development Hub, a collaboration between the Marvin company and local government. The DD Hub, as it’s called, is a vision of the best-

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## THE NEWS DESERT WAS CREEPING CLOSER, AND PEOPLE FELT IT.

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case future Warroad imagines for itself, with contemporary furniture and hip sans-serif fonts on the window.

But when she returned to the newsroom, her staff knew from looking at her that the meeting had not fixed anything. “We read each other’s minds,” Zaiser says.

“I think a lot of times people want that Hallmark story where a knight in shining armor comes out and we’re going to save the day,” Colden

says. “That was not this conversation.”

Her staff saw the toughness in her in April 2010 when she was forced to tangle with John W. Marvin, known as Jake, the chief executive of the Marvin company at the time and brother of Warroad’s mayor, Bob Marvin. The paper had published an article about Jake’s daughter, Brooke Marvin, after she had been arrested on charges of misdemeanor domestic assault, obstructing arrest, and criminal damage to property.

Colden said she heard from Jake Marvin soon after the article came out. He was angry. Many considered the Marvins the town’s de facto royal family. “Your name’s no different than anybody else’s name,” Colden recalls telling him, “and we publish other people’s children who get in trouble the same way.”

Jake Marvin told her he might rescind Marvin advertising—though he later walked back the threat. But he did rescind a favor. From that point forward, the *Pioneer* was no longer driven to Warroad from its printer in Grafton, North Dakota, on a Marvin company truck. And he canceled his subscription for good measure.

The next week, Colden wrote an editorial defending the article. “To anyone wanting to control the freedom of the press,” she wrote in a memorably tart final paragraph, or to those who “feel they can do a better job for the community, the *Warroad Pioneer* may be purchased for \$500,000.”



The newspaper went on to cover two of the more important local stories of the last decade. The first was about a budget crisis in the school district that forced teacher layoffs and the consolidation of all grades into a single school building. The *Pioneer* used public records laws to request e-mails sent by school board members, which revealed depths of infighting and dysfunction, and pointed to a possible violation of open-meeting laws.

The second was a scandal at the county board of commissioners, where one of the commissioners had been accused of improperly benefiting from a county gravel contract. Colden described the matter as “ludicrous” and an “example of backwoods politics and finger-pointing.” The commissioner, Roger Falk, was found innocent of a criminal charge in 2017.

COLDEN’S RULE FOR Bloody Mary Monday is that the vodka stops flowing at noon. In the late afternoon on that final day, like any other day, there were familiar headaches to deal with: The father of Scott Johnson, the *Pioneer’s* landlord, had died, and

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## ON THAT FINAL DAY, LIKE ANY OTHER DAY, THERE WERE HEADACHES.

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the obituary had just come in from the funeral home. Colden asked Provance to bump the issue up to 18 pages from 16. Zaiser was on the phone hunting for a student who could tell her the names of two high school baseball players in a photo.



Sometime after 5:30 p.m., they shipped the last of the newspaper's pages to the printer. The final issue included an article about the future of the farmers oil co-op now that its general manager had resigned. There was an article about low-interest federal loans for farmers affected by natural disasters. There was an ad inviting readers to the 85th-birthday open house in honor of a woman named Ione Carlson. And the Warroad High School prom king and prom queen were on the front page.

The *Pioneer* sisterhood opened a few bottles of wine.

The next day, Colden dropped her last-ever stack of *Pioneers* at the Thrifty White Pharmacy on Lake Street, and in the afternoon she and her staff met for Bible study.

Zaiser read from the Book of John: "Now is your time of grief, but I will

**"It's devastating to lose a local paper," said one of the *Pioneer's* many loyal readers.**

see you again, and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy. In that day you will no longer ask me anything."

Provance said she was still angry about the paper's end. "I'm very ashamed of this community, and we deserve better."

Colden told her to let the resentment go. But the publisher admitted she was having trouble letting go herself as she drove in the warming weather and saw the farmers in their fields.

"I thought, 'We need to get those farm stories going.'" **R**

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# THE GENIUS SECTION

10 Pages TO SHARPEN  
*Your Mind*



## THE ART OF THE “GOOD” MELTDOWN

*Under stress from every front, we're having more meltdowns. Here's how to lose it the right way.*

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BY *Elizabeth Bernstein*

FROM THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

**P**RESTON WOODRUFF HELD it together for months during the pandemic—working in his garden and workshop, sharing meals with his daughter, and walking in the woods behind his home. Then a sneeze sent him over the edge.

Woodruff was sleeping soundly when he woke to an uncomfortable feeling in his nose. He reached for the box of tissues on his nightstand. None peeked up from the top. He tried and tried to dig one out. The entire wad remained tightly wound.

So Woodruff grabbed the box, crushed it in his hands, and flung it at the far wall of his bedroom. Alone in the dark, he slammed his head back on the pillow and swore.

“I momentarily lost it,” says Woodruff, a retired philosophy professor.

Welcome to the meltdown. Have you had one lately?

It's what happens after you've held it together through a pandemic and a quarantine, working from home and homeschooling, civil unrest and the most divisive public discourse in several lifetimes—on top of the dishes and the laundry and your regular familial responsibilities. Then, when something seemingly small happens, suddenly you're alone in your car screaming or sobbing to your dog about, well, everything.

People lost control of their emotions before this past year, of course. But we've been doing it a whole lot

more because of our sustained levels of stress, anger, and fear. We've been overwhelmed by bad news, exhausted by the need to be ever-vigilant. It's no wonder our fuses have been short.

Think you've never had a meltdown? Think again. Although we typically expect meltdowns to look like the adult version of a toddler's tantrum—wailing, whining, whimpering—psychologists say they can manifest in different ways: crying, rage, silence, or an emotional shutdown. “Often, people don't identify with the word *meltdown* because of the stigma of having a mental health crisis,” says Amanda Luterman, a licensed psychotherapist in Montreal. “They will just say they are having a really horrible day.”

What most meltdowns have in common is a loss of emotional control—often manifested physically—and a sense of helplessness. They occur when we no longer have the emotional resources to deal with our stress. And they're typically triggered by something small and unanticipated—a stubbed toe, a spill on our shirt, or (for me recently) a broken backspace key on the laptop.

Yet meltdowns have an upside. They allow us to release tension, and once we do that, we can think more clearly because we're no longer spending all our energy trying to hold it together. “A meltdown is the body's natural mechanism to let go, to cleanse itself of painful emotions,”

says Tal Ben-Shahar, a psychologist who specializes in the science of happiness. "It lets us reset."

Not all meltdowns are created equal. Bad ones happen often and can hurt people around us or leave us feeling worse. Good ones are rare, ideally take place when we're alone, and leave us feeling better than we did before.

To have a productive meltdown, experts say we should accept that it's happening (or about to). Meltdowns are as natural as gravity, says Ben-Shahar. We need to identify what will make us feel better—and explain this to others. We should be careful to manage the negative effects and explore the meaning afterward.

**“IT SPIRALED UNTIL THINGS FELT 10,000 TIMES WORSE THAN THEY REALLY WERE.”**



Woodruff, of the tissue tantrum, has minor meltdowns several times a week nowadays and makes a point of taking his frustration out on inanimate objects—throwing a piece of wood across his workshop or slamming silverware into the dishwasher. He sometimes plans his emotional purges in advance. When he replaced his wonky computer a while back, he carried the machine out to his fire pit, destroyed it with a sledgehammer, and set it on fire.

But Woodruff makes sure to keep

his outbursts brief. "It's wasted energy and wasted time to focus too long on the hostility of the moment," he says. "I let it out, and then I have an immediate feeling of relief."

Mike Veny was walking to his truck one afternoon when he received an e-mail from a colleague stating that some information he needed for a project wasn't available. Immediately, his stomach dropped. His fists clenched. He began stomping down the street, ranting about a growing list of complaints: a coworker who annoyed him, the state of the country, whether people on the street were looking at him funny, how his dad hadn't called him all week.

"It was like going down a rabbit hole in *Alice in Wonderland*," says Veny, who lives in New York City and owns a company that provides mental-wellness and diversity training for corporations. "It spiraled faster and faster until things felt 10,000 times worse than they really were."

Luckily, Veny has a plan for dealing with meltdowns. He paused in the middle of the street to collect himself and then got into his truck. He sat for 20 minutes and thought about the answers to three questions: "What do I feel?" (Anger, but also sadness at losing work and fear of whether he would get the coronavirus by going to the gym.) "Where do I feel it?" (In his chest and stomach.) "What do I need now?" (Time to feel his emotions rather than suppress them.)

Next, he went to the gym. The music was loud, and he cursed while he worked out. When he got home, he did yoga, which he says helps him let go of his emotions.

In bed that night, Veny realized he had a smile on his face. “I felt free of whatever it was that had been cooking up inside me,” he says. “I felt like I was in control again, like I had taken my power back.”

Here are some tips on how to have an effective meltdown:

**Accept it.** Don’t judge yourself. A meltdown lets you release tension and frees up energy that was spent suppressing emotions.

**Know what you need.** Some people prefer to be left alone when they lose control. Others want a hug or a pep talk. Be clear with your loved ones about your needs, says Luterman.

**Model a good meltdown.** No kicking the dog, punching the wall, or full-blown meltdowns in front of children—it can frighten them. But showing others, especially kids, that you can express painful emotions in a way that doesn’t negatively affect others can be

an important lesson. “Having an occasional meltdown and recovering from it helps people see that we can be OK through these expressions,” says Carrie Krawiec, a licensed marriage and family therapist.

**Try an “alternate rebellion.”** When we lose control, we often want to rebel: quit our job or tell off our father-in-law. Instead, plan a healthy rebellion that satisfies the need to assert control in your life, recommends Jenny Taitz, a psychologist and assistant clinical professor at the University of California, Los Angeles. One idea: Tell others that you are turning off your phone for a while and can’t be reached, then go do something you enjoy.

**Calm yourself, explore the meaning of your meltdown, and move on.** Get some intense exercise or try paced breathing—six counts in and eight counts out—to calm your nervous system. Then reflect on what happened. Apologize if you’ve upset others—and forgive yourself: Having a meltdown makes you human. **R**

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### And the Answer Isn’t ...

I love that my six-year-old enjoys watching *Jeopardy!*, even if she just announced she wants a Nanoknee replacement.

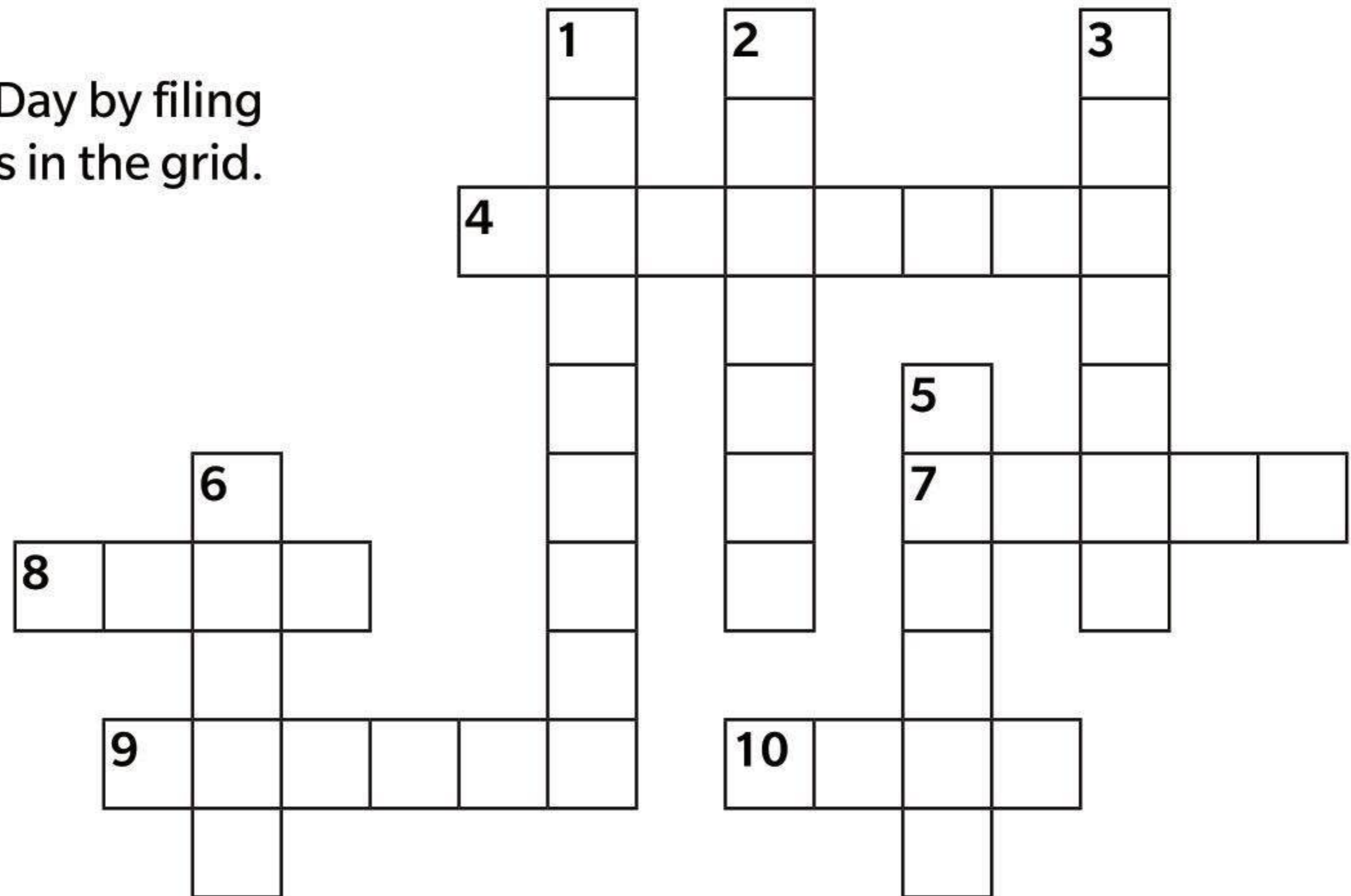
@ERDMANMOLLY

# BRAIN GAMES

## Quick Crossword

**EASY** Get ready for Tax Day by filing these tax-related words in the grid.

- INCOME
- PROPERTY
- SALES
- CITY
- ESTATE
- CAPITAL
- GAINS
- CORPORATE
- FLAT
- PAYROLL



## Pass the Salt, Please

**MEDIUM** On April Fools' Day, your mischievous teenager replaces the salt in three of your four salt shakers with sugar. He leaves a note next to each shaker:



**A.**  
THIS IS SALT.



**B.**  
THIS IS SALT.



**C.**  
THIS IS SUGAR.



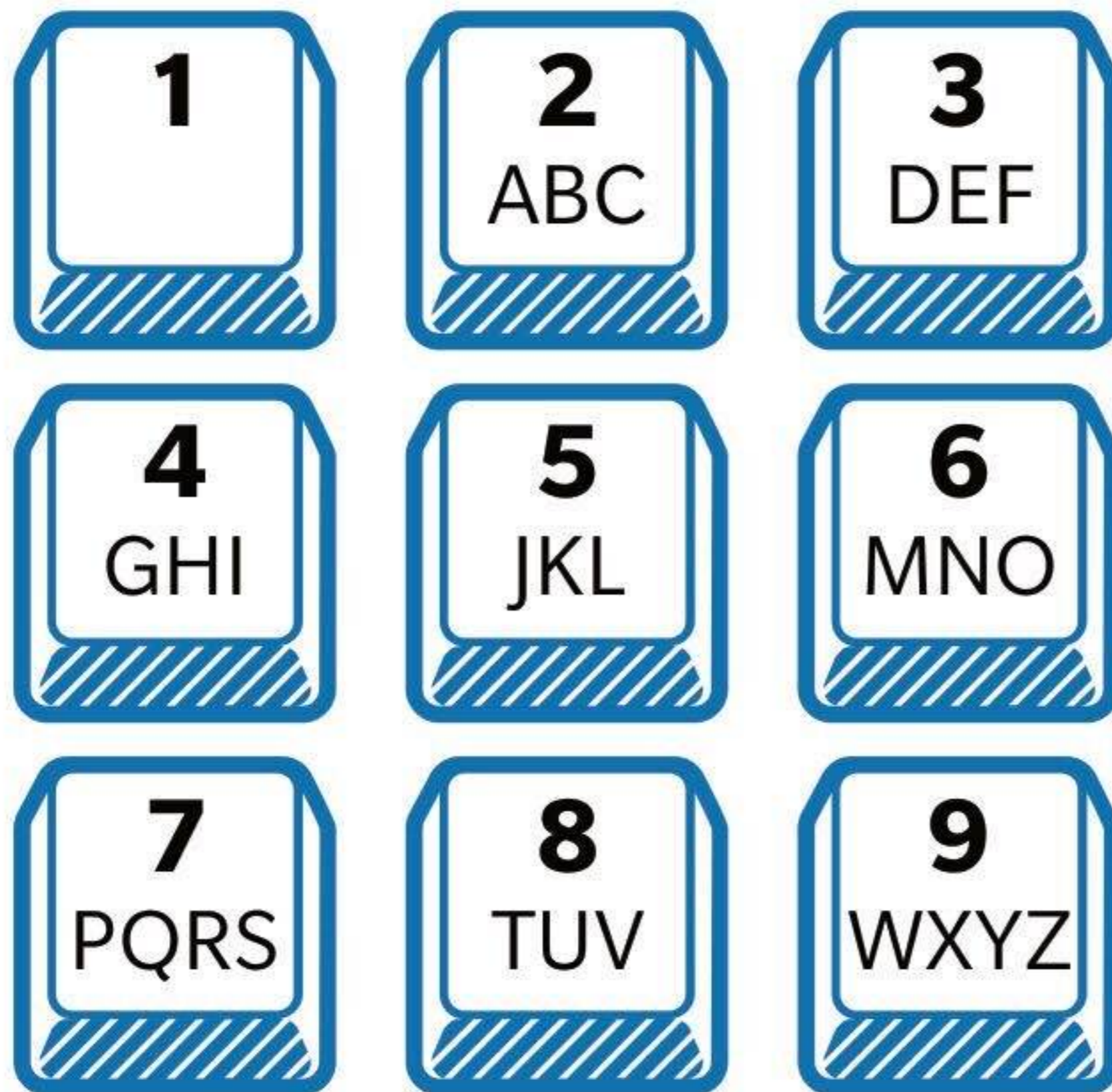
**D.**  
THE SALT IS NOT IN B.

If only one of these notes is true, which shaker still contains salt?



### Phoning It In

**MEDIUM** Each number in the message below corresponds to a letter on a standard telephone keypad. For instance, a 2 could represent an A, a B, or a C; a 3 could be a D, an E, or an F, and so on. Can you decipher the message to reveal a timely fun fact?

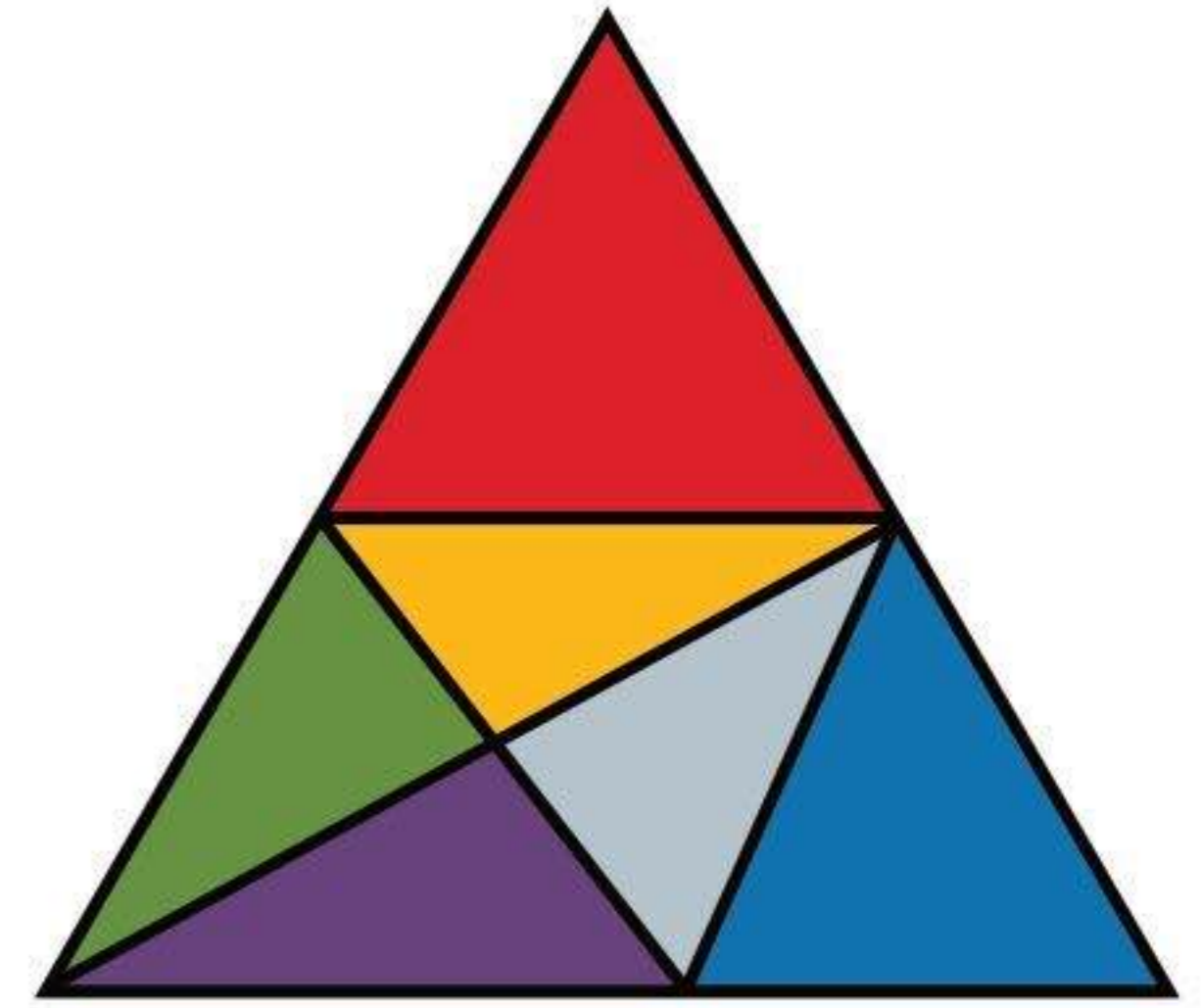


6673 8426 4253 2  
 6455466 3447 9373  
 443336 46 843 96753'7  
 5274378 327837 344  
 4868.

For more Brain Games,  
 go to [RD.COM/CROSSWORDS](http://RD.COM/CROSSWORDS).

For answers, turn to **PAGE 123**.

### The Genius Section



### Pyramid Scheme

**DIFFICULT** In total, how many distinct triangles are there in the figure above? Note: Some of the triangles are made up of two or more smaller ones.



### The Sock-Eating Dryer

**EASY** You bought a new clothes dryer, and the first time you used it, a single sock disappeared from your laundry. The next time you used it, two socks vanished. Cycle after cycle, the number of socks that went missing kept doubling until all 25 pairs of your socks were gone. How many cycles did that take?

**IF YOU PURCHASED MAXWELL HOUSE OR  
YUBAN BRANDED GROUND COFFEE PRODUCT(S)  
BETWEEN AUGUST 27, 2015 AND JANUARY 18, 2021,  
A CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT MAY AFFECT YOUR RIGHTS**

*Para información en español, visite el sitio web o llame al 833-644-1596.*

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**Maxwell House and Yuban Brands Ground Coffee**

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The lawsuit claims that Defendant deceptively packaged and labeled Maxwell House, and Yuban ground coffee Products as containing enough coffee to make a represented number of cups. As part of the Settlement, Defendant has agreed to change their Labeling practices and provide payments to customers. Defendant denies any wrongdoing.

**Who is included in the Settlement?**

You may be included in the Settlement if you purchased Maxwell House or Yuban ground coffee Products for personal use between August 27, 2015 and January 18, 2021.

**What does the Settlement provide?**

The Settlement will provide up to a maximum of \$16,000,000 to pay Valid Claims, an Attorneys' Fees and Costs Award, and Administration Expenses. Only one Claim may be submitted per Household under either Tier 1 or Tier 2, and final amounts paid may be reduced based on total number of Claims received.

- **Tier 1 - Without Proof of Purchase:** You can get up to \$.80 per Unit purchased up to a maximum of 6 Units per Household for **up to a maximum reimbursement of \$4.80** per Household.
- **Tier 2 - With Proof of Purchase:** You can get up to \$.80 per Unit purchased for the number of Units for which a valid Proof of Purchase has been provided, **up to a maximum reimbursement of \$25** per Household.

**What are my rights?**

- **Submit a Claim** – You must submit a Claim to get a monetary Benefit from this Settlement. Claim Forms must be submitted online by or received on or before **May 18, 2021**.
- **Do Nothing** – If you do nothing, you remain in the Settlement, you give up your rights to sue, and you will not get any money.

- **Exclude Yourself** – This is the only option that allows you to keep your right to sue about the claims in this lawsuit. You will not get any money from the Settlement. Your request for Exclusion must be received on or before **April 7, 2021**.
- **File an Objection** - Stay in the Settlement but tell the Court why you think the Settlement should not be approved. Objections must be received by **April 7, 2021**.

The Court will hold a Fairness Hearing in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida, U.S. Federal Building and Courthouse 299 East Broward Boulevard, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301 in the courtroom of the Honorable Rodolfo A. Ruiz, II, on **June 21, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.**, to decide whether to approve the Settlement and to award Attorneys' Fees and Expenses of up to \$3,900,000. All briefs and materials filed in support of the Settlement and the Application for Attorneys' Fees and Costs will be made available on the Settlement Website at **www.GroundCoffeeSettlement.com**. These materials will be made available on the website by March 24, 2021, which is 14 days before the deadline to file Objections. You may hire an attorney, at your own expense, to appear at the hearing, but you don't have to.

Claims will be paid only if the Court approves the Settlement and all appeals are resolved. Please be patient. If the Settlement does not become effective, the litigation will continue.

**This is only a summary.** For more information, please visit **www.GroundCoffeeSettlement.com**, or contact the Settlement Administrator at **833-644-1596** or by writing to Ferron v. Kraft Settlement, c/o Settlement Administrator, PO Box 189, Warminster, PA 18974-0189.

**www.GroundCoffeeSettlement.com**  
**833-644-1596**


**WORD POWER**

What do fettuccine, football, grasshoppers, and a carryall have in common? If you think you're seeing double, you're right—each of those words contains two sets of repeated letters, as do all the words this month. Will your answers be errorless? Don't be embarrassed to turn the page for the answers.

BY *Sarah Chassé*

**1. buccaneer** *n.*  
(buh-kuh-'neer)

- A** early settler.
- B** pirate.
- C** bullfighter.

**2. terrazzo** *n.*  
(tuh-'raz-oh)

- A** mosaic flooring.
- B** seasoned pork.
- C** public square.

**3. heedless** *adj.*  
('heed-less)

- A** outgoing.
- B** inconsiderate.
- C** unselfish.

**4. muumuu** *n.*  
('moo-moo)

- A** sweetheart.
- B** wild ox.
- C** loose dress.

**5. settee** *n.*  
(seh-'tee)

- A** place mat.
- B** sofa.
- C** tennis match.

**6. hippogriff** *n.*  
('hih-puh-grif)

- A** mythical animal.
- B** early automobile.
- C** complainer.

**7. bassoon** *n.*  
(buh-'soon)

- A** court jester.
- B** woodwind instrument.
- C** hunting dog.

**8. skiddoo** *v.*  
(skih-'doo)

- A** joke around.
- B** tap-dance.
- C** depart.

**9. guerrilla** *n.*  
(guh-'rih-luh)

- A** large monkey.
- B** outlaw soldier.
- C** grilled pita.

**10. milliwatt** *n.*  
('mih-luh-waht)

- A** tooth whitener.
- B** unit of power.
- C** earthworm.

**11. abbess** *n.*  
('ab-ess)

- A** deep wound.
- B** convent leader.
- C** grand estate.

**12. fuddy-duddy** *n.*  
('fuh-dee-duh-dee)

- A** old-fashioned person.
- B** sticky candy.
- C** mock turtleneck.

**13. lessee** *n.*  
(leh-'see)

- A** free trial
- B** rope trick.
- C** renter.

**14. kookaburra** *n.*  
('kuh-kuh-burr-uh)

- A** vegetable stew.
- B** giant oak tree.
- C** Australian bird.

**15. riffraff** *n.*  
('rif-raf)

- A** questionable character.
- B** expert surfer.
- C** fishing fanatic.



## Home of the Triple Double

Even more rare than words with double double letters are those with three pairs of doubles. You'll find a few of them on the map of the United States, many with an Indigenous origin.

There's Tallahassee and Kissimmee in Florida, the Chattahoochee River, Mississippi, and the grand champion: Goodlettsville, Tennessee.

### Word Power ANSWERS

**1. buccaneer (B)** *pirate.*  
After the raid, the band of buccaneers divvied up their loot.

**2. terrazzo (A)** *mosaic flooring.* Tamara installed cheery green-and-white terrazzo in her guest bathroom.

**3. heedless (B)** *inconsiderate.* "How can you be so heedless of my feelings?" Diego asked, looking heartbroken.

**4. muumuu (C)** *loose dress.* While visiting Maui, I bought two flower-patterned muumuus.

**5. settee (B)** *sofa.*  
Our dog Harpo likes to nap on our vintage settee despite having a bed of his own.

**6. hippogriff (A)** *mythical animal.*  
According to legend, a hippogriff has the front half of an eagle and the hind half of a horse.

**7. bassoon (B)** *woodwind instrument.*  
Erica is the only bassoon player in her high school's orchestra.

**8. skiddoo (C)** *depart.*  
"I'd love to stay and chat, but I have to skiddoo!" Amos said as he left.

**9. guerrilla (B)** *outlaw soldier.* The guerrilla leader hatched a plot to overthrow the government.

**10. milliwatt (B)** *unit of power.* A milliwatt is equal to one thousandth of a watt—not enough to give off much light!

**11. abbess (B)** *convent leader.* The younger nuns looked to their abbess for guidance.

**12. fuddy-duddy (A)** *old-fashioned person.*  
Call me a fuddy-duddy all you like, but I'm still not getting a smartphone.

**13. lessee (C)** *renter.*  
Per the contract, the apartment's lessee pays the cable bill.

**14. kookaburra (C)** *Australian bird.* The kookaburra's call sounds like fiendish laughter.

**15. riffraff (A)** *questionable character.*  
Mom says that in her day, people who got tattoos were considered to be total riffraff.

### Vocabulary Ratings

**9 & BELOW:** committed

**10–12:** successful

**13–15:** peerless

## BRAIN GAMES ANSWERS

See page 118.

### Quick Crossword

#### ACROSS

4. PROPERTY
7. SALES
8. FLAT
9. INCOME
10. CITY

#### DOWN

1. CORPORATE
2. CAPITAL
3. PAYROLL
5. ESTATE
6. GAINS

### Pass the Salt, Please

C. The only note that can be true without forcing any of the others to also be true is D's. Since the other inscriptions are therefore all false, C must contain the salt.

### Phoning It In

More than half a million eggs were hidden in the world's largest Easter egg hunt. (This took place in Winter Haven, Florida, on April 1, 2007.)

### Pyramid Scheme

13

### The Sock-Eating Dryer

6 cycles

MAKE  
US  
LAUGH!



### Caption Contest

What's your clever description for this picture? Submit your funniest line at [RD.COM/CAPTIONCONTEST](http://RD.COM/CAPTIONCONTEST). Winners will appear in a future Photo Finish (PAGE 124).

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**PHOTO FINISH**  
YOUR *Funniest* CAPTIONS



**Winner**

The Maytag Repairman: The Early Years.  
—WILLIAM KANDELL *Holbrook, New York*

**Runners-Up**

Long skeptical of the dish-running-away-with-the-spoon story, Joey decided to investigate their disappearance himself.

—NINA DIEHL *Oak Park, Illinois*

“I’ve got a full load!”

DONNA GARDNER *Burnsville, Minnesota*

*To enter an upcoming caption contest, see the photo on PAGE 123.*



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