

AUSTRALIA

Reader's Digest



I SURVIVED!

True Tales Of Epic Escapes

PAGE 40

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

JUDI DENCH

A Lifelong Performer

PAGE 28

**Ukraine's Stirring
Moments Of
SOLIDARITY**

PAGE 64

THE BODY PLAN
**How To Age Well
From Head To Toe**

PAGE 80

**Can You Really
TEACH YOUR DOG
TO SPEAK?**

PAGE 54



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CONTENTS

JULY 2022

Features

28

PROFILE

Judi Dench

At 87, Academy Award-winner Dench is not planning to stop acting any time soon. JAMES MOTTRAM

36

HEALTH

When Heart Disease Runs In The Family

Some cardiac conditions are passed down genetically.

CHARLOTTE HILTON ANDERSEN AND KARLA WALSH

40

DRAMA IN REAL LIFE

I Survived!

Three people who defied death share their stories.

SHERI NIEMEGERES, RYAN OSMUN AND JULIE MCSORLEY



76

50

50

FOOD ON YOUR PLATE

Cabbage: Versatile And Nutritious

It's good sautéed, salted or as a tasty side. DIANE GODLEY AND RD EDITORS

54

ANIMAL KINGDOM

Can You Teach Your Dog To Talk?

The dogs communicating through the touch of a button.

HELEN FOSTER

64

IN THE NEWS

Human Kindness Amid War

Simple acts of caring in the midst of the conflict in Ukraine.

76

HUMOUR

My Contest Against Insomnia

Adding up hours of tossing and turning is hard for someone who is bad at maths.

RICHARD GLOVER

80

HEALTH

Your Body: A Maintenance Plan

The complex organs and systems that keep your body functioning.

LISA FITTERMAN

88

ART OF LIVING

Why We Love Our Weird Jobs

Strange jobs are there for the taking.

TIM HULSE

ON THE COVER: I SURVIVED! – PAGE 40

CONTENTS

JULY 2022

95

13 THINGS

Our Two Cents Worth On Cryptocurrency

Facts about this investment form.

KAT TRETINA

98

FIRST PERSON

Comfort Cooking

Food traditions recreate a family's past.

NAMUGENYI KIWANUKA
FROM CHATELAINE

102

PHOTO FEATURE

World Of Snow

Enter a winter wonderland with snowy scenes.

CORNELIA KUMFERT

110

QUIZ

Year By Year

Where would we be without calendars to keep track of the passage of time?

ANNEMARIE SCHÄFER

116

TRAVEL

Magical Realism On The Faroe Islands

Fantastical landscapes define a remote archipelago.

CHLOE BERGE
FROM CANADIAN
GEOGRAPHIC TRAVEL

122

BONUS READ

When All They Had Was Love

Told that their baby has a severely underdeveloped brain, a couple is determined to beat the odds. KATIE MCCABE

2022
Trusted Brands Supplement

Go to page 153



Departments

THE DIGEST

- 20 **Pets**
- 22 **Health**
- 26 **News From The World Of Medicine**
- 137 **RD Recommends**

REGULARS

- 4 **Editor's Note**
- 6 **Letters**
- 10 **News Worth Sharing**
- 14 **My Story**
- 18 **Smart Animals**
- 60 **Look Twice**
- 87 **Quotable Quotes**
- 115 **Tell Me Why**

HUMOUR

- 48 **Life's Like That**
- 74 **Laughter, The Best Medicine**
- 108 **All In A Day's Work**

THE GENIUS SECTION

- 142 **Gaslighting Red Flags**
- 146 **Puzzles**
- 149 **Trivia**
- 150 **Puzzle Answers**
- 151 **Word Power**

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Telling Their Stories

IT'S NO SECRET THAT WE ENJOY A GOOD HUMAN DRAMA.

This month, in our cover story 'I Survived!' (page 40), we relate the unbelievable experiences of three people whose days all started out the same as any other but ended with a life-changing encounter with the natural world.

Anyone who has shared their life with a dog will understand the belief that many hold that they communicate their needs very clearly through looks and actions. But some dog owners are taking it further. Helen Foster, in her article, 'Can You Teach Your Dog To Talk?' (page 54), explains how these very determined and patient dog owners are training their pets to audibly 'speak' to them in what they claim is genuine two-way communication.



From an interview with acclaimed actress Judi Dench (page 28) to a quiz on calendars (page 110) and tips on managing your heart health (page 36), the July 2022 issue is bursting with great stories to interest every member of the family.

We hope you enjoy our line-up this month.

Louise

LOUISE WATERSON
Editor-in-Chief

AUSTRALIA Reader's Digest

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Managing Editor Zoë Meunier
Chief Subeditor Melanie Egan
Art Director Hugh Hanson
Senior Art Designer Adele Burley
Art Designer Annie Li
Senior Editor Diane Godley
Associate Editor Victoria Polzot

DIGITAL

Head of Digital Content Greg Barton

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Advertising Support Manager Rebecca Zhang

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Sheron White
Mobile Phone 0421 897 140
Email sheron.white@readersdigest.com.au

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LETTERS

Reader's Comments And Opinions

Mask Waste

I fear that the pandemic is also throwing a spanner in the works in the fight against plastic ('Shrinking Our Plastic Footprint', April).

Instead of disposing their disposable masks properly, many people simply throw them out on the street – just as they do with plastic bags.

IRENE HECKMANN



Origins Of Polar Bears

The story of nine-year-old Nanu, a female polar bear (*Ursus maritimus*), living in the Hudson Bay lowlands ('A Polar Bear's Journey', April) is fascinating for those interested in marine mammalogy.

In fact, polar bears stemmed from brown bears (*Ursus arctos*) around one million years ago. The oldest known fossil is a well-

preserved jaw from the Svalbard archipelago in northern Norway. Scientists have discovered polar bears trace their family tree to Ireland. Genetic evidence shows they are descended from Irish brown bears that lived during the last ice age.

SYED ALI

Ghostly Doings

I reside in Malaysia. I believe in ghosts. Reading 'Meet The

Let us know if you are moved – or provoked – by any item in the magazine, share your thoughts. See page 8 for how to join the discussion.

Ghostbusters' in the March issue 'scientified' ghosts for me.

However, the fear associated with an unwanted encounter with a *pocong* [shroud ghost], *pontianak* [mythological creature], *nu gui* [vengeful female ghost] or a *mohini* [beautiful female spirit] has not been busted. **SUGGUNA MUNISAMY**

Garlic Broccoli A Winner For Family Celebrations

Two days before a family celebration, I was looking for a simple but festive dish. The April issue had just arrived and I found what I was looking for (Food On Your Plate, April). Your roasted garlic broccoli recipe was a huge hit and I expect it will become a staple on our future menus.

AGNES GABRIS

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CATNIPPED

We asked you think up a funny caption for this photo.

Karate Kit strikes again.

TESSA MCCARTHY

Pussyfooting around can be disastrous.

MICHAEL GILLIES

Oopsie Daisy.

RAMONA WIJESINGHE

I'll blame it on the dog.

MARY PRESTON

Kitty Khaos!

EMILY TOOHER

Congratulations to this month's winner, Ramona Wijesinghe.



WIN!

CAPTION CONTEST

Come up with the funniest caption for the above photo and you could win

\$100. To enter, email

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or see details on page 8.

Making It 'Write' By Putting Thoughts On Paper

My mother used to jot down her thoughts, like the story ('Work Out Your Worries By Writing', April) suggests. But she'd place her 'notes to God' in our Bible, which she eventually gave to me.

While looking for a home 30 years later, I wrote a list of everything we wanted (including a pool, per my husband's request) and placed it in the Bible. We found our ideal home, but I forgot to ask that the pool be in perfect condition and filled with water. Now we make our writing very detailed!

KARI LAURI

Saving Species

My heart was warmed by the kindness of Anna Culliton and her care for Candy the wombat and the other native animals she nurses back to health ('Best of Buddies', March).

The article was a great reminder of the genius of a marsupial's pouch. Even when mothers do not survive fire, flood or road accidents, the pouch is an incredible shield, able to protect precious young from harm in the most disastrous circumstances. With the iconic koalas hitting the endangered species list this year, we're reminded, more than ever, of a responsibility to native wildlife.

JAYNE PARKER

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NEWS WORTH SHARING



Off-Grid Washing Machine Lightens The Load

For the 70 per cent of the world's population without access to electric washing machines, simply keeping up with laundry is a time-consuming task. The burden falls disproportionately to women and girls, many of whom spend 20 hours a week hand-scrubbing clothes, often without electricity or running water.

But Navjot Sawhney, an engineer based in London, has come up with an off-grid solution: a portable, lightweight washing machine powered by a hand crank.

Sawhney calls it the Diyva, after

the woman who inspired the project – his former next-door neighbour in southern India, where he spent a year volunteering after leaving his job as an engineer at a high-end vacuum cleaner manufacturer.

“When I got to know Divya, I was so frustrated by all the unpaid labour she needed to do for the sake of clean clothes,” says Sawhney. He returned to the UK and founded the Washing Machine Project in 2018. After a few months developing a prototype, he received a grant from Oxfam's Iraq Response Innovation Lab.

COMPILED BY VICTORIA POLZOT



A Safe Haven For Rescued Animals

As a child in Tangier, Morocco, in the late 1970s, Salima Kadaoui made it her mission to save strays from animal control. The eight year old volunteered at an animal charity and witnessed how the city's lack of vaccination, neutering and spaying programmes made the situation worse. "I promised myself that I would change my country and that promise stayed with me."

In 2012, after raising her family in the UK, she returned to Morocco and made good on her childhood vow, founding the Sanctuaire de la faune de Tanger. It is now home to more than 450 dogs, 100 cats, 48 donkeys, two wild boars, an ape, two storks and a mule, along with smaller creatures. Kadaoui believes her work has helped people sympathise with animals.

Turning Hate Graffiti Into Food Murals

The number of reported hate crimes in Italy has steadily risen since 2014, fuelled by populist politicians reacting to an influx of refugees and migrants. In Verona, Pier Paolo Spinazzé, a street artist who goes by the name Cibo (Italian for 'food'), is being celebrated for his creative countermeasures.

"Verona is beautiful," says Spinazzé, "but it has a big problem with the far right." Whenever he encounters swastikas and other racist graffiti, he paints over them with colourful depictions of his favourite foods, from cupcakes to pizza.

Extremists often spray paint over Spinazzé's cheerful food pictures, but he simply paints over their hateful messages again, and they usually give up. His art is also awakening locals to the seriousness of the problem. "People were so used to those messages that they didn't really see them. Now people are starting to understand."



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MY STORY

Strange Happenings

Was the cottage's previous owner still flitting about?

BY Susan Willis



I remember the first day I came to view the 1920s cottage. It was at the end of a quiet, tree-lined street – although at the time the autumn leaves were falling – but that was long before the three strange happenings occurred. The cottage was in a good residential area not far from the local hospital with great transport links to the north-east of London. It had been pouring with rain when I'd pulled up outside and remembered the estate agent's words that the cottage did need a little updating.

It looked small but, stepping through the hall, I decided it was like a Tardis because it was much bigger inside. The estate agent had also told me that a 92-year-old

spinster had died in the cottage in July 1999, just a few months earlier. Her nephew was selling the property. She'd been called Jane and had lived there all her life with her parents.

I thought it was strange to live in one house forever because people were much more transient nowadays. By the age of 40, I'd already lived in three different flats.

The lounge door opened onto a small square kitchen and a huge walk-in pantry. I clapped my hands with joy. I had only seen these in magazines and stroked the wood shelving lovingly.

Walking up the staircase, I was filled with happiness when I found myself standing on a huge L-shaped



landing. The whole area was encased with rosewood spindles and polished banisters, and I knew this was the wow factor.

A feeling of peace and tranquillity settled over me as I rested against the banister. I had just come out of a long break up with my partner and was at the stage where I thought, *Had all those tears and heartache been worth it?* My answer was simply, no, and I knew that he would have hated the old cottage.

I turned into the first bedroom.

Susan Willis lives in County Durham, England, surrounded by a big family and friends. When she's not writing, Susan enjoys swimming, knitting and going to the cinema.

An old brass headboard was propped against a wall and I wondered, *Was that where Jane died?* I shivered, but strangely it didn't feel eerie. The cottage felt calm.

I learnt more about Jane during the week I moved into the cottage. I found out from neighbours how the walk-in pantry had held all kinds of natural herbal remedies, potions and tonics. And how Jane had boiled these in a big old jam pan which still sat on a shelf in the pantry – I didn't have the heart to throw it away.

I'd talked to the man who lived next door. He said, 'Well, I snagged my arm on a rose bush and it wouldn't heal but Jane rubbed some ointment onto the gash and although I didn't know what it was – it certainly did the trick and healed up in two days!'

I smiled imagining Jane in her kitchen, or should I say, my kitchen now. I settled in quickly and concentrated on urgent jobs. I slept well in Jane's, or should I say, my bedroom. It was quiet and I felt perfectly safe. However, the landing proved to be a hot-spot where a couple of events happened.

The electrician who came to rewire the cottage had what he called, an eerie experience. He licked his lips nervously, then ran a hand through his grey hair. "I felt as though someone was behind me when I crawled into the small

trap door and pulled a new reel of cable behind me," he said. "At first, I thought it was you but when I looked over my shoulder and you weren't there, I didn't know what to think. I felt as though something, or someone, was hovering over my shoulder..."

I tried to make a joke but he didn't laugh, and I swallowed hard - he was serious. Needless to say, he finished the rewiring in record time. Two days later, a burly plasterer arrived and began to renew the landing walls. When I brought a mug of tea up to him he asked, "Did you come up a few minutes ago?"

I shook my head. "Er, no." The big man shook his head and rubbed his wide jaw. "Well, someone was definitely up here behind me when I was kneeling by the trap door!"

I gulped again.

"Well, I suppose because the house is over 80 years old, there's bound to be creaks and groans from the old floorboards."

He, too, finished up quickly, gathered his tools and made a hasty retreat.

The next week I was sound asleep when music drifted into my dream. I opened one eye. I knew that song. I woke myself up a little more and switched on the bedside light. I listened harder and suddenly it

clicked. It was the lullaby playing from my jewellery box. I stared over at the box on the other side of the bedroom.

It was in the shape of a small set of drawers where you had to pull out the bottom drawer to play the lullaby. It was a special memento because my father had bought it for me before he passed. I shook

my head in confusion. If I hadn't been out of bed, then who had pulled out the drawer? I couldn't understand but got up and pushed the drawer back in. Silence filled the bedroom once more

and I slid back under the quilt.

I wasn't frightened at all. In fact, I decided it was nice not to feel alone in the cottage. I like to think Jane loved the cottage so much she didn't want to leave, and maybe she liked my jewellery box, too.

Smiling, I drifted back to sleep. Perhaps being a spinster, Jane didn't like men in the cottage and that's why she'd showed herself and spooked them. I figured she was more comfortable with me - a single lady living alone like herself - and it was Jane's way of protecting me.

**“SOMETHING,
OR SOMEONE,
WAS HOVERING
OVER MY
SHOULDER...”**

Do you have a tale to tell? We'll pay cash for any original and unpublished story we print. See page 8 for details on how to contribute.



SMART ANIMALS

The personality of two assertive animals shines through



Buster The Bull

WYNNE SMITH

To be clear, Buster wasn't my bull. He escaped his pasture next door and showed up in my barn. I was afraid of the loose behemoth that day – maybe because I was new to the area – but he soon became my therapist, teacher and friend.

Once he was back in his pasture, we'd chat over the fence, covering such topics as hard days at work and exciting happenings at home. He did most of the listening, giving knowing glances and huffs when appropriate. When it was time to end the conversation, he'd turn and walk away. He had impeccable timing.

I posted Buster photos and stories on Facebook – he had quite a following. One admirer's dying wish was to muster the strength to meet him.

The fan arrived bearing apples. Buster rarely ate apples except from one tree in his pasture, but he gobbled them up that day. Buster also stopped eating long enough to pose for photos with the ailing man who thought the world of him.

In 2020, at just seven years old, Buster fell ill and drifted to the woods to be alone. It was his time. I miss Buster. There will never be another like him.

The Big Cheese

SAMANTHA KENT

My boyfriend and I were visiting Wolf Hollow wolf sanctuary in Ipswich, Boston, in the US in the late 1990s. On the other side of the chain-link fence a pack of wolves of different shades of grey and brown were milling about. The manager stood by the fence, telling us how he'd rescued the wolves from all over the US. He explained that wolf society is built on a strict hierarchy and pointed out one by one the alpha male, his mate the alpha female, the beta wolves, the deltas, and finally, the lowest-ranking omegas.

He had a bag of cubed cheese in his hand. The rustling of the plastic as he opened it drew the wolves' attention, and when he threw cubes of cheese over the fence, they scattered after them and started – dare I say it? – wolfing them down.

All, that is, except the alpha male. He sat down by the fence and stared pointedly at the manager. He wasn't going to lower himself by dashing here and there after the morsels. He wanted to be hand-fed through the fence. And so he was.

Next came a display of howling. To start them off, the manager did his



best imitation of a wolf howl. One of the youngest – and lowest-ranking – wolves couldn't help himself: he immediately followed suit. In wolf packs, the alpha male howls first, and only then do junior wolves join in. The alpha male clearly wasn't happy at this insubordination. To show his displeasure, he grabbed the offender around the muzzle and led him off behind a bush, where we could just make out the younger wolf rolling over at his feet in submission. After the niceties of protocol had been clarified, they returned to the pack. The alpha male offered up a tremendous howl, the others then joining him in a wonderful chorus.

You could earn cash by telling us about the antics of unique pets or wildlife. Turn to page 8 for details on how to contribute.

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PETS

Is A Cavoodle Right For You?

Things you need to know about this popular dog

BY *Dr Katrina Warren*



Our regular pet columnist, Dr Katrina Warren, is an established and trusted animal expert.

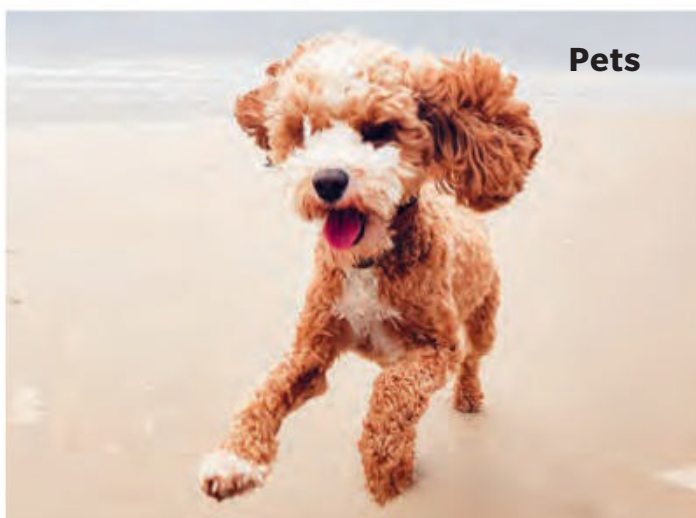
THE CAVOODLE has become one of the most popular family pets, loved for its convenient size, sweet personality and low-shedding coat. As its name suggests, cavoodles are a cross breed between a Cavalier King Charles spaniel and a poodle. They show characteristics from each parent. While generally regarded as great family pets, prospective owners should still carefully consider their suitability. Dr Katrina Warren shares points to consider before bringing a cavoodle into your household.

THE CAVOODLE IS NOT A RECOGNISED BREED.

The poodle part may be a toy or a miniature, with most cavoodles weighing between 5-12 kilograms and standing 25-40 centimetres high. Cavoodles are happiest as indoor dogs. They love human company and may fret if left outdoors for long periods. Like all dogs, they still need daily exercise for mental and physical stimulation and care must be taken to house train them properly if you want them to toilet outdoors.

TIPS FOR BUYING A PUPPY. Unfortunately, due to their popularity as a family pet, many cavoodles come from puppy farms. The breeding of mixed breed dogs is less regulated than pure breed dogs, so do your research to avoid supporting these businesses.

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES



A breeder should allow you to visit their property to see how their puppies are raised. You should be allowed to meet the mother of the litter, and ideally the father, and be comfortable with their health and personality. Remember, temperament is partly inherited, so you may get an indication of your puppy's temperament by meeting the parents. Don't buy a puppy online and look for a breeder who allows their puppies time indoors to socialise.

REGULAR GROOMING IS REQUIRED. One of the reasons cavoodles are popular is the fact that they don't shed a lot of hair. However, their hair grows continuously and requires clipping every six weeks. Most owners use a professional groomer for this and the cost should be taken



CAVOODLE FACTS

- *Life expectancy 13-15 years
- *Usually good with cats
- *Popular apartment pets

Although they prefer to be indoors, cavoodles still need outdoor exercise

into consideration before buying a cavoodle. If a cavoodle's coat grows too long, it is prone to tangles and matting, which can be uncomfortable and painful to remove. Cavoodles should also be brushed once a week and their ears checked and cleaned regularly.

LEARNING COPING SKILLS.

Cavoodles can be prone to separation anxiety. So make sure your puppy has dedicated alone time every day and don't allow them to constantly follow you around.

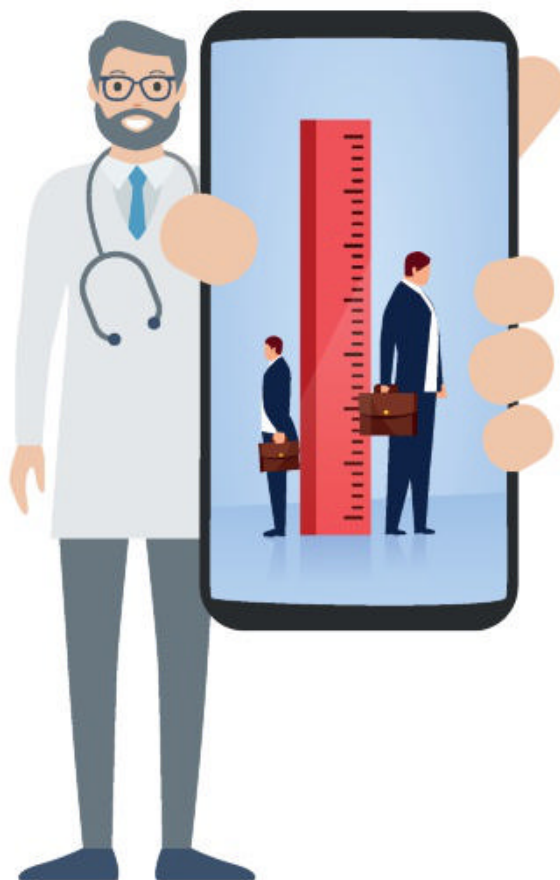
CAVOODLES AND CHILDREN.

While cavoodles are tolerant of children, young children should never be left alone with their puppy or dog as they can easily scare or injure them. Children must be taught to give their dog space when the dog is eating, sleeping or having quiet time.

HEALTH

Height-Weight Risk For Aggressive Prostate Cancer

BY *Lauren Cahn*



Globally, prostate cancer is the second-most common cancer among men, according to the World Health Organization. But it's very treatable with a five-year survival rate around 99 per cent, as it tends to be slow to grow and spread, and PSA (prostate-specific antigen) testing enables early detection. But certain physical features can make the prognosis significantly less rosy, according to new research.

A research team led by scientists at the University of Oxford has

discovered that being larger than average – either taller or fatter – puts men at a higher risk of developing a more aggressive prostate tumour, and of dying from it. The study, published in *BMC Medicine*, found that increased height was not associated with overall risk of contracting prostate cancer, but only with the aggressive forms of the disease.

Researchers analysed data from the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC) involving 141,896 men from Denmark, Italy, the

Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the UK, Germany and Greece. Of those men, 7024 were diagnosed with prostate cancer. Of those cancer cases, 726 were aggressive tumours, 1388 were diagnosed at an advanced stage, and 934 resulted in death.

With every additional ten centimetres of height, the risk of high-grade tumours and death increased by 21 per cent and 17 per cent respectively. With every ten centimetres of waist circumference (the study's preferred method for measuring obesity), the risk of high-grade tumours and death increased by 13 per cent and 18 per cent, respectively.

Though the researchers aren't clear about the link between height and aggressive prostate cancer, according to the study's lead author, Dr Aurora Perez-Cornago, further study is needed into how factors that influence greater height (such as hormones and childhood nutrition) may influence the development of this type of cancer.

OBESITY RAISES ODDS

When it comes to understanding the connection between obesity and the aggressive form of the disease,

the study authors theorise that the increased hormone levels associated with obesity may also increase the risk of developing aggressive prostate cancer. However, it could also be that obesity may make it more difficult to diagnose the illness at an early (and more survivable) stage, regardless of tumour aggressiveness.

In other more recent findings published online in *BMC*, using data from a UK Biobank study, researchers

found for every five additional points on a man's BMI score they were seven per cent more likely to die from prostate cancer.

"Knowing more about factors that increase the risk of prostate cancer is key to preventing it," said Dr Perez-Cornago.

"Age, family history and black ethnicity are known risk factors but they are not modifiable, and so it is important to discover risk factors that are possible to change."

Some smaller previous studies have suggested that higher adiposity (amount of body fat) is a risk factor for lethal prostate cancer, with central adiposity (fat around the belly and waist) being particularly important.

If you are concerned, seek advice from your GP about testing for prostate cancer.

INCREASED HEIGHT WAS FOUND TO BE LINKED TO THE AGGRESSIVE FORMS OF PROSTATE CANCER





HEALTH

Dandruff Problem?

Help is available for these common causes

BY *Susan Jara*

YOUR HAIR'S NATURAL FUNGUS

Dry skin doesn't cause dandruff. The real culprit is an overgrowth of a yeast called *pitryosporum orbiculare*. The yeast feeds on skin oils, which may explain why people with oily scalps are more susceptible to dandruff. A mild case will respond to self-treatment, so give over-the-counter dandruff shampoos about two weeks to work.

YOU'RE STRESSED OUT Stress causes dandruff, so it may be a clue that you need to relax. "Stress can worsen any skin condition," says dermatologist Dr Lotika Singh. It promotes oil production, which leads to more yeast and dandruff. It may also impair your immune system, provoking dandruff flare-ups. "Particularly in the cases where the dandruff is itchy," she adds. Try

relaxation techniques such as yoga, a daily walk or deep breathing.

YOU'RE NOT SHAMPOOING ENOUGH

A build-up of hair oils can create a hotbed for flakes. "Dandruff can result when there's a build-up of oils/sebum or sweat on the scalp," says dermatologist Dr Robert T. Brodell. "Washing hair more frequently can help reduce the sebum and control dandruff and its symptoms." Just take care to rinse shampoo thoroughly.

WATCH WHAT YOU EAT Some foods may cause a flare-up. Avoid full-fat dairy foods like cheese and cream which can increase inflammation and oil production that leads to dandruff. Conversely, food rich in zinc, like meat, legumes and seafood, may help control sebum production. **R**

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

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News From The

WORLD OF MEDICINE

QUITTING ALWAYS A GOOD IDEA

According to an American Cancer Society study, quitting smoking before age 35 almost entirely eliminates the risk of dying from the cancers caused by the habit. Smokers who stop before 45 cut that risk by 87 per cent, while those who quit between 45 and 54 can still reduce it by nearly 80 per cent. But anyone at any age can take heart: you're never too old to quit.

A PACEMAKER FOR DEPRESSION?

Nearly one-third of people with depression fail to respond to available treatments – including medication and psychotherapy. But a team at the University of California broke new ground by successfully treating a 36-year-old woman's depression by surgically implanting a battery-operated device inside her skull.

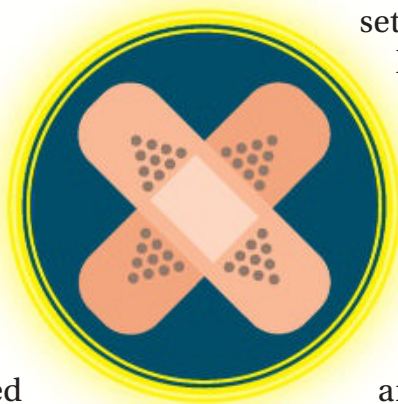
Similar to a pacemaker for the heart, the device was able to detect an abnormal electrical activity pattern in her mood circuit that occurred

when she was becoming depressed. When the device delivered short bursts of electrical stimulation, her depression improved almost immediately. Known as deep brain stimulation, this minimally invasive technique will soon be tested in more patients with severe, treatment-resistant depression.

'SMART BANDAGES' ARE ON THE WAY

To check if a wound is healing properly, you need to remove the bandage, which can give pathogens a chance to attack. But now, Australian researchers at RMIT University in Melbourne have developed 'smart' wound dressings that detect biochemical changes in the skin.

The dressings glow brightly under UV light if infection starts to set in. In wounds that had previously been infected, the absence of fluorescent light signalled that the infection had cleared. After more tests, the product will be made available to doctors around the world.



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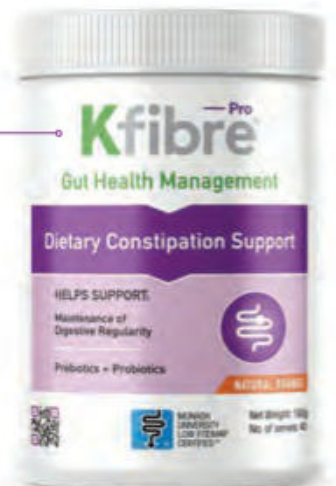


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Judi Dench

ON WHY WORKING MATTERS

The great actress opens up about stage fright, working with Kenneth Branagh and her viral TikTok videos

BY James Mottram

“I might cough a bit... don’t get alarmed!” says Judi Dench. In these pandemic-riddled times, any tickle in the throat is a concern – especially if you’re 87 years old, as she is. But it’s nothing serious, she assures me. With a floral scarf wrapped around her neck, her white hair neatly cropped, the acclaimed star of *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* and *Philomena* looks in fine fettle when we connect over Zoom. These



past months the biggest issue Dench has experienced, like so many of us, is psychological.

"The thing about COVID is that it mucked up the rhythm inside me, I feel," she says. "I don't know what the outcome of that will be. But it's a curious, odd, and unsettling feeling." She pauses for a second. "Hopefully, we'll get back to some kind of, well, normality... or something approximating normality."

For an actress who has rarely stopped performing professionally since 1957, it's no surprise to find her destabilised by the past two years. Theatre, TV and, more recently, film have been her lifeblood. So how did she cope with the enforced lockdown? Baking banana bread?

"I planned to learn all the sonnets, the Shakespeare sonnets. I didn't do that. I just didn't do it," she sighs. Inertia got the better of her. "You get nothing done."

Fortunately, her 24-year-old grandson, Sam Williams, paid a visit and taught her all about the social media site TikTok. "He's a TikTok fiend," she chuckles. Suddenly, Dench was dancing in micro-videos with Williams. "We would do it. And I'd say, 'Can we [film] that now?'. He said, 'No, no, no - more rehearsal! You need more rehearsal'. That went on for weeks!"

The clip, which sees Dench

moving in perfect harmony with Sam and his mother - her daughter Finty Williams - has been viewed millions of times.

Quite apart from staying limber and becoming a viral sensation, Dench is desperate to get back to work. While her eyesight has long been affected by macular degeneration, making it difficult to read scripts, there has never been any thought about retiring.

"I've always thought, *One is very lucky to be employed!*" she says, modestly. "I just think that and I always get frightened at the end of

the job, because I think I'm not going to be employed again, and then feel very relieved at the beginning of the next one."

Winning an Oscar (for her imperious Queen Elizabeth I in *Shakespeare in Love*), a Tony, seven Olivier awards and a staggering ten BAFTAs for television and film, it's bewildering to believe that Dench still gets the jitters. Even when she scores a job, she feels anxious. "I get more anxious now!" she cries. "Oh, yes, much more anxious. There's more things to consider and more things to find out and more things to learn about. And you think, *Oh God, have I got the energy to do this?*"

While her early years were spent

THE
1980s SITCOM
A FINE ROMANCE
TURNED
DENCH INTO
A HOUSEHOLD
NAME



Dench earned an Oscar for her performance as Queen Elizabeth I in the comedy-drama *Shakespeare In Love* in 1998

working with the Royal Shakespeare Company, she became a household name in the 1980s, starring in the four-series British sitcom *A Fine Romance* with her late husband Michael Williams. Yet it was in the following decade, winning an Oscar nomination for her sensitive take on Queen Victoria in *Mrs Brown*, that she became a film star. Then in her mid-60s, this late bloom left her hungry for more. “I just, really, always hope that I will be asked to do something different,” she says. “And perhaps not expected. Or something that has no reference to anything I’ve done

before.” That is exactly the case with her new film, *Belfast*, directed by her old friend, Kenneth Branagh.

They’ve worked together multiple times – 12, she counts – but this semi-autobiographical account of Branagh’s childhood in the Northern Irish capital in 1969, just as the Troubles began, is unlike anything Dench has ever done.

With the story seen through the eyes of the young Buddy (Jude Hill), Dench plays his Granny, almost unrecognisable thanks to a pudding bowl grey wig and a treacle-thick Irish accent.



Dench in *Belfast*, a film set in 1969 at the start of the era known as 'The Troubles' in Northern Ireland

She first met Branagh 25 years ago, on a television production of Ibsen's play *Ghosts*. "We both got sent out of the studio for laughing," she recalls. "We have very much the same sense of humour."

Their birthdays – his on December 10, hers December 9 – are also (almost) shared. "I just love working with him. I just love it. It's very varied, all the things I've done with Ken. And I've directed him and been directed by him and been in things with him. It's always different."

Shot in inky black-and-white, *Belfast* won the People's Choice Award at the Toronto Film Festival, while Dench was nominated for several awards, of which she won 'Best Supporting Actress – International' at the

Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts Awards.

But away from the gongs and the glamour, *Belfast* is a highly personal look at childhood and the difficulties of growing up in a politically turbulent era. "I thought it was from the heart, I must say," says Dench. "I thought it was very much from the heart and I understood why he had written it."

Dench has strong connections to Ireland. Her mother was from Dublin and her father, a doctor who hailed from Dorset, also grew up in southern Ireland. By the time Dench was born, her family were living in York but when the Catholic-Protestant conflict escalated in Ireland in the 1960s, she remembers just how much

it affected her relatives. “We had family in Northern Ireland, and I think we were concerned all the time about it. Everybody I remember was.”

Dench grew up as a Quaker, though her beloved husband – who died in 2001, 30 years into their marriage – was Catholic. She recalls being advised to convert before they married.

“And then a great, great friend of ours, Tom Corbishley, who was the master of Campion Hall [at Oxford University], said, ‘No, no, no. You mustn’t convert. On the page you may not meet, but off the page, you do.’ And that was a wonderfully quiet, sensitive, loving thing to say.”

She speaks fondly of Williams, especially when we move onto her time playing James Bond’s MI6 superior M, a tenure that began with 1995’s *GoldenEye*. “Mikey, my husband, longed to live with a Bond woman! He longed for it!” she chuckles, softly.

She recently went to the premiere of *No Time To Die* at the Royal Albert Hall to witness Daniel Craig’s final outing as Bond. “It was a very emotional moment!” says Dench, who featured in the previous eight 007 movies. This time, she pops up as a portrait on the wall – a good trivia question in years to come.

“I was frightfully pleased.”

Acting runs in Dench’s family – with daughter Finty, 49, also a regular on stage and screen. “I think both Michael and I knew with Finty that she would probably want to do this,” she says.

Dench recalls her time working with Daniel Day-Lewis on a 1989 production of *Hamlet* when she played Gertrude. Finty visited her dressing room. “When I came up after a scene, she was dressed entirely in my clothes from the closet scene, so I kind of thought, *Oh, hello, this is the way the wind blows!*”

Her grandson Sam, on the other hand, isn’t interested. “He has no desire whatsoever to act,” says Dench, who recollects watching him in a school play. “All the other little children came on and were all standing there and waving, trying to attract

Dench, here with Daniel Craig, played M, the head of MI6, in seven James Bond films



READER'S DIGEST

their parents. Not Sammy. Sammy just stood sideways to present the smallest amount of himself.”

Nevertheless, last year, he joined Dench and his mother for *A Dench and 2 Williams*, an on-stage ‘evening with’ event. “The person who was the least nervous was Sammy. Sammy was so calm. Finty and I were nervous wrecks!”

Dench’s curiosity and creativity remain undimmed. She’s already onto her next movie role in *Allelujah* – which reunites her with Richard Eyre, who previously directed her to Oscar nominations in two sublime films, *Iris*, about celebrated English author Iris Murdoch, and *Notes on a Scandal*. *Allelujah* is about a geriatric ward threatened with closure.

I want to finish by asking a hypothetical. After all the success she’s enjoyed, is there anything she’d tell her younger self if she could? “I don’t know,” she murmurs. “Don’t be so susceptible.” To what? “To falling in love with people!”



Dench with grandson Sam Williams at a screening of *Belfast*

Was that what she was like when she was younger? “Oh, certainly!” she coos. “It’s such a glorious stage, isn’t it? You can’t kind of resist to give it up. And then you do it all over again.” Dench giggles. “Just hopeless!” **R**

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

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Bendable Battery

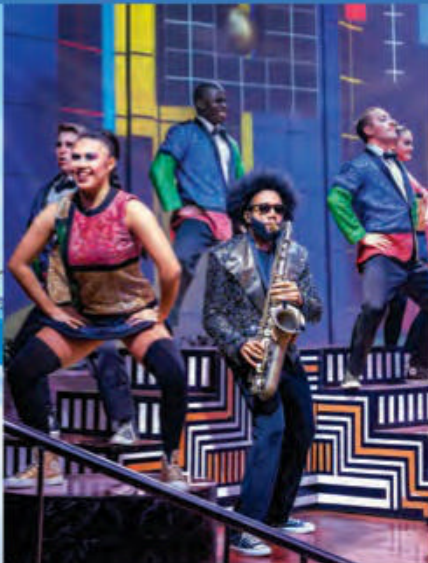
South Korean researchers have created a battery that bends and stretches like a snake, which could benefit wearable devices. Bongkyun Jang, who co-led the research, said that “mimicking snake scales helped them develop a battery that was flexible, stretchable, and safe to use.” Currently batteries in wearable devices are fitted in a tight formation. WWW.DAILYADVENT.COM



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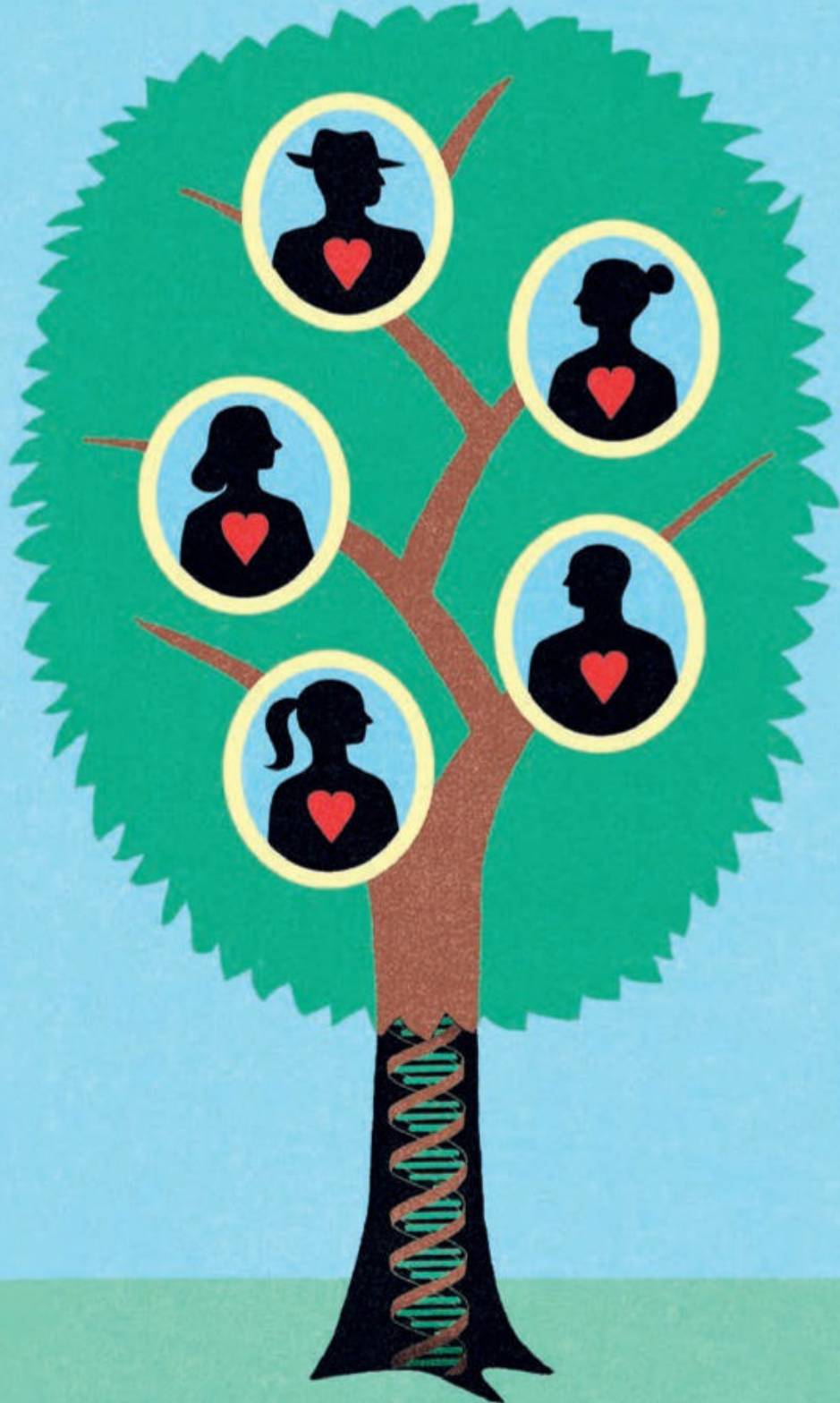
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When **HEART DISEASE** *Runs In The Family*

What you can do with the cardio cards you've been dealt

BY *Charlotte Hilton Andersen* AND *Karla Walsh*

“I had no idea what was going on,” recalls Jenny Petz, a mother of two. She remembers thinking at the time, *Why is my mother sitting on my chest to talk to me?* She knew that made no sense, but it was the only explanation she could think of for the extreme chest pressure and heaviness she felt as she lay on the bedroom floor in 2008, drifting in and out of consciousness.

She later learned that her mother was there, but she wasn't talking to Jenny. She was on the phone with emergency services, summoning an ambulance.

Jenny Petz, a young, healthy 32 year old, had only just given birth. Eight days later, she was having a heart attack.

READER'S DIGEST

An ECG (electrocardiogram) at the hospital revealed the severity of Jenny's condition. Her heart attack was caused by spontaneous coronary artery dissection (SCAD). "It's as scary as it sounds," she says. "One of the main arteries to my heart exploded."

Another artery to Jenny's heart was 90 per cent blocked, and when the pregnancy put extra strain on her heart, the clogged artery increased the work for the remaining arteries, and the extra pressure eventually became too much.

SHE WAS RUSHED INTO SURGERY, where doctors placed a stent in the blocked artery and repaired the one that had ruptured. Jenny was lucky to be alive.

Next came the search to figure out why someone who didn't appear to have risk factors for heart disease had suffered such a potentially cataclysmic event. The culprit: her cholesterol, which measured 8.1 mmol/L, far into the high-risk category.

"I'd never had my cholesterol tested, because I'd never seen a reason to," she says. "I had no obvious risk factors."

A genetic test showed familial hypercholesterolemia, a life-threatening condition that leads to high cholesterol. A mutation means the body can't remove the LDL (low density lipoprotein), or 'bad' cholesterol, from the blood as it normally would. Heart attacks or strokes often follow.

FAMILIAL HYPERCHOLESTEROLEMIA affects about one in every 250 people, according to the The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the US, although many, like Jenny, are never diagnosed until serious symptoms arise. Many people's elevated cholesterol is chalked up to bad lifestyle choices.

Familial hypercholesterolemia is only one of many heart conditions that can be passed down from parents to children, including cardiomyopathies (diseases of the heart muscle), arrhythmias (irregular heartbeat) and more.

Of course, lifestyle also plays a powerful role in determining heart health. Inactivity, obesity and smoking contribute. According to the World Health Organization, heart disease is the leading cause of death globally, responsible for 17.9 million deaths in 2019, a whopping 32 per cent of all global deaths.

"The risk for heart disease can increase even more when heredity combines with unhealthy lifestyle choices, such as smoking cigarettes and eating an unhealthy diet," says cardiologist Dr Satjit Bhusri.

Knowing your family history can help you assess your risks and take steps to lower them. "Make a systematic assessment of the health of your relatives. In addition to your parents, siblings and kids, also remember your grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, nephews and

When Heart Disease Runs In The Family



nieces,” says Dr Carolyn Yung Ho, an associate professor of cardiology at Harvard Medical School. “Make note of which side of the family you are talking about, and any important medical illnesses, as well as age and circumstances of how people passed away. Being organised can help you and your doctor identify important patterns,” she says.

FORTUNATELY, EVEN THE MOST PROBLEMATIC GENES can lie dormant in most people if they make positive health habits a priority. A 2016 study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* reported that those with a high genetic risk of heart disease had about double the risk of having a heart attack or stroke.

But they could trim their risk by a whopping 46 per cent with healthy lifestyle choices, including not smoking, exercising regularly, eating

a well-balanced diet and maintaining a body mass index (BMI) of less than 30.

“Try to reduce the risks that you can control,” Dr Ho says. Being healthy and active is the best defence, she says.

Jenny Petz, now 46, has done just that. After her terrifying heart attack, she went through cardiac rehabilitation and suffered no lasting heart damage. She began taking a statin to lower her cholesterol, and a drug to lower blood pressure. She does her best to exercise regularly and eat a healthy diet.

“Thanks to these changes, my total cholesterol has stayed around 3.8 mmol/L – right in the healthy range – for years now,” she says. Jenny had her two children tested for the genetic condition that caused her heart attack, “and, fortunately, they did not inherit it,” she says. **R**



I SURVIVED!

***WHEN FACED WITH CERTAIN DEATH,
IT TAKES BRAVERY, DETERMINATION
AND PLENTY OF LUCK. THESE PEOPLE
LIVED TO TELL THEIR STORIES***

ILLUSTRATIONS BY **KAGAN MCLEOD**

DRAMA IN REAL LIFE



I SURVIVED A MUDSLIDE

SHERI NIEMEGEERS, 47,
INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATOR

It was a long weekend in May 2018 and my partner, Gabe Rosescu, and I were taking a road trip from my home in the Canadian province of Saskatchewan, to visit friends in Nelson, British Columbia. We are both adventurous, and we couldn't wait to go hiking and exploring. It was our first trip together after six months of dating.

At around 5.30pm on Thursday, May 17, we were driving on a steep mountain road known as the Crowsnest Highway. I was texting updates to my family and enjoying the view. We weren't aware there'd recently been flooding in the area. When I looked up from my phone, I saw a wave of mud and an enormous tree barrelling down the mountain, right in front of our car, a little Hyundai Elantra. Gabe tried to brake, but it was too late.

I looked at him and we both said, "Oh, shoot!" – the understatement of the century. The mudslide sent our car plummeting nearly 300 metres down a rocky cliff. It landed on its side among some trees.

I don't know how long we were unconscious, but I woke up to the sound of Gabe moaning. He was slumped over the steering wheel and there was blood everywhere. Outside my



The wrecked car after the mudslide

passenger window there was a steep drop. Every time I moved, I was hit with excruciating chest pain. I had broken my sternum and my right ankle was smashed and practically turned backwards. Gabe had broken his orbital bone and nasal and cheek bones. Parts of his skull were crushed and his vision was damaged. But the body is an amazing thing, and somehow we were both able to crawl out of that wreckage.

I was so focused on our survival that I didn't register the wrecked state of the car or where we were. We had no phone signal, so all we could think of doing was to yell for help. But my chest hurt too much to even breathe. So Gabe started shouting as loud as he could.

We were shocked when, after just a few minutes, we heard someone call back. Four bystanders had spotted us and were wading through waist-deep

mud to rescue us. I couldn't walk, so the men took turns shimmying me up the rock face and helping Gabe make his way up to the road. Gabe was in shock, slipping in and out of consciousness, and I honestly didn't think he was going to make it. When the paramedics got to us, they let us kiss each other goodbye from our stretchers as they loaded us into separate ambulances. I was swearing a lot as they took us away – I didn't think I'd ever see my boyfriend again.

They took me to the closest hospital, in Trail, and Gabe was airlifted to the trauma hospital in Kelowna. Throughout the flight, they kept shocking him to keep him awake. I was in the hospital for a week and a half, but they kept Gabe for six weeks. My surgeon had to reconnect the main artery in my foot, and Gabe's surgeon had to split his scalp open three ways to reattach everything. Even after surgery, I'll walk with a limp for the rest of my life, and Gabe permanently lost the vision in his left eye.

Before this all happened, we were happy-go-lucky people. We're even more positive now. We look at everything differently. Despite the injuries we sustained, we're grateful that we're still living a pretty good life. The experience also bonded us as a couple. We still go on road trips. A year after the accident, we drove back to the Crowsnest Highway and gave the finger to the mudslide.

AS TOLD TO EMILY LANDAU

I SURVIVED QUICKSAND

RYAN OSMUN, 34, PHOTOGRAPHER

The Subway is a trail in Zion National Park, in Utah, that's named for its tunnel-shaped canyon. On February 16, 2019, Ryan Osmun and his girlfriend, Jessika McNeill, both from Arizona, had the trail to themselves. The National Park Service describes the hike as very strenuous requiring "route finding, creek crossing and scrambling over boulders." Nowhere does it mention quicksand.

It was sunny when we set out from the trailhead at 8am. Halfway through our 16-kilometre hike, a light snow began to fall. Soon after, we entered the Subway and its swirling, rust-coloured walls. Standing in our way was a small pond. The trail continued on the other side and, because it looked shallow, we began to wade through, with Jessika leading the way.

About 1.5 metres from the edge, her front foot sank into the sandy bottom. Then Jessika fell forwards, and both legs started to sink. I lunged, grabbed her under the shoulders and pulled her out of the muck. She then scrambled back to shore. But now I was sinking. The muck came all the way up to my right thigh and my left calf. I freed my left leg but I couldn't move my right leg at all. Jess handed me a



Jessika McNeill and Ryan Osmun before getting caught in quicksand

long stick we'd picked up earlier in the hike and I jammed it down the side of my leg and tried to wiggle and pull my leg out. Nothing.

Jessika started scooping sand with both hands, but it was refilling faster than she could pull it out. I told her to stop; she was wasting her energy. I was not getting out of the quicksand.

The only phone reception was back at the trailhead, five hours away over rough terrain. I told Jessika she had to hike back and call for help. She was scared – she'd only ever hiked with me and was wary of being alone on such a difficult trail.

Thirty minutes after she left, it started to snow heavily. I zipped up my jacket and pulled my head inside. At some point I nodded off to sleep. I don't know how long I was out, but I woke up as I was falling backwards into the pond and the quicksand. I urgently planted my stick into the dry ground and pulled myself upright. I was exhausted. If I fell backwards

again, I'd never be able to get out. It had been about five hours since Jess left, and it was getting dark.

A few hours later, I saw a light. I prayed it was a helicopter, but it was just the moonlight shining over the canyon walls. At that point, I believed I wasn't going to survive. I started to think about what I could do to die faster. I didn't want to drown if I fell again. That would be the worst way to go.

An hour later, another light shone across my eyes. A torch! I yelled for help. A man shouted back as he ran to me. His name was Tim and he said that Jessika had got through to rescuers. The rest of his crew was an hour behind.

When the three others arrived, they set up a pulley system. Two of the rescuers held me under each shoulder as Tim wrapped a strap around my kneecap. An anchor strap was tied around a boulder. A fourth rescuer worked the pulley. With each ratchet, it felt like my leg was being

ripped off. Tim dug into the sand and got a hand around my ankle and started pulling up. It was agonising, but I could feel my leg moving. “Keep going!” I screamed.

Three more ratchets and my leg was freed. It was too dark and snowy for a helicopter, so they got me into a sleeping bag, gave me pain medication and we settled in for the night. When I woke up at 6am the next day, snow covered the top of my sleeping bag. Around noon, the weather lifted, and the rescue team called in a helicopter.

My entire leg had swollen to the size of my thigh, but when I got to hospital, X-rays revealed no fractures or breaks. I had sat in the quicksand for 12 hours and believed I would die. But I didn't.

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I SURVIVED GETTING SWALLOWED BY A WHALE

JULIE MCSORLEY, 56,
PHYSIOTHERAPIST

I live with my husband, Tyrone, in San Luis Obispo, California. Every few years, the humpback whales come into the bay for a few days while they're migrating.

In November 2020, the whales were around, so we took out our yellow double kayak. We saw about 20 whales feeding on silverfish. It

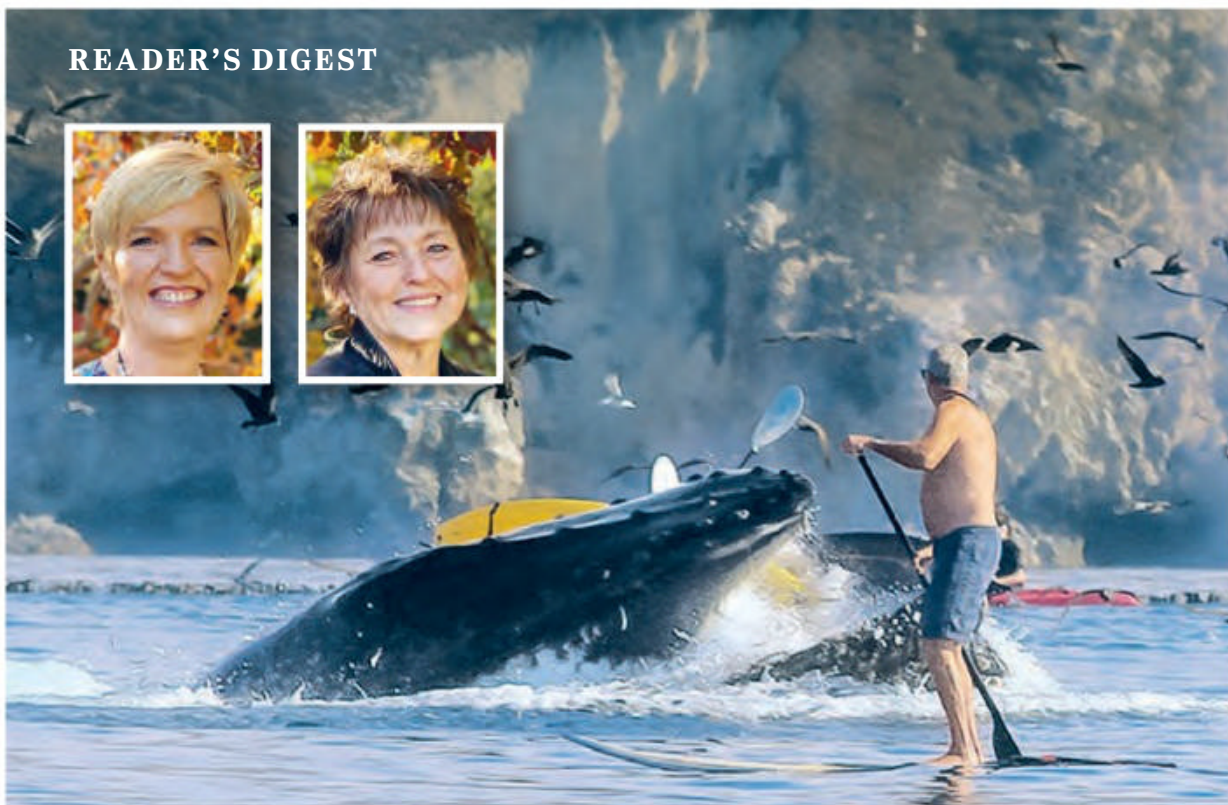
was incredible. They breached and sprayed through their blowholes, and were so graceful and majestic. Each one is huge, about 15 metres long.

At the time, my friend Liz Cottriel was staying with us. The next morning, I asked Liz if she wanted to go out on the water to check them out.

“No way,” she said. She's scared of whales and sharks, and was terrified the kayak would overturn while we were in it. I told her there was nothing to worry about. We got out on the water at about 8.30 the next morning. For the first half hour we didn't see anything. Then I spotted two pairs of whales just past the pier, swimming towards us. It's an amazing feeling to be so close to a creature that size.

When whales go down after breaching, they leave what looks like an oil slick on the water. I figured if we paddled towards that spot, we'd be safe from the whales, since they'd just left. We followed them at a distance – or what I thought was a distance. I later found out that it's recommended to keep 100 metres away. We were about 18 metres away.

All of a sudden, a tightly packed swarm of fish, known as a bait ball, started jumping out of the water into our kayak. Their movement sounded like crackling glass around us. At that moment, I knew we were too close. I was terrified. Then I felt the kayak lift out of the water – about two metres, we later learned – and tip back into the ocean. I figured the whale



Inset: Julie McSorley, left, and Liz Cottriel, right.

A witness captured the moment the whale swallowed the women on video

was going to drag us down somehow, and I had no idea how deep we'd be sucked underwater.

What I didn't realise at the time was that Liz and I were in the whale's mouth. It had engulfed my entire body except for my right arm and paddle. Liz, meanwhile, was looking up directly into the whale's jaw - it was like a big white wall. I was still worried about being sucked underwater, so I just kept thinking, *I've got to get up. I've got to fight this. I've got to breathe.*

Whales have huge mouths but tiny throats. Anything they can't swallow, they spit out. We were wearing life jackets and soon we both popped up out of the water about a metre apart. The entire ordeal lasted only

ten seconds, but to me it felt like an eternity.

A few people were nearby, and someone shot a video of the entire incident. Three or four people paddled over, including a retired firefighter who asked us if we were OK.

"You were in the whale's mouth!" he told us. "We thought you were dead."

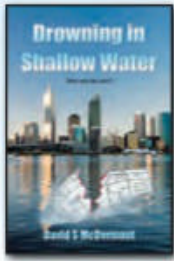
A few days later, I studied the video and saw how close I'd come to being injured or killed.

There's no way I'm getting that close to the whales again. I want to respect their space. When we got back to shore, Liz removed her T-shirt, and five or six fish flopped out. **R**

AS TOLD TO EMILY LANDAU

PHOTOS: (INSET) COURTESY JULIE MCSORLEY AND LIZ COTTRIEL; SAM MCMILLAN PHOTOGRAPHY

GREAT READS FROM GREAT MINDS.



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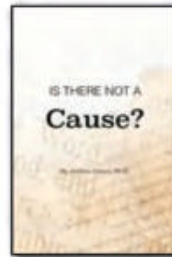
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Lilli Hartel

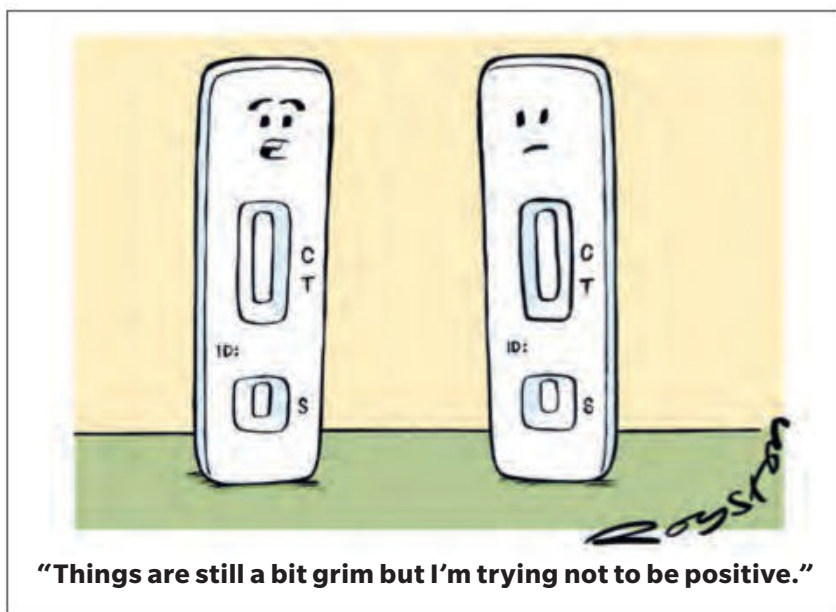
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River Bridge Friends follows the story of two dogs and how they learned to get along and became friends with the geese.

LIFE'S LIKE THAT

Seeing The Funny Side



Be Cherrily Careful

Our six-year-old son told my wife and me that his grandmother had warned him not to go near the river because the big cherry would get him.

Confused, we rang his grandmother only to find out that she actually said, "Be careful not to fall into the river as the current will take you away."

SUBMITTED BY CLED HERBERT

Just Ask Siri

I sometimes ask Siri questions on my iPhone. She comes up with some strange answers. I asked her

recently if she had a boyfriend. Her reply was, "Why? So we can get ice cream together, and listen to music and travel across galaxies, only to have it end in slammed doors, heartbreak and loneliness. Sure, where do I sign up?"

SUBMITTED BY ROB AITCHISON

Soft Served

I was in the park when a lady called out, "Anyone who wants an ice cream, come over here". I went over with several others. She handed out the ice creams to them and asked me, "Who are you?"

I then realised that the rest of the people were her family who were having a day out.

I still cringe about it to this day.

SUBMITTED BY GLORIA WILDING

Park That Thought

During a holiday, my mother and stepfather, Ian, arrived at their hotel and, after checking in, decided to venture out in the car and explore the nearest town. With no other vehicles on the grounds, they assumed they must be the only guests. The hotel was in the middle of nowhere.

A few hours later, after enjoying a meal and several drinks, they drove back to their accommodation and the carpark was completely empty.

"Where is our car?" my mother asked, panicked.

"You're in it!" replied Ian.

SUBMITTED BY LUKE ITHURRALDE

Remember My Name?

Once, a famous entertainer was visiting the care home where I worked and got chatting to an elderly resident. After a while he asked her, "Do you know who I am?"

"No, dear, I'm sorry, I don't," she replied. "But don't worry about it. We all get a bit forgetful now and then. Go and ask that lady over there in the red dress. She's the matron. She'll be able to tell you."

SUBMITTED BY VALERIE CROSSLEY



THE GREAT TWEET OFF: PAWS AND CLAWS

The pet lovers of Twitter share anecdotes about their animals.

My dog, who does not pay rent or bills and is, himself, a bill, has sighed three times in the past five minutes.

@VIKKIE

My favourite thing is when I stay up too late and my dog passive-aggressively puts herself to bed without me, like "YOU do what you want but SOME of us have work in the morning." @AYANAGRAY

ME: [relaxing in bed]

MY CAT: [getting right up in my face] Are you or are you not looking at photos of other cats on your phone right now?

@CATSTRONOMICAL

Almost tripping me up is not just my dog's hobby, it's his passion.

@KENDRAGARDEN

My cat is buddies with a possum. Now I know what it's like to be the parent of a teenager who falls in with the wrong crowd. @EVE6



I Am The
FOOD ON YOUR PLATE



Cabbage

Versatile And Nutritious

BY *Diane Godley & RD Editors*

Ask anyone from a certain age group about the dinners their mothers used to serve up and I guarantee you I'll be top and centre of the conversation. Unfortunately, not because I am super healthy and nutritious, but because I, cabbage, was often boiled to within an inch of my life,

resulting in a limp, pale, smelly mess on the plate. Luckily, my fortunes are slowly changing.

Grown around the world for thousands of years, I come in a variety of shapes and colours, such as red, purple, white and green, and belong to the Brassica genus of vegetables, which includes broccoli, kale and

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

cauliflower. Even with today's food-price hikes, I am still affordable and cooks are slowly realising my value on the dinner plate – not just because I'm cheap but because of my high nutritional value. Like other members of the Brassica family, to reduce the unpleasant odour my sulphur content produces, I should be cooked until just tender. I can also be eaten raw and added to a variety of dishes like soups, stews and salads.

In fact, I am very versatile and have been fermented for thousands of years to extend my life span.

Although my memory doesn't serve me this far back, it is widely reported that fermented cabbage, what those in Europe call *sauerkraut*, didn't originate from Germany at all but from China. During the construction of the Great Wall Of China, the builders subsisted on rice and cabbage, dousing the latter in rice wine to preserve it all winter long.

This concept for fermenting vegetables arose from the need to preserve produce back in the day when refrigeration wasn't a thing. The key to making fermented or pickled cabbage is lacto-fermentation, which is what happens when you take me and pack me with salt. This creates an environment hostile to the microbes that would normally come along

and cause food to rot. *Lactobacillus*, a type of probiotic (good) bacteria found naturally on plants, is quite tolerant of salt, so upping the sodium stacks the deck in its favour. The salt draws water out of the vegetable creating a brine, and the *lactobacillus* bacteria (which thrive in their salty bath), eat the natural sugars in the cabbage, producing lactic acid, which is what makes it sour. And voilà! I am fermented.

Fermented Chinese cabbage, or *suancai*, was introduced in Europe by the 12th century Mongolian warrior-ruler Genghis Khan and his band of nomadic marauders. The big difference between German sauerkraut (literally meaning 'sour cabbage') and

suancai is the type of cabbage used. Whereas sauerkraut is made from white cabbage, *suancai* – and Korean *kimchi*, for that matter – is made from Chinese or napa cabbage.

While the European approach to sauerkraut is to eat it with bratwurst (sausage) and heavily smoked meats, Koreans serve their traditional fermented food as a side dish at almost every meal, even breakfast. Kimchi varies from season to season and region to region, but usually includes napa cabbage and a combination of vegetables (carrots, radish, cucumber, spring onions), garlic, ginger, chilli,

GROWN AROUND THE WORLD FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, I COME IN A VARIETY OF SHAPES

READER'S DIGEST

salt and fish sauce. The flavours are typically sour, spicy and umami; their intensity depending on the amount of salt used and the length of time it is fermented. Like my good self, kimchi is very versatile and can be added to recipes to change them up a bit. It works especially well with bland ingredients, such as tofu, as well as in stews, fried rice, stir-fries and noodles.

When shopping for either sauerkraut or kimchi at the supermarket, choose products from the refrigerated section as they are more likely to be the fermented versions and will be teeming with probiotics. Shelf stable 'fermented' foods, such as old-fashioned pickles, are made with vinegar instead of fermentation, and therefore lack those good probiotics. **R**

CREAMY POTATO SALAD WITH CABBAGE

- 1.5kg red potatoes
- 1 red onion
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 cup sour cream
- ½ cup sauerkraut or kimchi (drained and chopped)
- ½ cup chopped fresh dill
- 2 tbsls wholegrain mustard
- Salt and pepper



Method

1. Slice potatoes (skin left on) into 2cm thick slices.
2. Place potatoes in a medium saucepan and cover with cold water, season generously with salt.
3. Bring to a simmer and cook until potatoes are tender but still holding their shape, about 15 minutes.
4. Drain and let cool.
5. While the potatoes are cooking, cut the onion into rings, then toss in a small mixing bowl with the red wine vinegar. Let stand, stirring every few minutes, until the onion rings are bright pink, about 20 minutes.
6. In a bowl, mix together the sour cream, sauerkraut or kimchi, fresh dill and wholegrain mustard. Season with salt and pepper.
7. Gently stir the sour cream dressing into the cooled potatoes until slices are well coated. Season with additional salt if desired. Serve straight away, or refrigerate up to 8 hours before serving.

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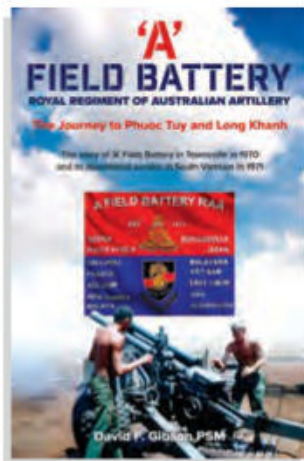
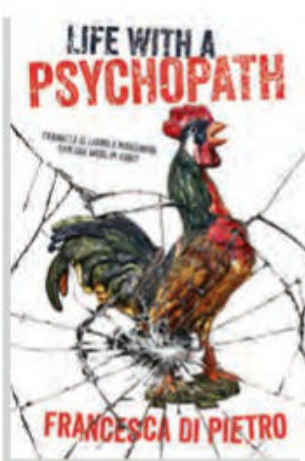
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RECENT TITLES...



CAN YOU
TEACH
YOUR
DOG
TO
TALK?

A new breed of dog owner is trying to teach their dogs to talk. Could your pooch learn some new patter?

BY *Helen Foster*



Bunny, a sheepadoodle, is standing in front of a row of buttons on the floor. Her paw stretches out and pushes two of them. "Who this?", an automated voice asks while Bunny goes to the mirror to look at her own reflection.

It's a remarkable level of understanding – particularly if you're currently at the 'please don't chew my shoe again' stage of communication with your own dog – and it's why Bunny sports over seven million social media followers (@whataboutbunny on TikTok) and why searching the phrase 'dog speech buttons' will bring up eight million results on Google.

It's well established that dogs understand some level of language. A recent study from Dalhousie University in Canada, for example, found that the average dog responds to 89 words but power pooches have up to 215 words in their vocabulary. Leading dog behaviourist Stanley Coren says that dogs can also count up to four or five and even do simple maths. The idea of dog speech training is to take human-canine communication further than basic comprehension.

You, the owner, buy a set of the recordable buttons and decide on a number of words you would like your dog to communicate. You then start a training programme that aims to get your dog to associate the word on the button with an activity like 'outside', 'play' or 'Grandma's house'. In time,

the hope is that your dog will not just understand the button commands, but push buttons themselves to tell you what they need, rather than you trying to figure it out from various woofs or wags.

But, how real is this two-way communication? Is Bunny really chatting to her owner or, is her owner ascribing meaning to her button pushes that just isn't there? "That's what we're trying to find out," says Professor Frederico Rossano, an expert in cognitive science leading a study into the buttons at the University of California, San Diego.

"It is true that humans tend to over-interpret communication," says Professor Rossano. "We do it with children, we do it with other adults by trying to read into people's intentions, and so it's human nature to do this with animals, too – but that doesn't mean that some animals can't communicate."

It would be remarkable to discover even 50 per cent of them can do it, he says, "although whether every dog can is another matter."

What we do know is that some types of dogs seem to pick up words more

Can You Teach Your Dog To Talk?

effectively than others. In the Dalhousie trials, working dogs like border collies or German Shepherds responded to more words and phrases than other dogs – and those with actual jobs recognised 1.5 times more words than pure pets. Toy dogs like Chihuahuas were also good with words. Conversely, golden retrievers, setters and terriers had the lowest vocabulary.

“We’re teasing out other elements but the age of the dog when you started training, personality, temperament and their motivation to please their human may also play a role in learning ability,” says Professor Rossano.

“There’s definitely something about border collies that’s different from other dogs when it comes to linguistics,” says Brisbane-based vet Dr Evan Shaw. He has tried the buttons with his own dog, who he describes as “the Smartest Border Collie in Australia”.

However, Dr Shaw says that he is not sure that dogs really understand language the way those using the buttons assume they do. “I look at it like this – imagine staying in a home where everyone spoke a different language to you but where there was a speech button on the table. If every time you pushed that button, food arrived, you’d assume you’d learned the word for food – but actually it could say anything and pressing the button was what triggered the delivery.”

It’s possible that same association is happening with many dogs, he says.

Other experts have different

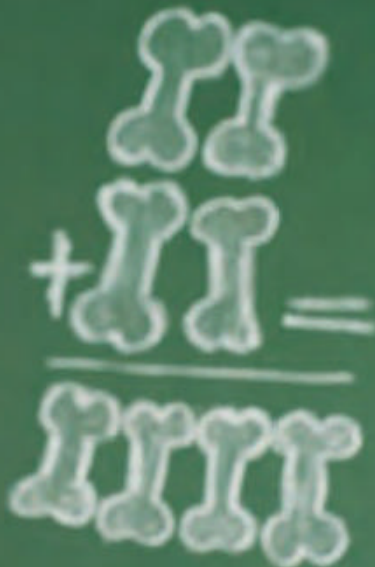
concerns. “I’m not keen on relying on dogs to learn human language to communicate with us rather than us paying more attention to them. It pushes responsibility way too much onto the dogs,” says dog trainer Barbara Hodel, president of the Pet Professional Guild of Australia.

But, in part, better communication is one reason why Professor Rossano is conducting the research. “Dogs are generally very good at communicating their needs to us via their looks



“THERE’S DEFINITELY SOMETHING ABOUT BORDER COLLIES THAT’S DIFFERENT FROM OTHER DOGS WHEN IT COMES TO LINGUISTICS”





***“DOGS ARE
GENERALLY
GOOD AT
COMMUNICATING
THEIR NEEDS VIA
LOOKS AND ACTIONS”***

and actions,” he says. “But the fact that thousands of people a year go to the hospital with dog bites shows we’re obviously not all that good at reading that communication.”

Not every dog needs to be making sentences like Bunny, he adds. “However, if they were able to tell you when they are hungry, thirsty, need the bathroom or in pain, life is going to be easier for everyone.”

Felicity Heron, 33, from Hobart, Tasmania, started training her poodle puppy Piper with buttons because she was looking for a tool to communicate more effectively. “As I’m a speech pathologist, I figured teaching her would be easy – but, I think I was giving Piper a bit too much credit and assuming that she actually knew what words like ‘outside’ meant,” says Heron. “Poppy first realised that if she pushed this button she got a treat, but only after a while did she realise she also got taken outside.

Heron is still not sure if Poppy comprehends how the two relate. “But I noticed that she was sometimes scared by the noise the buttons made so I’ve backed off until she’s a bit older.”

So, if you do want to try and improve your level of canine

Can You Teach Your Dog To Talk?

communication, what gives you the best chance of success? The first is to get a set of buttons – Fluent Pet is the brand being used in the trials – and start with one or two words you think your dog will understand.

“Then it comes down to consistency,” says Professor Rossano. “You have to make sure that whenever the buttons are pushed, the same thing happens. They can’t just think of the buttons as something to chew or play with. You must introduce the association from the outset.”

You do that by saying the word, pushing the button and showing them the meaning – over and over again. This is what’s known as modelling and it’s essential for success. “What we can see is that a lot of people don’t want to push the buttons, they don’t want to bend down, or spend the time – but, the more time you spend pushing the

buttons, the more the dog will also engage because they think there’s something interesting going on,” says Professor Rossano.

Other tips (a full list can be found on TheyCanTalk.org) include starting with words that fit into your dog’s routine like ‘walk’ or ‘outside’. Avoid words that make them too excited and be consistent with wording. Don’t alternate ‘outside’ with ‘garden’ or ‘treat’ with ‘snack’, for example. And choose your first button carefully. “Outside is a good start – but never choose anything to do with food,” says Professor Rossano.

Lucy Frome, 42, from Perth, learned that tip too late. “Max, my four-year-old kelpie-Staffordshire cross quickly worked out the ‘treat’ button and would press it hourly,” she explains. “And then I had to explain to the vet why he was getting fat.” **R**

HOW TO UNDERSTAND DOG GESTURES

While you wait to see if your dog can learn to chat, you might want to spend a bit of time learning what they’re trying to say. Researchers at the University of Salford in the UK have identified 19 gestures dogs use for communication. Here are a few:

FEED ME

- Using their nose or head to move your hand onto their body
- Holding one paw in the air while sitting
- Standing on their hind legs

SCRATCH ME

- Lifting a paw and placing it on your arm
- Gently biting your arm
- Lifting a back leg while laying on their side

OPEN THE DOOR

- Lifting both paws off the ground and placing them on you or another object
- Jumping up and down near the door





SEE THE WORLD...

Turn the page »

...DIFFERENTLY

ARTFULLY ARRANGED FRESHLY CUT MAT GRASS

dries in Shuanggang village in eastern China's Zhejiang province. In July 2021, farmers enjoyed a rich harvest, cultivating about 133 hectares of land with mat grass. The grass is dried in the shape of a fan, then villagers use it to make straw hats, baskets and fans, which they sell to supplement their incomes.

PHOTOS: WANG HUABIN/VCG VIA
GETTY IMAGES



IN THE NEWS

Human Kindness Amid **WAR**

Shining through the death, destruction and heartbreak since Russia invaded Ukraine in February are countless stories of generosity and compassion. Here are just a few.



**Safe and sound (from left): Juan
Luis Escobar, the Fil sisters
(Liubava, Varya and Yesenia),
and María Jesús Márquez**



SPAIN

The Family Who Brought Three Sisters To Safety

On February 25, María Jesús Márquez and her husband Juan Luis Escobar, of Ciudad Real in central Spain, got into their Citroën C4 to make a lengthy round trip: roughly 7700 kilometres. They were heading to Ubla, a village in eastern Slovakia on the Ukraine border.

Their mission? To pick up three Ukrainian sisters – Liubava Fil, 14;

were able to bring these three girls to safety.

During the summers of 2017, 2018 and 2019, the couple had hosted Yesenia in their home through an aid programme. So when the girls' older sister, Juliana, 18, asked for their help – starting with a message to them on Instagram that read, “Juan, María, please come for my sisters, this is very bad and horrible” – they didn't hesitate to do it.

It was a difficult trip, partly because the couple couldn't share the driving; only Maria Jesús has a driver's licence. Also, they didn't have much time to plan a route or arrange accommodation. But their daughter Andrea, 25, who remained in Spain, helped them with logistics along the way.

They also had the support of friends and members of Ciudad Real en Ayuda al Niño, the non-profit organisation that had arranged Yesenia's

previous visits.

The couple says they experienced beautiful moments of solidarity with, and generosity from, many people, including in Poland, Germany and France. For example, a Polish family opened their home to the group to stay on the return trip to Spain. And others contacted them through various social networks to offer accommodation.

“There was even a restaurant that

On the trip, they experienced generosity from many people, and beautiful moments of solidarity

Yesenia Fil, 12; and Varya Fil, 10 – and give them refuge from the escalating war.

“These girls had to flee, in desperation, an unjust war in which they had become immersed,” says Juan Luis.

The group of five returned from their long drive on March 5. María Jesús and Juan Luis were visibly tired as they explained to media that the journey had indeed been exhausting, but also very exciting because they

PHOTO: (PREVIOUS SPREAD) COURTESY MARÍA JESÚS MÁRQUEZ & JUAN LUIS ESCOBAR

wouldn't let us pay for our meals when they learned we were taking in three Ukrainian girls fleeing the war," Juan Luis says.

He acknowledges that the saddest moment of the trip was when the girls' mother had to say goodbye to her daughters. How have the girls coped with the separation? "We tried to avoid talking about it," Juan Luis shares.

"We didn't want to upset them further."

The two youngest, Yesenia and Varya, will stay with Maria Jesús and Juan Luis, and Liubava will go to another foster family that lives only a few kilometres away.

Yesenia did not hide her joy upon arriving in Spain: she greeted journalists in Ciudad Real with a cheerful "Hola!" and said she wanted to go to Juan Luis and María Jesús's house for an ice cream.

Now, the foster couple will begin the necessary paperwork, starting with ensuring the girls get health care and can attend school.

How long will the Fil sisters be welcome to stay? For as long as they need to and as long as their family wants them to, the couple says.

"We know that after a war there is a post-war period, and there will be many difficult moments," says Juan



Dr Peter Haarmann helps Ukrainian refugees at the Polish border

Luis. "But we are prepared to face it, and we will treat the girls as if they are our own daughters."

EFE from *La Tribuna de Ciudad Real*

EFE NEWS SERVICES (MARCH 5, 2022)

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GERMANY

The Doctor Who Rushed To The Border

When Russia invaded Ukraine at the end of February and millions of people began fleeing to neighbouring Poland, Peter Haarmann, a doctor from Stühlingen in southwestern Germany, knew he had to help. He left his medical practice and headed to the town of Przemysl, in south-eastern Poland, as soon as he could to help refugees crossing the border. Dr Haarmann stayed for two weeks.

This interview with German broadcaster *SWR* took place shortly after he arrived in early March.

Dr Haarmann, what is the situation where you are now?

We've been here at the border for four days and we're seeing a steady flow of refugees. They are exhausted, sick and mentally stressed. Most are women with children, and older people. There are almost no men.

What are the people telling you?

Conversation is a bit difficult because we don't have anyone on our team

In what ways are you able to help out medically?

I can partially examine people and make sure they get the appropriate medicine. We brought a lot of medications with us, for example, treatments for skin conditions caused by the cold. Being out in this weather for so many hours takes a toll. Diarrhoea has also become a problem. Medical-aid deliveries are arriving here by the truck-load, and some of them go directly into Ukraine, to military hospitals. We've already established contact there, and their drivers, often women, come here to pick up supplies.

“I can make sure people get the right medication.

Truck-loads of medical aid are arriving”

who speaks Ukrainian. From time to time we have a couple of interpreters nearby – often refugees themselves – who come to help us.

It is quite difficult. These women are often severely traumatised and take loving care of their children. Sometimes, after we have given their child a surprise treat and we ask the mothers whether we can do anything for them, too, tears fill their eyes, and they turn away.

What made you decide to come to Poland to help?

When news about these terrible events first came out, I heard about a local businessman collecting things and delivering them by truck to the Ukraine border. I thought, *I can drive there too and help.*

When I mentioned this at my doctor's office, one of my employees immediately said: “I'll come with you.”

What would you like to say to people back home?

I can only appeal for continued support for these people who have been so battered by this war. Please, please keep donating. First and foremost, donate money. We are also establishing connections while we are here at

the border so that we can still help once we have returned to Stühlingen.

Aren't you scared to be so close to a war zone?

No. But we know that some people are worried about us. We always try to convey that we feel very safe here. We are not afraid. Other emotions are much more on our minds.

SWR Aktuell

FROM SWR AKTUELL, MARCH 3, 2022

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FINLAND

The Olympian Who Started A Movement

Anni Vuohijoki had just returned to her home in Helsinki from the Winter Olympics in Beijing when Russia invaded Ukraine. "It reminded me of the annexation of Crimea," says the doctor-in-training and member of the Finnish national team's support staff. "They did that after the 2014 Olympics in Sochi."

Anni, 33, feels deeply connected to Ukrainians. "I have Ukrainian friends through my sport," says Anni, who competed in the 2016 Rio Olympics in weight lifting. "And we Finns grew up with a constant fear of our big neighbour." Finland and Russia share a 1300-kilometre border.

On Sunday, February 27, three days after the invasion, Anni and her husband Sami Kõngäs decided



Laura Peippo (left) and Anni Vuohijoki on the bus they used to bring refugees to Finland

that they would offer their cabin as a home for refugees. While chatting online with her friend Laura Peippo in Lapland, she wondered what else they could do. "We decided that if we could get a bus and drivers for free, we could deliver supplies and bring back a group of refugees."

Anni is well known in Finland, and when she tweeted out their plan, journalists immediately called with questions. Aid organisations and even a former Finnish foreign minister offered information and help. Careful planning was key.

"We asked a Ukrainian organisation what they needed, and they sent us a list of medical supplies, food and other goods," says Anni.

Meanwhile, Laura used her network to draw up a list of refugees who wanted to come to Finland and who had local contacts to help them and to take them in.

"It was total chaos," says Anni. But six days after she sent her tweet, the women had identified 56 refugees -

It all started after Wojcik posted an appeal on Facebook. Soon there were many offers of help

enough to fill the bus - and secured permits to transport supplies to Warsaw, Poland. On Sunday, March 6, Anni and Laura, along with three volunteer drivers, boarded a donated bus in Helsinki and set off for the ferry to Tallinn, Estonia.

When they dropped off the supplies at the medical distribution centre in Warsaw, they saw firsthand how desperately they were needed. "As soon as a truck arrived that was headed for Ukraine, it was loaded up and gone. I don't think our cargo was there for more than 25 minutes," Anni recalls.

Next stop was Warsaw's railway station, where the 56 refugees had been told to gather between 4pm and 6pm. "We weren't sure if everybody would show up, but they did."

The bus arrived in Helsinki on Tuesday, March 8.

The initiative has generated enormous publicity in Finland - which is exactly what Anni and Laura wanted. "Finland has a culture of helping silently, you don't advertise it. We wanted to openly show that we can all do something," Anni says.

And it has worked. The women have been overwhelmed with messages from people who want to help.

Anni remains in touch with one of the refugees, a young student named Dana, and has even offered her a job at her gym in Helsinki.

"She was alone on the bus," Anni recalls. "Her boyfriend stayed behind in Ukraine to fight. It's heart wrenching."

Paul Robert

FRANCE

The Businessman Who Organised Ambulance Convoys

Lucas Wojcik, a businessman from Meuse department in northeastern France, is behind an initiative to deliver emergency vehicles to help besieged Ukrainians. Thanks to fundraising, and several organisations who responded to his appeal, 22 ambulances driven by volunteers left the small town of



Lucas Wojcik (second from left) led efforts to get desperately needed ambulances to Ukraine

Commercy on March 7 and headed for Ukraine.

It all started a few days earlier when Wojcik posted an appeal on a Facebook page he created called Anti War Ambulance Convoy. “I work in the ambulance business,” he wrote, “and following the start of war in Ukraine, I decided to personally mobilise three medical vehicles filled with basic necessities and medicines ... There will be several other convoys depending on the support.”

There was *lots* of support. Soon, the Facebook page was filled with messages from ambulance and taxi drivers volunteering to join the convoy. Wojcik says there were more than 50 in all, not only from Commercy but also from other communities.

Wojcik heads up Euro Machines, which specialises in new and used emergency vehicles. He has had

experience delivering vehicles: in 2014, when Russia invaded Crimea, a group of Parisian students asked for his help to get ambulances to Ukraine, and Wojcik readily agreed.

After the initial convoy, two more departed later in March, for a total of 38 ambulances – Wojcik himself drove one. All were equipped with donated first-aid supplies. “The vehicles were delivered to aid associations in Ukraine,” Wojcik explains.

He has covered much of the cost of this initiative, some of which has been reimbursed by charitable organisations. A crowd-funding campaign helped pay for petrol and food for the drivers.

“If you don’t give from your pocket, you can’t initiate much,” Wojcik says.

Malika Boudiba from *France Télévisions*
FRANCE TÉLÉVISIONS (MARCH 6, 2022)
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NETHERLANDS

The Animal Lovers Who Evacuated Wildlife

Sitting in the back of the small white cattle truck, Gyz and Nila, two African lions, were unaware that the distant bangs they heard over the engine's noise were the sounds of war. They couldn't know that at one point their volunteer driver had to talk his way through an armed Russian roadblock outside the Ukrainian capital Kyiv, or that earlier attempts had failed and he'd had to look for other routes to the Polish border. This little ark was just one of the thousands of vehicles trying to reach safety.

“You cannot just move wild animals, especially endangered species, across borders any time you want”

It was Tuesday, March 1. The cargo was noisy; there were the stressed growls of the wild cats (six lions, four tigers and two caracals), plus the whining of Zair, a member of the endangered African wild dog species. Also on board was a capuchin monkey. The animals had been in the



truck for hours. Gyz and Nila were in proper cages, but others were in hastily improvised lodgings. The lioness Flori, for instance, was housed in a wooden crate held together by cages placed tightly around it. It was a surreal scene in the middle of Europe's biggest refugee crisis since World War II. “You can imagine this as a movie script,” says Peter de Haan of the Dutch animal rescue organisation AAP (the Dutch word for ‘ape’), which helped arrange this

evacuation from its base east of Amsterdam. “We had been planning to bring these animals out of Ukraine in May,” he explains. But when the war started, Ukraine's Wild Animal Rescue shelter asked AAP for immediate help – the only other option was to leave them to die.



**En route to a safer home:
the lioness named Flori and Zair,
an African wild dog**

The shelter, located near Kyiv, cares for wounded or abused wild animals. Gyz had once been on display in a cage at a shopping centre and Nila in a nightclub before the shelter took them in. AAP generally doesn't work outside the European Union, but made an exception to welcome as many animals from the Kyiv shelter as they could on such short notice. Sadly, many others had to stay behind.

On Wednesday night the truck's occupants arrived at the Polish border, among thousands of human refugees, where they sat for eight hours. "You cannot just move wild animals, especially endangered species, across borders any time you want," says De Haan. "It involves paperwork and permits from CITES

(the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora)." The process usually takes several days, but all parties involved understood these were special circumstances and arranged everything in hours.

In Poland, the truck was met by representatives of Poznan Zoo, where the animals rested for a few days before being loaded onto animal-transport trucks. One came from the Nature Help Centre Opglabbeek, AAP's Belgian partner, to take two lions to Belgium. Another journeyed 2600 kilometres to Spain, where AAP runs a large rescue centre. Its two drivers stopped every couple of hours to give the animals fresh water and food.

AAP's director, David van Gennep, travelled to Spain to greet the truck on March 9, more than a week after the animals had left Ukraine. "They were terrified and stressed," he says. "We put Gyz and Nila together in the enclosure and it was good to see how they immediately greeted each other and started licking. And the next morning, Zair was running around and playing, chasing his own tail."

AAP can't rescue all the animals trapped by the war in Ukraine, he says, but at least it can help these lucky few find places to live in peace. "After everything they have been through," says van Gennep, "our first goal is to see them develop into healthy, normal animals."

Paul Robert 

LAUGHTER

The Best Medicine



Right Way Up

It was the funeral of the inventor of the dishwasher today. The coffin was lowered into the ground only to be taken out by their partner and put back in properly.

Seen online

Debt Back

A man went to his lawyer and told him, “My neighbour owes me \$500 and he won’t pay up. What should I do?”

“Do you have any proof that he owes you the money?” asked the lawyer.

“No,” replied the man.

“OK, then write him a letter asking him for the \$5000 he owed you,” said the lawyer.

“But it’s only \$500,” replied the man.

“Precisely. That’s what he will reply and then you’ll have your proof!”

Seen on Reddit

And Ten There Were None

How many times can you subtract ten from 100?

Once. The next time you would be subtracting ten from 90.

RD.CA

CARTOON: ROYSTON

Sweet Enough

We have so much knowledge of the dangers of sugar nowadays. Twenty years from now, we'll be talking about sugar the way we talk about smoking today: "Can you believe there was no age limit on ice cream? What a wild world we once lived in."

RYAN HAMILTON, COMEDIAN

Just Desserts

I used to get teased quite a lot at school because I bore a slight resemblance to a bowl of custard. Luckily I had quite a thick skin.

OLAF FALAFEL, COMEDIAN

OPERATOR: Hello, Police.

ME: I need to speak to an officer please. I've been accused of chucking something at someone, but it was only a bit of my dessert!

OPERATOR: Just pudding you threw.

ME: Thank you.

PAUL EGGLESTON, VIA TWITTER

Primed For Bed

I wonder what Jeff Bezos does before he goes to bed. Probably puts his pyjamazon. Seen on Reddit

Quite The Catch

My online dating bio says I have a corner office with views of the entire city, drive a \$500,000 vehicle and that I'm paid to travel.

I don't know why my dates are surprised when I tell them I'm a bus driver.

@DADSAYSJOKES

INTERGALACTIC COMEDY

Space puns to gravitate towards.

Q: What did Mars say to Saturn?

A: Give me a ring sometime!

Why did the rocket scientist stop working on a project?

He had no comet-ment.

I'm reading a book about anti-gravity.

It's impossible to put down.

Why didn't the Dog Star laugh at the joke?

It was too Sirius.

Q: Why is every alien green when it lands on Earth?

A: Atmospheric turbulence.

www.upjoke.com



HUMOUR



My Contest Against **INSOMNIA**

BY *Richard Glover*

A couple of years ago, the British government considered issuing official guidance telling people, of various ages, how many hours' sleep they must achieve. This would have been a mistake. Didn't they realise the reason people can't get enough sleep is because they are so worried about getting enough sleep?

Already I spend most of the night in fevered calculation. "It's now 2.20am and I went to bed at 11pm, which means I've only had three hours, 20 minutes' sleep, and since I'm meant to have eight hours, that is a deficit of ...".

For someone who is bad at arithmetic, this calculation involves the mouthing of numbers, the use of fingers, and the reciting of barely

ILLUSTRATION BY SAM ISLAND

remembered multiplication tables, so much so that by the time I've finished it 15 minutes later, I need to start the whole calculation afresh.

Meanwhile, I don't know what to do with my arms. Once you get into bed, you seem to have too many of them. I scrunch one under the pillow, pop another up over my head, and still have a third and a fourth with nowhere to go. If there were a way of making them detachable, I might have a chance of nodding off.

The pillow, too, is all wrong. It's too thin, but if I fold it double, it's too fat. A scrunched-up arm, plus pillow, is about right, especially since I have arms to spare, but then my elbow goes numb and my head gets too hot.

I turn over, replacing the numb arm with a fresh one, which means I'm now facing the clock. Why do they make alarm clocks with such large, illuminated numbers? Couldn't the government step in with some regulations on clock illumination?

It's now 2.50am, I've had no further sleep, and the alarm is set for 7.15am, which means that if I went to sleep RIGHT NOW, my deficit would still be ...

Mental arithmetic is difficult. How do people do it? Perhaps I should assume it's already 3am and the alarm

is set for 7am, that's four hours, right? I check my calculation, counting out the numbers on a spare set of fingers, which I find at the end of one of my spare arms. Correct! Now add the ten minutes and the 15 minutes, which is 25, plus the three hours and 20 minutes I've already enjoyed ...

I'm halfway through the computation, when I discover I need to go to the bathroom.

I heave myself out of bed and trip on my boots, which clatter across the floor, awakening Jocasta sufficiently that she issues a sleepy proclamation that, if I insist on having a wee, she'd prefer me to

sit down during the process to avoid what she calls 'accidents'.

Mustering my dignity, I stumble down the hallway and carry out her instructions which - while they might sound emasculating - do, as I understand it, reflect the cultural norms in Germany, where apparently it's common for men to wee sitting down.

This gets me thinking about World War II, which gets me thinking about *Stalingrad*, the book not the battle, the one by Antony Beevor ... which really is terrific, the book not the battle, and I'd like to read it again, but ... I loaned it to someone, if only I could remember who, I think it was my friend Simon.

I'm still awake at 3.45am and need

**THE PILLOW
IS ALL WRONG.
IT'S TOO THIN,
BUT IF I FOLD
IT DOUBLE,
IT'S TOO FAT**

another wee. This time I refuse to sit down. I realise this is grounds for a dispute to take place later this morning.

Back in bed, I adopt the foetal position, my various arms tucked in like origami. I wonder why my body, which feels fine during the day, descends to fresh levels of decrepitude at night. Maybe, I'm thinking, I should start taking fish oil supplements to help my hip, which is now aching, besides which they say it's good for your brain, but then again, if fish oil was so great for your brain, why aren't fish smarter?

It's 4.15am and I am way under my required eight hours. According to a draft of the British government's advice, "failure to sleep between seven and nine hours a night is associated with physical and mental health problems, including an increased risk of obesity, strokes, heart attacks, depression and anxiety."

Oh, my God, I'm too young to die.

But then again, I start thinking, what would the British government know, a dysfunctional rabble of self-servers and charlatans who decapitated their own economy with Brexit, a fantasy of backward-looking nostalgia?

I WONDER WHY MY BODY DESCENDS INTO FRESH LEVELS OF DECREPITUDE AT NIGHT



I decide their advice on sleep is not worth taking. Besides which, it's now so close to dawn, it's pointless to attempt getting any more. I put aside their warnings and relax.

The alarm wakes me at 7.15am. I don't feel too bad. I've somehow

survived another night.

I turn and look at Jocasta, who is lit by the early morning light. It does make me wonder how she'd cope without me, should the British government - one day - be proved right.

Perfectly well, probably. The bathroom floor would be cleaner, for a start. **R**



Bird's-Eye View

A thieving parrot offered a breathtaking view of the Fiordland National Park in Te Anau, New Zealand, after swiping a GoPro camera from a group of hikers and flying off with it. The kea parrot is native to New Zealand and well known for its curiosity. After taking the stunning aerial footage, the feathered kleptomaniac flew back to Earth and left the camera on the ground. SKY NEWS

ADVERTORIAL PROMOTION

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“You can only imagine what toileting was like pre-bidet. Post bidet things have changed.

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“Thanks to The Bidet Shop, I have restored my dignity and removed the painful experience of toileting with toilet paper.”

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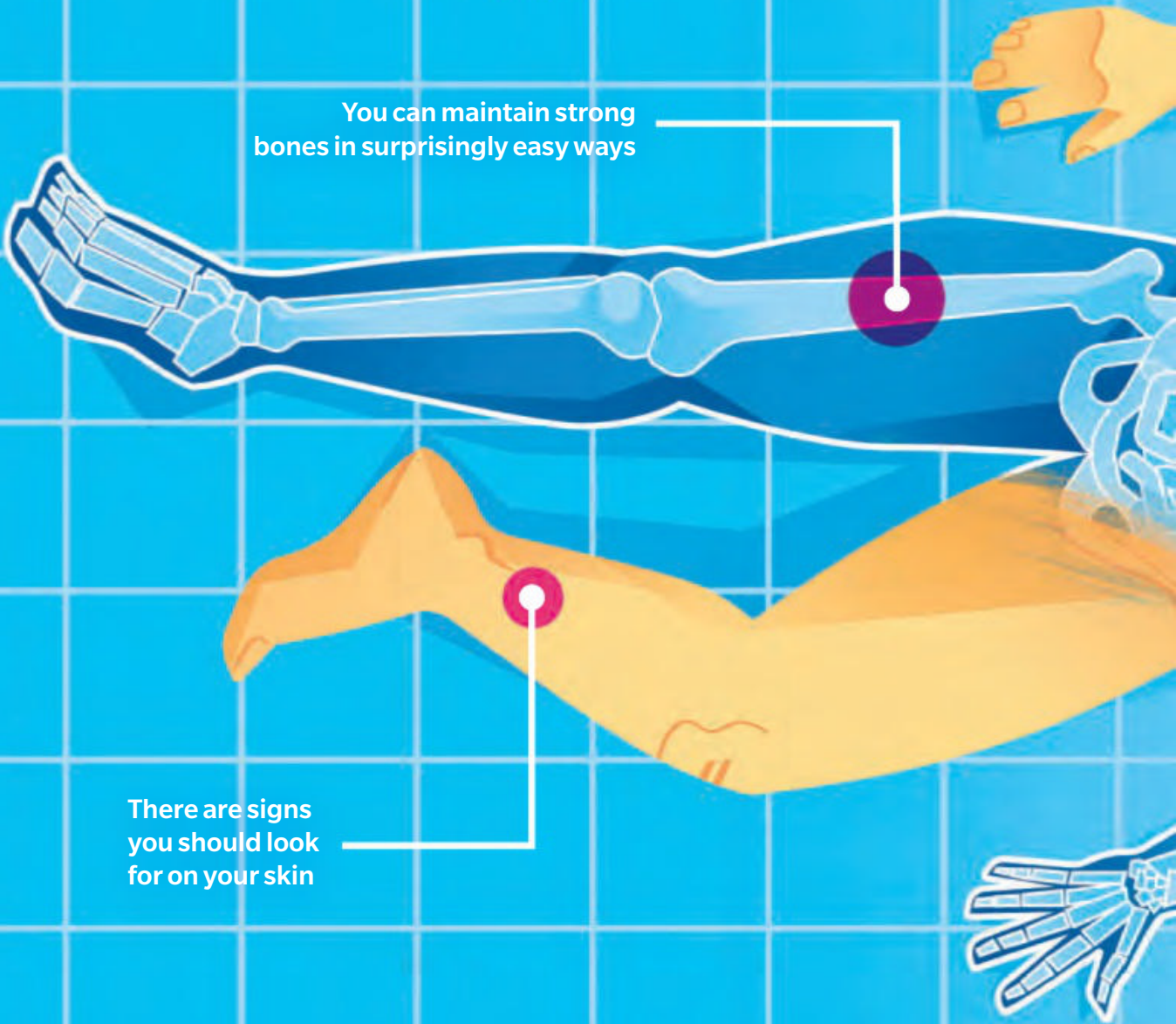
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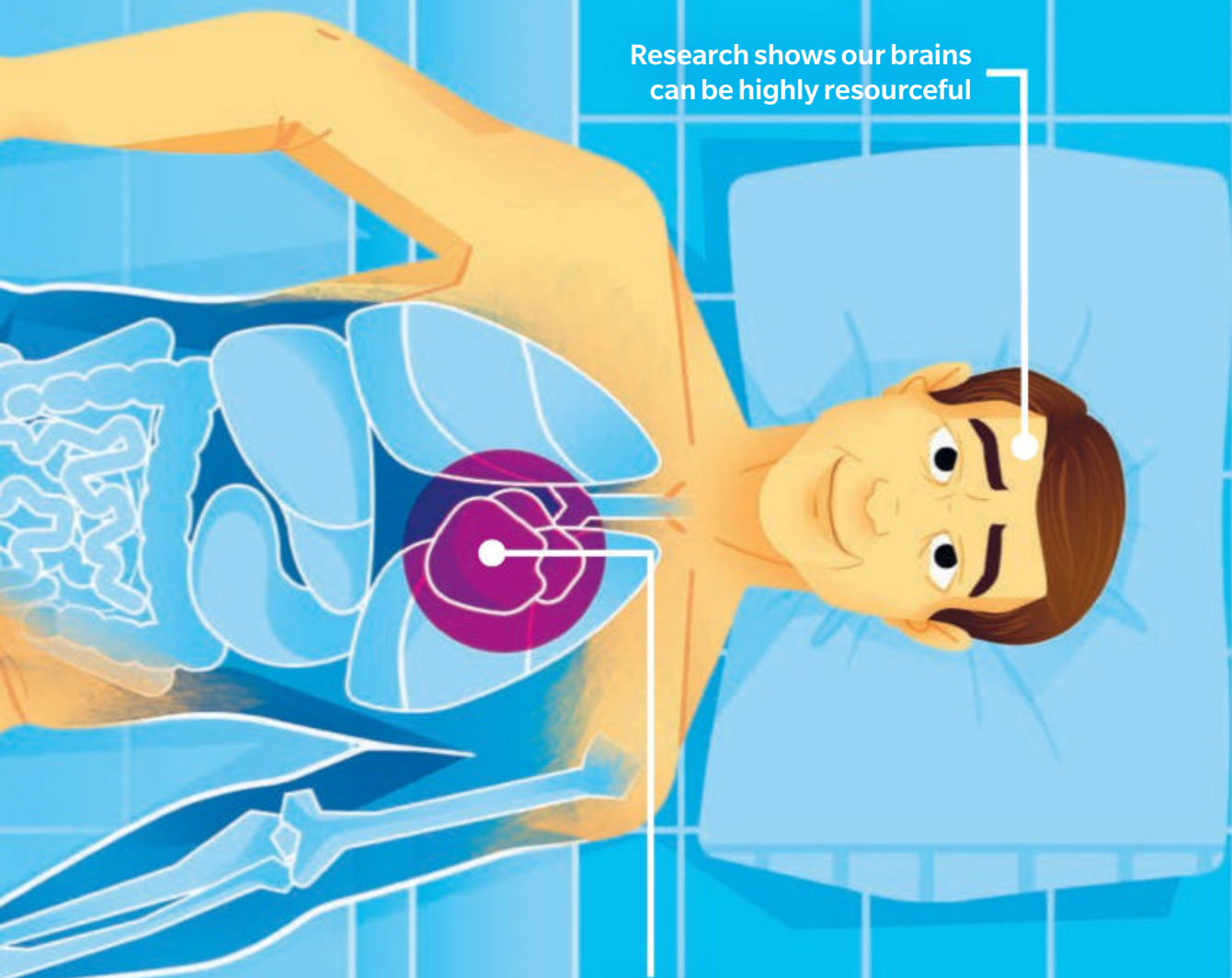
You can maintain strong bones in surprisingly easy ways

There are signs you should look for on your skin

YOUR BODY: FROM HEAD TO TOE AND INSIDE

BY *Lisa Fitterman* ILLUSTRATIONS BY **VICTOR WONG**





Research shows our brains can be highly resourceful

There's a promising new treatment for heart disease

A Maintenance Plan

OUT, HERE'S HOW TO AGE WELL

Remember when we were young and thought we'd live forever? We are living longer but time still takes its toll on our bodies. Our hearts may not pump as well as they once did, and there are leaks, fading vision and 'senior moments'.

Like a machine, everything in our bodies is interconnected – and bits and pieces eventually malfunction. Dr Berndt Kleine-Gunk, a gynaecologist and head of the German Society for Anti-Ageing Medicine, suggests we think of the human body as a basket of apples in which one rotten specimen can infect the others. In medical terms, these 'rotten apples' are called senescent, or zombie cells, because they continue to age but stop dividing and refuse to die. As they accumulate, they contribute to everything from age spots to cancer.

In other words, rather than cells that divide, sparking health, "we've got zombie cells eliminating it," says Dr Kleine-Gunk. "That's why scientists are looking at what happens when zombie cells can be removed from the body before they cause damage."

With 727 million people over the age of 65 in the world – a number expected to jump to 1.5 billion by 2050 – scientists are making significant strides in the field of gerontology, with better diagnostics and more advanced treatments. Dr Kleine-Gunk points to the number of start-up companies working on drugs that either suppress the damaging molecules that zombie cells secrete or kill them outright.

He also mentions clinical trials in the United States collectively known as TAME (Targeting Ageing with Metformin), a drug used to treat type 2 diabetes. The trials came about when researchers found that patients taking Metformin outlived non-diabetics, and in separate studies it had a preventative effect on dementia, heart disease and cancer.

Does all this point to a fountain of youth? "Not so much as a potential fountain of health," says Dr Kleine-Gunk. "Possibly within five years."

So, because knowledge is power, what can we expect as we get older, and how do we make the best of it?

THE HEADQUARTERS: OUR BRAIN

When we are young, our brain is resourceful and resilient. Even after a stroke, it can find new pathways to take over damaged areas. Think of it as a factory that's producing, storing, discarding and recycling data, including what Dr Kleine-Gunk calls "microbiological garbage".

"As we age, that data starts to accumulate and work less effectively," he says. "It's a bit like those messy apartments on television shows about hoarders. You try to step over

THE KEY TO BRAIN HEALTH IS TO TAKE ON CHALLENGING ACTIVITIES

or around the accumulation, but it can be too much.”

One of the effects is dementia, for which there is no cure. Still, in the last few years, scientists have found that the more engaged and curious we are, the better we can fend off dementia’s effects for longer periods.

“You may be able to do one complicated thing and do it well, but the key is to challenge yourself to do different activities – to navigate a strange city or to force your feet to move in unfamiliar ways,” says Dr Gérard Nisal Bischof, a cognitive neuroscientist at the Institute for Neuroscience in Cologne, Germany.

There is also good news for women experiencing lower mental sharpness as they hit menopause. Dr Caoimhe Hartley, who runs Menopause Health in Dalkey, Ireland, notes that the “brain fog” is likely temporary. “Your brain is just adapting to a different hormonal environment,” she says.

THE ENGINES: OUR HEART AND LUNGS

Quick quiz: which of these are heart attack symptoms? a) nausea; b) shortness of breath; c) sore jaw; d) chest pain; e) all the above.

If you answered e) all of the above



you’re correct. Women are more likely to experience the sore jaw and nausea, but any of these could be a sign that blood flow to your heart is blocked. While heart attacks can occur at any age, the risk for men increases starting at 45, and for women, at 55. Usually, it’s because of arteries clogged by cholesterol and plaque, and slackening cardiac muscle that pumps less effectively.

That weakening muscle is also why the chance of suffering a stroke doubles every decade after age 55. There are two kinds of stroke: ischaemic (the most common), which occurs when a major blood vessel in the brain is blocked; and haemorrhagic, when a blood vessel bursts in the brain. Along with age, risk factors include smoking, being sedentary and obesity. As with many health conditions, lifestyle changes can lower your risk.

“Old age is when bad habits and genetics come home to roost,” says neurology specialist Dr Vernon

READER'S DIGEST

Williams. Life expectancy is rising, so turning 100 won't be so unusual in coming decades. "This means that while ageing, people will want to stay healthy," says Dr Williams.

Experts agree that genetics aside, the biggest threat to our heart and lungs is smoking. Inhaling a toxic chemical stew hotter than molten lava can lead to incurable chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart disease and lung cancer. Plus, it increases blood pressure, a major cause of heart attack or stroke.

Dr Williams stresses that it's never too late to quit smoking because lungs can repair themselves to an extent. "And exercise," he adds. "When you participate in sport, you

LUNGS CAN REPAIR THEMSELVES TO AN EXTENT



exercise the lungs and breathe more intensely, and the heart has to beat quicker to make sure the blood supply is there." It's a workout that pays double dividends.

THE PLUMBING: OUR GENITOURINARY SYSTEM

For men and women, a common side effect of ageing is incontinence: a bit of leakage when you laugh, or a sudden urge to go. This is because our kidney tissue decreases as we age, affecting function. Simple exercises such as contracting the pelvic floor muscles can help. Drugs are also used to calm overactive bladders, as are topical oestrogen creams, which may help rejuvenate atrophied tissue.

For a woman, menopause can come with hot flashes, night sweats, irritability, insomnia and a low sex drive. The good news? Claims about the negative impact of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) – which came under fire in 2002 when the first results of a major US study suggested that it contributed to breast cancer, blood clots and strokes – have been mostly debunked.

Further research and reviews of that study show that when prescribed to women in perimenopause or early post-menopause, HRT generally has a beneficial effect on the cardiovascular system and mortality.

The ingredients and delivery

CLAIMS ABOUT THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF HRT HAVE BEEN DEBUNKED



methods have improved, too. “The formulas are bio-identical to what we produce in our bodies and are now applied through the skin as a gel or a spray, which makes absorption safer and more effective,” says Dr Hartley.

For men, age can often bring prostate problems. The gland starts to slowly grow around the age of 25, which is normal. But by age 50, if it becomes too enlarged, it will press on the urethra, making urination difficult.

Experts suspect hormonal changes are responsible, but don’t know for certain. What is known is at the first sign of a change, you should see your doctor, who can check for cancer and determine the next steps.

THE FRAMEWORK: OUR MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM

Bones, muscles, ligaments, tendons and cartilage hold our bodies together. As we age, they begin to break down from use. For example, cartilage, which cushions our joints, begins to tear, causing osteoarthritis. The condition, with which bone can end up rubbing against bone, is irreversible but can be managed through increased physical activity, weight loss or pain medication.

Dr Hartley warns that 50 per cent of women over the age of 50, many of whom remain undiagnosed, will face osteoporosis, a disease that thins and weakens the bones, making them brittle. “It’ll increase the risk of fracture, can make you shorter, and you can lose mobility,” she says.

But osteoporosis isn’t just a post-menopausal women’s disease, says Dr Williams. It affects millions of men, too, even if they have larger skeletal frames and don’t go through extreme hormonal changes. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that five per cent of men aged 50 and over have the disease.

“Consider this, too: 33 per cent of men over 50 have low bone density, or osteopenia, which is often a precursor to osteoporosis,” he says. “There are several risk factors, including family history, certain medications and lifestyle habits.”

As with most things, prevention is

READER'S DIGEST

key. Eat healthfully. Do weight-bearing workouts to build up muscle mass, which helps protect your bones, and get a bone scan. If a problem is detected, your doctor may prescribe drugs to slow, or even stop, bone loss.

THE PROCESSING CENTRE: OUR DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

There are fewer changes here, except that everything moves more slowly, and the stomach, which is less elastic, can't hold as much food. Chances are significant that you'll develop some degree of lactose intolerance because the digestive tract tends to produce less lactase, an enzyme needed to digest dairy foods.

Stomach ulcers are common over age 60. They develop when digestive juices damage the stomach lining; irritants include alcohol, coffee and smoking. Also common are burping and acid reflux, because your oesophagus has become less responsive. Call your doctor if the problem persists; it could be a symptom of something serious, such as oesophageal cancer.

And then there is coeliac disease, a condition in which gluten triggers an immune response, impeding absorption of nutrients in the small intestine. Coeliac was once thought to be a children's disease but is increasingly diagnosed in older adults because it can go undetected for years. "I spend half my day convincing people to get tested for coeliac," says Dr Hartley. "They could be losing weight, for



OSTEOPOROSIS AFFECTS BOTH WOMEN AND MEN

example, or tired." There is no cure, but the condition can be controlled by eliminating gluten from your diet.

THE WRAPPER: OUR SKIN

Our skin is our body's largest organ: on average, it weighs between 3.5 and ten kilograms. As we age, it becomes thinner and less elastic because we lose collagen and elastin, proteins that make it soft and smooth. It damages more easily and heals more slowly due to slower blood circulation and, for women, decreased hormone production. Most of us will have brown age spots. Caused by sun damage, the spots may lead to skin cancers; watch for new moles, or changes in old ones, as well as patches that crust, ooze or bleed. According to Dr Kleine-Gunk, the skin is just like the brain. "The accumulation of microbiological garbage – from pollution, sunlight, and other factors – affects our ability to heal and fight disease." **R**

QUOTABLE QUOTES

The real key to happiness? Step one: marry your best friend. Step two: always, I mean always, have a plethora of wigs in your home.

MELISSA MCCARTHY, ACTRESS



Her Majesty believes you are as old as you feel. As such, the Queen does not believe she meets the relevant criteria.

TOM LAING-BAKER,
PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
QUEEN ELIZABETH II,
IN RESPONSE TO HER
'OLDIE OF THE YEAR' AWARD

People say that love is hard, right? Like, love is work. I think it's the opposite. I think love is really easy, because it's an emotion.

ROSS BUTLER, ACTOR



I look at fear not as cowardice, but as a call forward, a summons to fight for what we hold dear.

AMANDA GORMAN, POET


NATURE HAS GIVEN US ALL THE PIECES REQUIRED TO ACHIEVE EXCEPTIONAL WELLNESS AND HEALTH, BUT HAS LEFT IT TO US TO PUT THESE PIECES TOGETHER.

DIANE MCLAREN,
NATURAL HEALTH
PRACTITIONER



When we strive to become better than we are, everything around us becomes better too.

PAULO COELHO, AUTHOR

A man with brown hair and a beard, wearing a plaid shirt and suspenders, is smiling broadly. He is holding two large, dark metal pots or pans. The background is a workshop or factory setting with various pieces of equipment and bright lights.

**Shearing llamas,
diving for golf balls,
creating Lego art?
There are some very
unusual ways to
make a living!**

BY *Tim Hulse*

**“WHY WE
LOVE OUR
WEIRD**



ART OF LIVING



Cowbell
makers Michael
Rohmoser (left)
and Gerhard
Bertele at
Bertele's family-
run forge



JOBS

THE COWBELL MAKER

The sound of cowbells is as synonymous with the Bavarian Alps as *lederhosen* and beer drinking. But the bells serve a serious purpose, allowing herders not only to know where their cows are if visibility is bad, but even to recognise individual cows, because every bell has a unique ring.

The bells are made by a small number of companies in the Oberallgäu region, including Gerhard Bertele's family-run forge in Bihlerdorf. The business was founded by his great-grandfather in 1912. Around 1980, cowbells became part of their repertoire. "The idea came to me on *Klausentreiben*, a custom in the Alpine region in December that is supposed to drive away demons," explains Bertele. "Young men run through the streets wearing animal skins and cowbells around their waists. I thought it would be a good thing to produce bells during winter, when we are less busy. Now we make them for cow herders all year round."

It takes between two and eight hours to forge each bell by hand. Two sheets of iron are heated until they soften and then they are hammered into a semicircular shape. To make a single, medium-sized bell that weighs



Michael Rohmoser working on a cowbell. The job requires physical fitness as well as having a good ear and an accurate eye

around 2.5 kilograms and is 45 centimetres wide, it takes more than 25,000 blows. The clapper is added and the two halves are then joined together and coated with a clear varnish to prevent the metal from rusting.

"You need to be physically fit, but as well as strength and endurance you also need a good ear and an accurate eye," says Bertele, who employs three skilled workers and two apprentices.

Cowbell makers can be recognised by the signature shape of their wares, which range from round to oval to cup-like (which is Bertele's favoured shape). "The sound of the bell is important, too," he says. "It has to be deep, powerful and harmonious."

By making cowbells they are maintaining a tradition. "Alpine nature has to be preserved. Cattle grazing on hilly pastures help to protect the environment - and in their own way the cowbells contribute to that, too."

THE TEDDY BEAR SURGEON

Aimee Whyte has seen some terrible things in her working life. Mangled hands and feet. Limbs barely attached. Sometimes even a whole face missing.

“Nine times out of ten, it’s been a jealous dog, and they always seem to go for the face,” she says in a matter-of-fact way. “We get a lot of those.”

Fortunately no blood was spilled in these horrific accidents, because Whyte is one of five teddy bear surgeons at the Leith Toy Hospital in Edinburgh, Scotland, where soft toys and dolls are sent to be repaired and renewed. And no case is terminal.

“Nothing is ever beyond repair,” she says. “I’ve never turned away a bear.”

The ‘hospital’ receives around ten teddy bear patients every week, and each is given its own patient card and referred to by name. The kinds of injuries they exhibit are many and varied, says Whyte, and no two days on the job are the same.

“A lot of older ones need patches because the fabric’s so worn, and we have to recover them completely if it is very degraded,” she explains.

“And often we have to take them apart to fix their

joints. We also get a lot of koalas that have been brought back from Australia. They have little plastic hands, so sometimes we have to remake them.”

Whyte has worked at the hospital since the beginning of 2019. She studied costume design at university and had just finished working on a play in Glasgow before joining.

“I was supposed to come in for the day just to help out and I ended up never leaving,” she says. “When I tell people what I do, I have to explain it. A lot of people don’t realise it’s a real job.”

And it’s a job that means a lot to the worried teddy bear owners who provide Whyte’s patients. “It’s mostly adults,” she says.

“It’s not just a toy to them, it’s their special companion. It’s usually been a constant in their life – they’ve grown up with it, they’ve left home with it. So when they get it back, there are always tears.”

Aimee Whyte is one of five teddy bear surgeons at the Leith Toy Hospital in Scotland



THE GOLF BALL DIVER

When Patrick Schönemann was nine, his father took up golf and bought him a little club of his own so that he could join in. But young Schönemann wasn't so interested in playing the sport. "I found it more fun to go into the woods to look for balls," he says.

Before long, hunting golf balls turned into a passion, and he'd cycle to the club in his hometown of Gothenburg, Sweden, every weekend, selling the balls he found to players there for pocket money. After a while he extended his search area to the ponds on the course, and would wade into the shallows, feeling for balls with his feet. But the treasure trove of golf balls in the ponds' depths remained frustratingly out of reach – until he turned 18, that is, and got himself a diver's licence and some scuba equipment.

For many years, diving for balls was just something Schönemann

did in his spare time to make a little cash. It was only when a business he'd started didn't work out that he suddenly saw it as a potential career.

"I was 30 and had no money and big debts, and I thought to myself, *what is the fastest way I can earn as much money as possible?*" he says. Together with a friend, he started his own golf ball diving business, Golfballdivers.se.

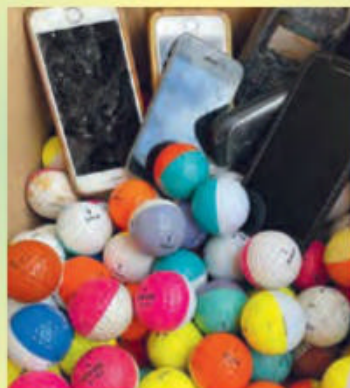
That was five years ago, and today, Schönemann and his team retrieve errant balls from golf courses throughout Scandinavia as well as in Germany, Switzerland and Poland.

"The number of balls we find can vary from 500 to a couple of thousand in each pond," he says. They put on their scuba gear and gather them by hand. "The pond is completely dark, so you just have to feel around to find them."

But that isn't all they find. As well as discarded clubs, Schönemann has also retrieved phones, a pair of ice skates, a frying pan and even a cash register.



Golf balls aren't the only things Patrick Schönemann and his team find





From left: Dirk Denoyelle's version of Rubens's painting *Adoration of the Magi*; a sculpture created for a company in The Netherlands; Denoyelle with his Lego portrait of musician Ed Sheeran

"I enjoy it. Every day is new: a different golf course, different ponds. But if you ask me in December and it's two degrees and snowing, maybe I'll give you a different answer."

THE LEGO ARTIST

Dirk Denoyelle's daughter's seventh birthday changed his life. "She got her first box of Lego bricks," he recalls. "I'd had Lego as a kid, but then I'd gone to college, got my degree, met my wife. I'd forgotten all about the bricks. And then suddenly they popped up again. I started playing with them and after a while I thought, *I seem to be quite good at this ...*"

At the time, Denoyelle was a successful comedian in his native Belgium, and the bricks gave him an idea: "There's a local artist here who's both a singer and a sculptor called Willem Vermandere, and I'd been impersonating him for ages. I said

to myself, *why not build his head in Lego bricks?*" So he did, and revealed it onstage as a 'self-portrait' he'd done in a new sculpting technique called 'digitalistic cubism'. "Much to my surprise, people loved it!"

The seed was sown. Denoyelle, who lives in Antwerp, carried on making life-size celebrity heads – which take about 35 hours – for his act. He's made comedy figures such as Laurel and Hardy, Mr Bean and John Cleese, as well as Belgian celebrities and Hollywood stars – he's particularly proud of his George Clooney.

After he'd made around 25 heads, he found himself doing a comedy show for Lego Holland, and met an executive from its headquarters in Denmark. Not long after, he became only the seventh 'Lego Certified Professional' in the world. The title means he doesn't actually work for Lego but gets easier access to bricks.

Gradually Denoyelle's Lego art

READER'S DIGEST

eclipsed his comedian work, though he still performs occasionally. He has a small company, Amazings, which makes original Lego artworks for exhibits and museums. As well as his 3D busts, Denoyelle creates stunning 2D Lego mosaics. His favourite is a 5m x 3.6m adaptation of Rubens's *Adoration Of The Magi*, featuring Einstein, Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Denoyelle's wife, Amaya.

"It's great to turn a hobby into a profession. For me, life is about fun, fame and fortune – in that order."

THE LLAMA SHEARER

Eve Kastner has a liking for unusual animals. At home in the Dordogne region of France, she breeds miniature American donkeys and 'mini-mules'. But she also has a second job shearing llamas and their smaller cousins, alpacas.

It all started in 2015, when Kastner's family decided to give her father a present of two alpacas for his 50th birthday. Like sheep, neither llamas nor alpacas moult, which means they need to be sheared each year. "If they're not, they can die during periods of extreme heat," says Kastner. Flies can also lay eggs in the animals' wool, and their larvae then burrow under the skin.

When Kastner saw her father's



Eve Kastner has more than 100 clients, and last year sheared about 400 animals

alpacas being sheared, she got the idea of doing it herself, and the shearer offered to train her. She now travels to more than 100 clients scattered around the country; last year, she sheared around 400 animals.

To shear the animals, they first have to be restrained. "To calm them down, I talk to them or get the owner to talk to them," she says. "It's a very physical and tiring job. I've never been seriously injured, but there's always a risk because sometimes the animals can be very lively and struggle. It's easy to get kicked. At the same time, you have to really concentrate during the shearing, because you can easily injure them with the shears."

A word of advice: don't get on the wrong side of a llama or an alpaca. "When they get annoyed, they spit on you. They're real sub-machine guns," she says with a laugh. "But I love these animals. Most of the time, they are very elegant and peaceful." **R**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF EVE KASTNER

13 THINGS

Our Two Cents Worth On Cryptocurrency

BY *Kat Tretina*



ILLUSTRATION: SERGE BLOCH

1 Cryptocurrency is constantly in the news headlines because of its price fluctuations, but how does it actually work? It's any form of currency that exists digitally and uses cryptography to secure transactions. This makes it nearly impossible to

counterfeit. Its main appeal has been the potential profit from trading it, making cryptocurrency more commodity than cash to spend on goods. However, unlike investments like company shares, cryptocurrency has no underlying asset to back it.

READER'S DIGEST

2 Most cryptocurrencies work using blockchain technology – a type of database that serves as a permanent ledger for transactions. But their value is based on the activity of their users: the more ‘coins’ people buy, the more those coins are worth.

3 The best-known cryptocurrency, or crypto for short, is Bitcoin. Crypto is generally regarded as a very volatile investment, with rapid ‘boom and bust’ cycles and trading in it is not for the faint-hearted. In July last year the price of one bitcoin was US\$23,000. In November, it hit an all-time high of \$69,000 before dropping back to \$29,000 at the time of going to press.

4 The creator of Bitcoin goes by the name of Satoshi Nakamoto, but (almost) no one knows who Nakamoto is because it’s a pseudonym. Many think it’s a group rather than an individual. One theory is that four Japanese companies, Samsung, Toshiba, Nakamichi and Motorola, all collaborated on it and took a part from each of their names.

5 There are more than 7000 kinds of cryptocurrency. Among the largest are Bitcoin, Ethereum, Binance Coin, Cardano, Tether, Solana and Dogecoin. That last one may sound familiar if you follow stories on Tesla CEO Elon Musk, a major Dogecoin investor. When he

hosted *Saturday Night Live* last year, he joked that the coin was a “hustle”, sometimes slang for a shady way to make money. The next morning the price of Dogecoin had plummeted by 30 per cent.

6 Despite that kind of volatility, during its bullish periods, crypto became a popular investment option. More than 30 million people across the world bought or traded it in the past year. People are also increasingly interested in spending crypto, and one of the biggest reasons is for the privacy it affords its users. You can transfer crypto currency without an intermediary and, unlike credit cards, crypto obscures both your identity and the amounts you spend with it. This has made it attractive to criminals.

7 Businesses that allow customers to pay with crypto include PayPal and Xbox. Sotheby’s, the venerable auction house, announced last year that it would accept bids made in bitcoins or ethereums. Even some big-name charities accept donations made in cryptocurrency.

8 One way to earn cryptocurrency is through ‘mining’, using a complicated process that releases new coins into circulation using advanced computer equipment. (Like other mined materials, the total amount of some cryptocurrencies is

Our Two Cents Worth On Cryptocurrency

finite.) So instead most people buy their crypto on online platforms.

9 In order to trade cryptocurrency, you'll need an individual investment account with a crypto exchange. Popular exchanges include Coinbase, CoinSpot and Gemini, all of which charge fees, just as traditional brokerages do. You could also use a cryptocurrency broker and, instead of owning the coins, speculate on their prices, betting on how they will rise and fall.

10 While the stock market has set trading hours, cryptocurrencies can be traded 24 hours a day, seven days a week. But governments (except for El Salvador) don't back cryptocurrency as they do other currencies, and cryptocurrency investments don't carry the same legal protections as traditional payment methods.

11 Another key difference is that investors are responsible for storing their cryptocurrencies, which is easier said than done. Because the coins aren't regulated

by any governments, you could lose them (through theft, system failures or simply by forgetting your key code to access them) and thus, lose your investment. Once cryptocurrency is lost, it's nearly impossible to recover, which then makes the remaining accessible coins even more valuable.

12 The way to store cryptocurrency is in a digital wallet. These wallets can either be 'hot' (meaning that they're stored online), or 'cold' (stored on an external device that isn't connected to the internet). Cold wallets are more secure since hackers can't use the internet to access them.

13 Many people start trading cryptocurrency because they think these investments are exempt from taxation. But this is changing. In Australia, disposing of crypto is liable for capital gains tax. Just like any other investment, if you buy cryptocurrency and later sell it at a profit, you will incur capital gains taxes. Even in cyberspace, the tax office always gets its due. **R**



A Dog's Life

Dogs are able to recall key events in their lives, such as their previous owners or spending time in rescue centres, thanks to their episodic-like memories, according to researchers from Eötvös

Loránd University, in Budapest, Hungary. MIRROR.CO.UK

For many years, I felt lost in the kitchen. But with help from some family favourites, I found my place

BY *Namugenyi Kiwanuka* FROM CHATELAINE

Comfort COOKING

For a man raised in a patriarchal culture, my father loved to cook for his family. We lived in Uganda and, later, in Kenya for about two years as refugees. Since we didn't have an indoor kitchen, he would light a fire outside of our home. He'd cook *sukuma wiki*, a dish of leafy greens, onions and tomatoes, and serve it with *ugali*, a porridge made of corn-meal and water. We ate this in the refugee camp, and it remains one of my favourite meals.

My mother left our family when I

was five – war has the power to come between a mother and her children. I never met my father's mother, or *jaaja* in the Luganda language. But if my dad's cooking took after that of my *jaaja*, she was phenomenal.

My father didn't cook often – we ate once a day and other family or community members would feed us. But when he did, it was worth the wait. If he started making dinner at 4pm, you wouldn't expect to eat until at least 10pm. He liked to take his time, cutting ingredients into pieces so tiny that the onion was practically puréed. He also loved his *pili pili*



peppers: tiny red and green chillies he would munch on at every meal. The smell of his cooking would overpower our home, including the one in London, Ontario, Canada, where we moved in the mid-1980s, when I was ten years old.

With his friends, my father was the life of the party – he would host get-togethers that would go into the early hours of the morning. I washed dishes, enthralled with the loudness of the adults and how happy they all seemed. Looking back, that joy was what freedom felt like. Their dancing revealed a vulnerability that wasn't afforded to them during the war. When my father was cooking, he was happy. But if he wasn't, he could be unpredictable. I often felt like he resented my presence.

I left home when I was 16, and from then on, I lived on my own before moving to Toronto. I really only knew how to make pancakes and scrambled eggs because in our family I was responsible for making breakfast on weekends. My father would say that his mum taught him how to cook because she didn't want him to rely on anyone to take care of him. But he never passed on the same knowledge to me.

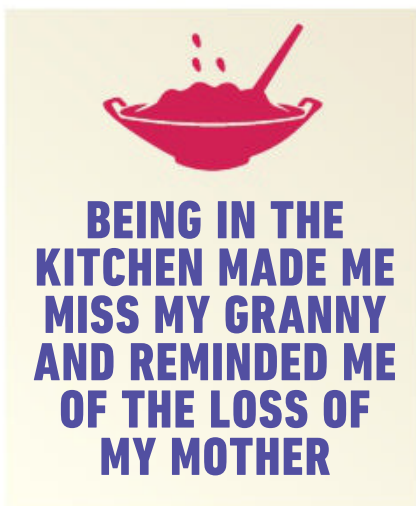
The woman who sponsored us to come to Canada, whom I've since called granny, turned the kitchen into a place of love. When we left refugee housing, she moved us next door to her house, and we lived there for about three years. On Sundays, she would make potato stew, cheese-cake and lemon meringue pie. We would listen to Louis Armstrong and watch movies in her basement. She knew me better than I knew myself.

From my mid-teens to early 20s, I lived on a steady diet of ramen noodles and pasta with canned sauces. Cooking at that time in my life was perfunctory; cleaning the toilet brought me more joy. Being in the

kitchen made me miss my granny and reminded me of the loss of my mother, who is still alive.

Unlike many things in my life, not knowing how to cook wasn't something I could gloss over or joke away. So I avoided thinking about it. It was only when I had kids in my 30s that I realised I had to learn.

I'd listen to a friend tell me in detail how she made puréed baby food from scratch, while I fed the jarred stuff to my toddler. I watched in awe as another friend baked cookies for parent-teacher nights. I'm a



resourceful person, but not knowing how to cook for my kids made me feel stuck and guilty.

The time I spent in the kitchen only clarified what I lacked. Should the pot be hot when I add the onions? Should the butter be room temperature? Should I use baking powder or baking soda? The absence of family recipes and secrets passed down the line was a reminder that elders are missing from my life.

When my son was around two, I realised I had to feed him solids. I took to Google in search of 'easy' recipes and also sought out inspiration on Instagram. I looked for reassurance that with time and patience, I could do it. There have been failures – I once baked chocolate chip cookies so hard they chipped my daughter's tooth – but I keep trying. And in learning to be comfortable with what I don't know, I'm realising that the things that make me feel as though I can't cook don't have to be true forever.

Once my kids were ready for full meals, I tried to recreate my father's stewed chicken, one of his favourites. The dish includes minced onions, tomatoes, salt and curry served with white rice and a salad of tomatoes, onions, lemon juice and coriander. I would fry the chicken separately

first and then add the rest of it into one pot with water. That handful of ingredients connects me to a simpler story of family, one that I imagine was the same for my father when his mother, my jaaja, was still alive.

And then in 2019, the pandemic lockdown pushed me into the kitchen not just out of necessity but also curiosity. What began as an activity to pass time with my kids, like trying out different recipes and making vanilla cupcakes, has become a slow peeling away of the conviction that I can't learn to cook.

One afternoon, I surprised myself when I made a loaf of bread. Yes, I used the wrong type of yeast and the dough rose to an incredible height, but it baked into a crispy exterior with an inside as soft as any bread I'd bought from a bakery. And then I finally made a batch of cookies that didn't hurt my daughter's teeth.

Standing in my kitchen can be daunting, but I remind myself that those feelings are just a beginning, a place to create cooking traditions of my own that I can pass on to my children. As I stand at the stove, I know the story doesn't end with me. **R**

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Nighty Night

I never knew how long it took a human to fall asleep until I had kids. It's two hours, three cups of water and 18 books. @OUTSMARTEDMOMMY



The world's largest snow labyrinth is in the Polish town of Zakopane. It's made out of some 60,000 blocks of ice, which took 50 workers more than a month to stack together. The icy blocks create a unique kind of maze covering an area of 2500 square metres.

PHOTO: PICTURE ALLIANCE/AA/OMAR MARQUES



PHOTO FEATURE

WORLD OF SNOW

*Snow holds something magical –
for children as well as for adults*

BY *Cornelia Kumfert*

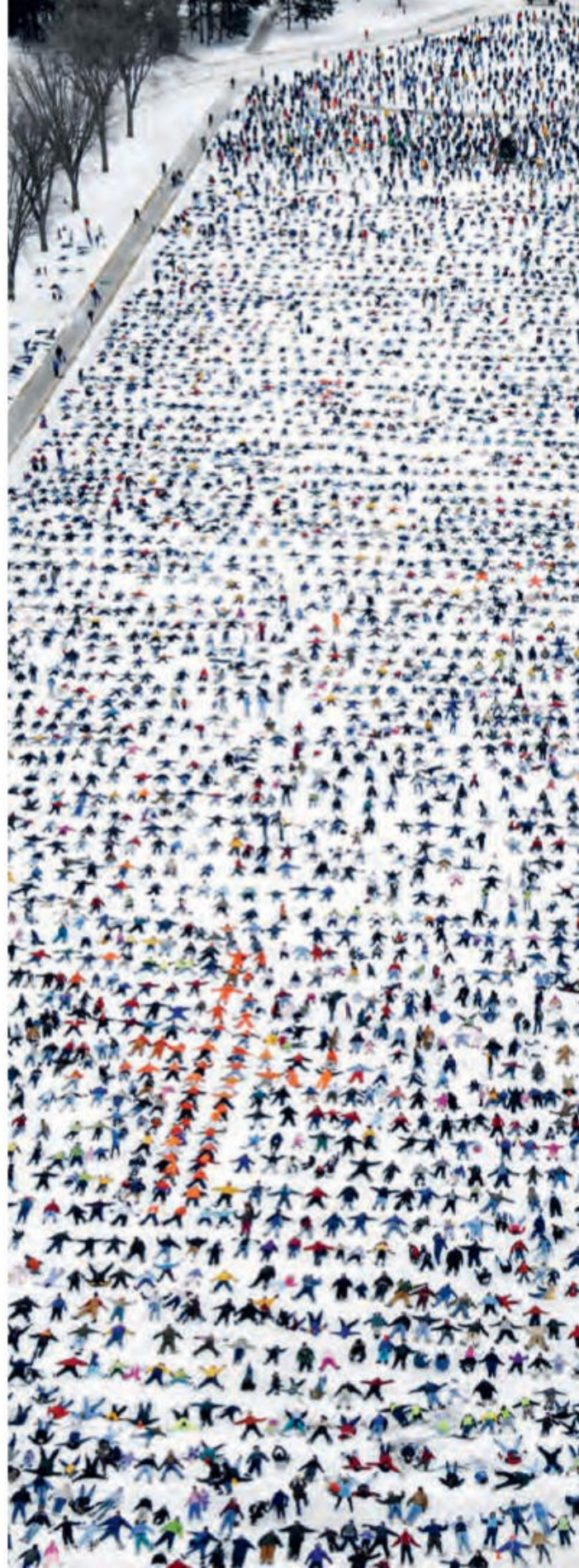


◀◀ **Whether sledging**, building a snowman or having a snowball fight, children find snow great fun. Just look at the face of this little fellow pictured in his brightly coloured winter outfit. Excitement is written all over it and it's highly contagious. His beaming little face is enough to melt the heart of the grouchiest snow hater.

◀ **The world's largest igloo** was built 2727 metres above sea level in 2016. The people running the igloo village in Zermatt, Switzerland needed about 2000 hours to finish the building. The structure is 13 metres in diameter, 11 metres high and took 1387 blocks of snow to construct. By the way, the risk of the snow shelters collapsing during the winter is negligible due to their special architecture.

▶ **The town of Bismarck** in North Dakota, USA holds an unusual record. Back in 2007, 8962 people all dropped into the snow at the same time and simultaneously moved their arms and legs like jumping jacks to create snow angels – a new world record. And it wasn't just children who enjoyed the event. One person was 99 years old.

◀ **Castles, pagodas, bridges** and even a restaurant made of ice are created every year at the Harbin Snow and Ice Festival in China. The frosty wonderland attracts thousands of visitors between December and February.





◀ **A red fox** was probably less than thrilled with a thick blanket of snow, because its prey was hiding just underneath. Foxes have exceptionally good hearing, which allows them to hear even the tiniest of mice nestling in the supposed safety of the snow cover. Plunging headlong into the snow, the fox was able to snatch up his prey.

▶ **This snowman** is actually a woman. In 2008, the residents of Bethel, USA, piled up 6000 tonnes of snow to build this giant lady. With eyelashes made of skis, a mouth made of car tyres and arms made of spruce, she towered over the buildings in the town for six months. The tallest snowman was actually an Austrian one made in 2020. Measuring 38 metres high, he beat his female counterpart by almost one metre.

▼ **A snow boarder** makes wavy tracks in pristine powder snow in New Zealand. After being dropped off by helicopter in areas with high peaks that are otherwise very difficult to reach, skiers and snow boarders can experience the thrill of an icy descent through fresh snow.

R



PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT) ALL CANADA PHOTOS/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO; GETTY IMAGES/CAPPI THOMPSON; GETTY IMAGES



ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

Humour On The Job



You Goat It!

During and after filming the Netflix movie *Don't Look Up*, actor Jonah Hill took to calling his co-star, three-time Academy Award-winner Meryl Streep, 'The Goat'.

The 72-year-old Streep took it all in her stride. "I thought, well, that's cute, I am kind of an old goat," she said during a press conference. It was left up to another, younger co-star, Jennifer Lawrence, to explain to Streep that Hill wasn't being mean. "The GOAT," Lawrence told Streep, "stands for Greatest Of All Time."

Source: *The Tonight Show*

Flying Granny

My daughter, a teacher, was asking her young class all about their grandparents. When she came to one child, she asked if her grandmother lived nearby. The child replied, "No, she lives at the airport."

Puzzled, my daughter questioned her about this.

The child replied, "We just go and pick her up from the airport when we want her to visit us."

SUBMITTED BY PAULA MADDOCKS

Tense Talks

Negotiations were at a standstill, so we took a break to let tempers simmer down. As my team and I stepped outside, I tripped and fell face-first down concrete steps, ripping my blouse and bloodying my arm and chin.

When we returned to our client's office, he looked alarmed.

"What happened to you?"

My colleague answered, "She recommended we accept your last offer."

SUBMITTED BY JUNE RAINBOW

Making Your Name

Starting a new job feels like you're a new character on the tenth season of a TV show.

@3dlooks

Can You Spell Regret?

A colleague of mine asked the tattoo artist to draw the Chinese character for 'free' that he found using a translation app. Turns out, it was very close to being accurate, but not quite. His new tattoo actually reads 'tax free'. boredpanda.com

Instead of 'Mum is my angel' on a man's arm, the tattoo artist spelled it "Mum is my angle". liveabout.com

Wrong Side Of The Bars

Every year, the prison where I work as a volunteer chaplain holds a training session for staff. This year, the instructor kicked things off by asking, "What kind of people do you work among?"

He was instantly bombarded with a slew of angry responses: "They're lazy!" "They can't be trusted!" "They steal!" "They lie!"

"And," another colleague added, "some of the inmates aren't all that nice, either."

SUBMITTED BY H. D. PATTISON



MY VERY FIRST JOB

Our first experiences of earning money are often less than ideal.

When I was ten, I went to my grandfather's farm. He offered me \$10 to be a scarecrow. I stood out in the sun yelling at birds for about an hour until my mother arrived and rescued me. [@mobsterlobsterr](https://twitter.com/mobsterlobsterr)

I had a job walking five chihuahuas. When they got tired, I had to carry them home. Two in my arms. Two on my shoulders. One on my head. [@whoopie10](https://twitter.com/whoopie10)

I was babysitting two kids. One ran out the front door, the other out the back. When I ran out the house to find them, they ran back inside and locked the door. Then they turned the garden sprinklers on.

Lisa Rooney, boredpanda.com



QUIZ

YEAR BY YEAR

*Almost all calendars count days and years.
Nevertheless, the time calculation can be very different*

BY Annemarie Schäfer

QUESTIONS

1 On January 1 the world celebrates New Year. As it occurs in at least 38 time zones, it doesn't start everywhere at the same time. What place welcomes in the New Year first?

- a)** Cape Verde in the Atlantic Ocean
- b)** Hawaii in the Central Pacific
- c)** Samoa and Tonga in the South Pacific Ocean
- d)** Cape Runaway, North Island, New Zealand

2 When is your next dentist appointment? The calendar reminds us. During the Stone Age, early man developed a different way to record the passage of time. The oldest known calendar served to ...

- a)** plan sowing and harvesting more accurately
- b)** record when it was worth going hunting
- c)** mark important religious events
- d)** record their ages

ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

2022



READER'S DIGEST

3 The Christian calendar begins with the birth of Jesus Christ. The Islamic Hijri calendar commences 622 years later, marking the year the Prophet Muhammad migrated from Mecca to Yathrib (Medina). The Jewish calendar begins with ...

- a) the creation of the world
- b) the birth of Moses
- c) the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem
- d) the creation of Adam and Eve

4 Children in many countries mark the countdown to Christmas Eve on 24 December using an Advent calendar made from wood or paper. From December 1 to 24 they are allowed to open a little door every day, behind which there is usually a small treat, such as a piece of chocolate. Who is considered to be the inventor of the Advent calendar?

The New Year starts at different times around the world



- a) David Sprüngli, confectioner from Switzerland
- b) Gerhard Lang, publisher from Germany
- c) Queen Victoria, mother of nine children
- d) Milton Snavely Hershey, US chocolate entrepreneur

5 Calendars are mostly based on observing the sun and moon. The Christian calendar in use today counts sun years, the Islamic calendar uses lunar years, and the Jewish one takes both into account. A solar year is not identical to a lunar year. The lunar year is ...

- a) 11 days shorter
- b) five days longer
- c) 18 days longer
- d) 21 days shorter

6 In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII had a calendar named after him, which is the most commonly used across the world today. The Pope initiated this reform in order to ...

- a) shorten the year by 11 minutes and 14 seconds
- b) mark the church's Reformation
- c) perpetuate his name
- d) mark the middle of the northern hemisphere winter

7 In 1873, Japan adopted the Gregorian calendar but retained the use of the Era Name (gengō) system, which has been in continuous use since 701 CE.

The Era Name calendar marks ...

- a)** the year of the reign of the current Emperor
- b)** the start of a golden period in Japanese history
- c)** local festivals
- d)** ties to the Chinese zodiac system

8 In 2003, cinema goers enjoyed the comedy *Calendar Girls*, starring English actresses Helen Mirren and Julie Walters. The movie is based on a true story and portrays ...

- a)** feminists preventing the delivery of the erotic 1999 Pirelli calendar
- b)** middle-aged English women stripping down to help raise money for leukaemia research
- c)** the off-screen competition between Marilyn Monroe, Elizabeth Taylor and Audrey Hepburn
- d)** a struggling stationery business

9 February 29 only appears on the calendar every four years. Who is responsible for this so-called leap day?

- a)** German mathematician Johannes Kepler
- b)** Greek astronomer Ptolemy
- c)** Roman Emperor Julius Caesar
- d)** a nameless Scottish calendarist



Helen Mirren and Julie Walters in *Calendar Girls*

10 Followers of the 2012 Phenomenon believed that December 21, 2012, had a special meaning. What did some interpretations of the Mayan calendar suggest would occur on that day?

- a)** the world would end
- b)** the new moon would not rise
- c)** a simultaneous total sun and lunar eclipse
- d)** a new star would be born

11 In many Asian countries, each year is associated with a zodiac sign. Currently, we are in the year of the tiger. According to legend, a Chinese emperor invited all the animals to a contest. The twelve fastest would be the Chinese zodiac signs. Which of these animals was too slow?

- a)** monkey
- b)** elephant
- c)** pig
- d)** snake

>> Turn to page 114 for quiz answers

ANSWERS TO CALENDAR QUIZ

1 c) When Samoa and Tonga welcome in the New Year, the people of these Polynesian nations celebrate 14 hours before residents in Cape Verde. Hawaiians celebrate 23 hours after Samoans and Tongans, who by this time are just an hour from January 2.

2 b) As early as 8000 BCE, Stone Age man erected a monument in Scotland to mark the passing of the seasons. This was how they recorded when it was worth going hunting.

3 a) The Jewish calendar begins with the creation of the world, which according to tradition is dated October 6, some 5782 years ago.

4 b) The first printed Advent calendar was designed by Gerhard Lang, who picked up the idea from his mother. As a child, she gave him a box of 24 biscuits, of which he was allowed to eat one each day until Christmas.

5 c) A year with 12 lunar months is 11 days shorter than the solar year, while a year with 13 lunar months is 18 days longer. The discrepancy arises from the fact that there are about 29.5 days between two new moons, but the earth revolves around the sun once in 365.25 days.

6 a) In the Christian calendar that was used up until 1582, the years were too long by 11 minutes and 14 seconds. Over the centuries, the beginning of the northern hemisphere spring shifted more and more towards February. Pope Gregory XIII made sure that the beginning of spring in the northern hemisphere falls on March 21.

7 a) The Japanese Era Name calendar is a traditional calendar that dates back to the eighth century. The era name of the current monarch, His Majesty Emperor Naruhito, 62, who ascended to the Chrysanthemum Throne in 2019, is Reiwa. The year 2022 converts to Reiwa 3, which indicates the third year of Emperor Naruhito's reign.

8 b) The movie *Calendar Girls* is based on the fundraising efforts of two middle-aged women, both members of a branch of the Women's Institute. Following the death of one of the woman's husband to leukaemia, they decide to produce a nude calendar to sell and raise money for the local hospital.

9 c) In the course of a solar year, the Earth orbits the sun once. It takes exactly 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds to do this. The Roman Emperor Julius Caesar decreed that the hours, minutes and seconds be rounded up every four years as an extra 24 hours to add a day to the calendar.

10 a) The Mayan calendar works with sequential time cycles. It regarded December 21, 2012, as the end-date of a 5126-year-long cycle. Some people interpreted this to mean a cataclysmic event would take place, and that the world would end. It did not.

11 b) The elephant is not one of the 12 Chinese zodiac signs. In order, the animals are: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig. **R**

TELL ME WHY...



Toilet Paper Is White

Toilet paper has been enjoying special attention in recent times. But why is it usually plain white?

BY *Emily DiNuzzo*

First, it's important to understand how toilet paper is made. According to Jessica Carette, a chemist for the Cascades Tissue Group, it is made from cellulose fibres that come either directly from trees or recycled paper and are mixed with water to make pulp.

Toilet paper creation involves two processes: making the raw paper, and converting it to the end product you buy in the supermarket, explains manufacturing consultant David Altemir. Brands bleach wood pulp with hydrogen peroxide or chlorine to make it whiter. This bleaching process also softens the paper.

Carette notes that cellulose fibres

are naturally white, and that toilet tissue made from recycled paper uses mostly office printer paper, which is already white. Although bleached virgin pulp produces the softest fibres to make tissue, unbleached and recycled fibres can also make high-quality tissue. So the white colour of toilet paper is more conventional than functional since it doesn't necessarily have to be white to be soft and absorbent.

Although white toilet paper is currently the norm, coloured toilet paper was trendy in the past, chiefly to coordinate with bathroom colour schemes. The trend died down because of concerns about the safety of pastel dyes for the skin and the environment.

*In this Danish archipelago,
fantastic landscapes, rare wildlife
and Norse mythology lend a
dreamlike quality to everyday life*

BY *Chloe Berge*
FROM **CANADIAN**
GEOGRAPHIC TRAVEL

Magical Realism On The **FAROE ISLANDS**

Breathtaking sights, such as the Múlafossur waterfall on Vágur Island, greet visitors at almost every turn

The setting sun pours its amber honey down onto a steep trail carved through meadows of emerald grass. I hike up the hillside, reaching a breathless, abrupt stop on a narrow ridge. A view of the tiny, turf-roofed village on Mykines – one of the most remote members of Denmark's Faroe Islands – is sketched in shadow in the valley below. On the other side of the vertiginous cliff, there's nothing but the wild, churning North Atlantic, and on the ridge's edge, puffins strut and hop – hundreds of them. Their feathers ruffle in the briny wind as they huddle together, bobbing their bright orange beaks and blinking teardrop-shaped eyes.

Spotting so many of them together, cast against the yawning ocean, feels like stumbling upon a congress of mythical creatures.

Heightening the surreal scene is the utter lack of other tourists, or any people for that matter. Isolated in the North Atlantic Ocean between Iceland and Norway, this string of 18 islands has managed to evade the world's attention (for now) and on Mykines, the permanent resident count sits at just 16. Only accessible by boat or helicopter, the island is mostly cut off from the rest of the

archipelago during ice-hardened winters. But from May to August, travellers can venture over for a day trip, or, as my fiancé and I have chosen to do, to spend the night.

After arriving on a ferry from the island of Vágur, we stopped at The Locals Cafe in Mykines' storybook village. "I was born here, left to study abroad in London, but I had to come back," owner Katrina Johannesen tells us. Taking in the rustic scene outside the cafe's windows, it's easy to see why.

The discovery of the puffins has slowed our progress on our three-hour round-trip hike to the Holmur Lighthouse – a postcard sight that marks the western tip of the Faroes' westernmost island – as we linger on this narrow sliver of land to marvel

MIND-BENDING VISTAS WAIT AROUND EVERY CORNER IN THE ARCHIPELAGO

at the birds. They create burrows on these steep seaside cliffs during nesting season, from June to August, and are most social at sunset, the best time to spot them. Hikers are

advised to observe them from a distance, sticking to the path and never touching chicks or eggs. The rest of the walk only grows more beautiful. Clouds of puffins and gannets soar overhead, fog cloaks the headland's rocky peaks, and the salty wind whips around me in wild gusts, pulling my hair skyward.



Faroese horses play an important role in the islands' mythology

The next day, we ferry back over to Vágur, where the feeling that I am in a dream continues. Navigating our rental car down spiralling roads with hairpin turns, we reach the Lake Sørvágsvatn trailhead. A gentle, rolling path traces the edge of the 3.4-square kilometre lake.

An incline at the end of the hike brings us to a cliff's precipitous edge. Turning back towards the direction we came from, the lake appears to hover, suspended, hundreds of metres above the ocean's violent waves in a physics-defying optical illusion. The crescent-shaped slice of water seems to tilt towards us, yet only one small waterfall pours from its edge.

Mind-bending vistas wait around every corner in the archipelago. Before a tunnel was built on Vágur in

2004, the postman was charged with the task of hiking over a mountain pass to deliver mail to the hidden village of Gásadalur. To get a sense of life on the islands before the advent of major infrastructure, we follow in his footsteps. The two-to-three-hour hike is rugged but ends with a bird's-eye view of the small scatter of buildings that freckle the green headland. The village is punctuated by a 30-metre waterfall that tumbles into the ocean, and my fiancé and I let out audible gasps at the sight.

As dusk's shadow turns the landscape blue and mauve, we head towards the historic village of Saksun on the island of Streymoy. We weave down a frighteningly narrow country road, and arrive at a cluster of grass-roofed homes that hug a shimmering



Grass-roofed homes in the village of Saksun on Streymoy Island

inlet. The 1897 farmer's house we've rented still has all its original bones, and as we duck past the small entryway, we're greeted by the words of Faroese poet Marjun Kjelnæs written in English on a chalkboard: *"This is an ancient place, famished you want to stay here, sit until your skeleton turns to cliff, watch until your eyes wash out, listen to the labyrinth in your ears swoosh like shells."* It's true: the landscape outside the French windows reveals the kind of beauty you could contemplate forever.

Later that day, we drive into the highlands that overlook the Faroese capital, Tórshavn, to reach Fjallaross, or 'Faroe Horse,' a horse-riding outfit. The Faroese horse was only domesticated 50 years ago and isn't found anywhere else in the world. The breed is also under threat of extinction, with a scarce 80 left in the archipelago. "The Faroese horse is important in our

culture and history," says Fjallaross owner Anna Louisa Joensen.

We ride our two horses bareback – which is more comfortable for the horse – across a rocky, windswept plateau. I grasp the wiry black mane of my mount, Grani, and use my legs to steady myself as he trots up and down the gentle ridges. As we ride, Joensen explains the horses' prominence in Faroese myths and ballads, where they starred as the heroes' stalwart companions. The horse Grani belonged to the hero Sjúrdur in one of these old Nordic tales. "The ballads are forgotten in most of Europe, but we preserved them because they're sung during our traditional chain dance," says Joensen. Elves, dragons and magical rings also abound in the stories, and Joensen says it's widely believed that they inspired J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy.

Magical Realism On The Faroe Islands

Steeped in ancient myths, so much of the Faroes' romance lies in how life has remained unchanged for centuries. For dinner that evening, we head into Tórshavn, which means 'Thor's Harbour', named after the Norse god of lightning and thunder. Dating back to the ninth century, it was the site of an early Viking parliament.


Reyn, the town's historic centre, is home to a cluster of black-tarred wooden houses with overgrown turf roofs, intersected by cobblestone streets. Like walking through a Brothers Grimm fairytale, we meander down the lantern-lit alleyways and arrive at Ræst, which serves traditional Faroese fermented cuisine.

Fermented fish and meat have been integral to the Faroese way of life for centuries, as the harsh climate and long winters made farming and hunting year-round impossible.

Our candlelit plates of hearty fish stew and fermented lamb evoke the cold, howling winters of long ago. The Faroe Islands feel like a haunting melody from another time, a myth whispered by the wind, a magic trick pulled from the ocean. The beauty here has the soft edges of a dream, yet I've never felt more awake. **R**

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BONUS READ



Doctors gave Leah Church, who was born with a huge, misshapen head filled with fluid, little chance of survival. But Sandy and Tim Church refused to give up on their little girl

BY *Katie McCabe*

*When All They
Had Was*
LOVE

Sandy Church was desperate for a glimpse of her newborn daughter. But when her wheelchair was rolled past the high windows of the intensive care nursery, every shade was drawn.

"How sick is she, Tim?" Sandy asked her husband. Up from her memory rose the sound of the doctor's whispered "Oh, no" when he saw the baby's enlarged head on ultrasound. Seconds after Leah's birth, the nurse had whisked the baby away, and Sandy had been too groggy with painkillers to demand an explanation.

For 24 hours after her emergency Caesarean, she was delirious with fever from a massive pelvic infection. *Where is Leah?* she wondered frantically.

Now as she and her husband approached the nursery entrance, Sandy shivered, "Her head is just a little bit big, isn't it, Tim?" she asked, fighting panic. Her tall, fair husband was silent as they moved past a row of incubators and came slowly to a standstill.

There, in the incubator before her, lay a tiny baby girl smothered in a maze of tubes. Her head was so enlarged that her ears were pushed down onto her neck.

"No! No!" Sandy whispered. She was ashamed to speak aloud the thought that rushed into her mind: *She can't be mine.*

Tim, white-faced and mute, took her hand. "What on Earth is wrong with her?" Sandy wailed.

"Hydrocephalus." One of the attending doctors spoke the word to Tim and Sandy that afternoon. "We don't know exactly why, but in some babies the brain's normal drainage system shuts down before birth. Fluid accumulates in the head and compresses the brain tissue. Your baby has the worst case I've ever seen."

The doctor told them the baby could die. Sandy fought back tears.

"But if she should live?" Tim asked.

"From what we can tell, she would have very little chance for anything beyond a vegetative existence."

The CAT scans Dr Robert Wood, the neurosurgeon, received the next morning made him wonder whether "very little chance" had been an overstatement.

The film showed a well of blackness inside Leah's misshapen head. Where the thinking part of her brain should have been, there was almost nothing but fluid.

For years, doctors had known that hydrocephalus could be arrested by

placing a shunt, or one-way valve, in a baby's brain. In Leah's case, the shunt would enable the excess fluid to drain down a tube into a cavity around the stomach, where it could be reabsorbed into the body.

"The shunt operation may itself be lethal when performed on a baby this sick," Dr Wood told the medical team that gathered to discuss the case. "Do we take that risk? We may put the family through the trauma of high-risk surgery and still end up with a person who will never do anything but breathe."

He paused. "With so little brain substance, we also have to consider whether there would be anything to support the skull, once the fluid begins to drain."

where he worked as a farmhand; missing another day of work in harvest season could cost him his job.

Although alone, and more frightened than ever, Sandy badly wanted to visit Leah. She asked the nurses to wheel her to the nursery. When she saw Leah's huge head turned sideways, she felt again the horror of the day before. But something else tugged at her – a feeling that this baby belonged to her.

Tentatively, she reached into the incubator, then pulled away. "I'm afraid I'll hurt her," she confided to nurse Paul Franko.

"Don't be afraid. Leah's what we call a snuggler," he said.

Taking care not to dislodge the electrode wires, Sandy gingerly patted the

"IF SHE SURVIVES, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE LEAH WILL EVER HEAR OR SEE OR THINK"

Over the next few days, the team of three paediatricians and two neurosurgeons pondered Leah's case.

Fighting For Her Life

Down the hall from the neurosurgical suite where doctors agonised, Leah Marie Church was fighting with all of her might. Now, three days after her birth on September 1, 1985, all of her 47-centimetre body wriggled in her incubator.

Tim had left before dawn for the ranch 130 kilometres outside Billings

rounded pink tummy. Leah curled her body towards Sandy, as if hungry for her touch.

Franko laughed. "See what I mean?"

Mesmerised, Sandy stroked Leah's clenched fist. Lightening fast, Leah grabbed her finger.

"You know your Mummy, don't you, sweetheart?" Sandy whispered. She looked at Leah's wide-set eyes, her tiny nose and perfect bow mouth. For the first time, Sandy realised how exquisitely beautiful Leah was.

"It's like she's asking me to fight for

her," Sandy said. "But the doctors say there's nothing to fight for."

"Nothing to fight for?" Franko seemed incredulous. "Let me tell you about this little girl of yours. Late last night, I was changing Leah, holding the incubator door open with my elbow. It slipped and slammed shut. Leah jumped. She startled, Sandy – a baby who's supposed to be deaf!"

Franko opened the incubator's port-hole and stroked Leah's arm. She responded to his touch. "There is someone home in there," he insisted.

ANY HOPE FOR LEAH disappeared when Sandy and Tim talked with

Sandy and Tim were silent.

"Leah may die with or without surgery," Dr Wood continued. And if she did survive, he added, she could still end up in a persistent vegetative state.

From deep within her a resolve took hold of Sandy to fight for her daughter. "I refuse to believe that there's no future for my daughter," she said. "I want the shunt operation done."

She meant every word. But later, when she was alone with Tim, things turned greyer. "What if Paul Franko's wrong?" Sandy agonised.

From the day she'd met her quiet, unwavering husband, he always

HOLDING HER FOR THE FIRST TIME, SANDY LOOKED INTO LEAH'S WIDE-SPACED EYES

Dr Wood about the dangers of shunting.

"There is a significant chance that your daughter will die of cerebral haemorrhage on the operating table," Dr Wood said. "Or of brain collapse or infection after the surgery."

Sandy reached for Tim's hand.

"If she survives, there is no evidence she will ever hear or see or think. Your baby really has almost no brain..." He held the black sheet of CAT scan film up to the light.

"Technically, your daughter has hydrocephalus, but she is very close to anencephalic. That means without a brain."

knew the right thing to do, even when nobody else did.

"As long as Leah's alive," Tim answered, "she deserves every chance we can give her."

On the morning of September 11, Sandy and Tim patted their daughter outside the operating room. After Leah was wheeled in, Sandy walked to the hospital chapel, sank to her knees, and prayed: "Please, God, don't let her die."

Sandy and Tim had met in Montana, on an icy morning in February 1984. Sandy was 19, beautiful and bubbling with energy. He was 35, quiet and shy, a plain-spoken

ranchhand working towards buying a herd of his own.

This big, strapping man had the kindest eyes Sandy had ever seen. And the gentlest manner and the strongest voice. Although they'd just met, she knew this was the person with whom she wanted to spend the rest of her life.

Five weeks later, Sandy and Tim exchanged marriage vows, then settled into small town life. To both of them, a house full of children seemed the most natural thing in the world.

"You may have to wait a little longer, Mrs Church," the doctor advised her when she and Tim went for tests the following winter to see why she hadn't become pregnant. "I suspect you have a tubal blockage, but that needs to be confirmed by special X-rays."

The tests would have to wait. When, just a month later, Sandy began feeling nauseated and tired, her doctor ran one more test and announced, laughing, "The impossible has happened, Mrs Church. You are pregnant."

If ever a child was meant to come into the world, she and Tim told each other, it was this one who'd proved the expert wrong.

Nothing Left, Except Love

The infant who emerged from surgery a little after 11am on September 11 was a tiny mass of bandages and oxygen tubes. But she was alive. That alone was a miracle.

"When can we hold her?" Sandy demanded.

"The minute we get her off oxygen," Paul Franko promised, "and the doctors give the OK, you can hold her."

Later that week, the nurses placed Leah in Sandy's arms for the first time. Transfixed, she sat looking into Leah's wide-spaced eyes – light blue, like Tim's – that peeked out at her from between bandages.

"Sandy, there's a problem with the shunt," she heard Tim saying. Then Dr Wood explained that the medium-pressure valve he'd installed wasn't doing the job. Leah's head was still growing so fast her incision threatened to break open.

Sandy was even more devastated than she'd been at the outset. "Now there's another battle for her to fight," she told Tim.

Leah was producing cerebrospinal fluid at the normal rate, but without the brain surface that normally absorbs the fluid. The job of removal fell entirely on the shunt, and therein lay the new problem.

Manual pumping – by pressing the thumb directly into the spot where the shunt was implanted – seemed to be the only way the nurses could stabilise Leah's head growth and keep her alive.

Two weeks later Dr Wood returned Leah to the operating room and replaced the original shunt valve with a low-pressure one. The fluid began

flushing more rapidly, but her head continued to grow more than a centimetre a day.

The neurosurgeons were forced to resort to a head tap, a delicate and dangerous procedure. Dr Wood inserted a needle into Leah's skull and gently sucked out excess cranial fluid into a syringe. It worked, at least temporarily.

But how many more of the taps could Leah survive? With each passing day, Sandy and Tim felt themselves moving closer to the moment they'd been dreading. Gradually, the choice took shape: where did they want Leah to be when the time came for her to die?

If they took Leah to the dingy downtown motel where they were living, they'd have to pump her shunt by hand, around the clock, and walk her to the hospital several times a week to have her head drained. And in the end, would their baby just die anyway?

Something else had happened since Leah's birth: Tim had lost his job. His employer needed field hands he could count on seven days a week.

"There's no choice, Sandy. We're going to have to sell the cows," Tim said quietly. Sandy looked away, thinking how proud her husband had been the day he'd first shown her his hard-earned start on a herd.

She knew that it might be months before Tim could find another job. They'd have to sell everything else

- their furniture, their clothes, their wedding rings, all so they could be with Leah. And take government assistance.

Tim and Sandy had no income, no insurance, no medical expertise, no home, no future. If it hadn't been for love, they would have had nothing at all.

"She's Ours"

Sandy and Tim set out from the hospital on an October evening. "I just can't stop worrying that we'll wake up one morning and find Leah dead," Sandy agonised. "I love her too much to watch her die."

Tim unlocked the motel room door and switched on the lamp. He took Sandy's hands in his.

"There is no decision here," he told her softly. "Leah is our responsibility, no one else's. We are the only ones she has, and we have to love her until she dies."

Sandy began to tremble. "That's just it, Tim. That's what I can't face. Every minute, I get more attached to her ..."

She could not go on. The prospect of having Leah die in her arms was too terrible to contemplate. But so was the idea of abandoning her.

Tim didn't stop. "She deserves to be held and cuddled and kissed and loved every minute until the time comes for her to die. She doesn't deserve to be left with strangers."

Sandy wanted to run, but she had

nowhere to go. Desperate, she turned on her husband. When she heard her voice, shrill and frantic, she barely recognised it as her own.

“Leave, Tim, please. Just leave, and don’t come back,” she shouted, not even knowing where the words came from. Ashen, he buttoned his coat and in an instant was out of the door. Sandy ran out, calling for him, but the hallway was empty.

The nurses at the intensive care nursery looked up, startled, when Tim walked in at ten o’clock, alone. “I’ve come to visit Leah,” he said.

He slid a rocking chair next to Leah’s crib, leaned over and picked her up. Leah nuzzled her swollen,

threatened to swallow up everything she loved. Now, it seemed so clear: the three of them belonged together.

“We’re both staying with Leah,” she said.

They would bring Leah home and love her as much as they could.

Only For Today

Once Sandy and Tim had Leah to themselves, they could not kiss and cuddle her enough.

“You’re home with Mummy and Daddy,” they told her the first night, when at last they tucked her into the desk drawer that was her crib. When she cried in pain from the pressure inside her head, they held her. When

SANDY AND TIM HAD TO PUMP LEAH'S SHUNT VALVE BY HAND AROUND THE CLOCK

sutured head into his chest. *What would he do, he wondered, if Leah died in his arms?*

“Daddy’s here, Leah,” he whispered as he began to cry. “You’re not alone.”

Slowly, Leah’s eyes closed.

“Sleep tight. Leah. You’ll be going home soon,” he told her. And then he left.

“We have to talk,” Tim told Sandy. “I’ve been with Leah.”

They sat next to each other on the bed. “If you want to leave, then leave,” he said. “But I’m staying with Leah.”

Sandy was quiet. Her fear had

she relaxed and wriggled and cooed, they held her. When she slept, they held her.

“Don’t you two ever get tired?” marvelled social worker June Collins, a handicapped child specialist who had been assigned to monitor Leah’s care.

“No, we really don’t feel tired,” Sandy told her. “Not yet, anyway.”

“Soon we won’t have her with us anymore,” Tim explained.

Hundreds of times every day, around the clock, Sandy and Tim had to pump her shunt valve by hand. In and out, in and out, they pressed,

Sandy taking days, Tim nights. They were mindful of the nurse's warning: "One missed cycle could mean the difference between life and death."

Four times each day, they measured Leah's head, which kept growing, just as Dr Wood had warned. Every other day, they carried her back to the hospital to have her tapped with a needle and syringe.

Somehow, the little girl continued to beat death. Each time the doctors tapped her head and disposed of the fluid, Sandy and Tim waited for the worst to happen. Cerebrospinal fluid, with its vital nutrients, was meant to be reabsorbed into the body. Throwing it away meant risking a fatal disturbance of the body's electrolyte balance.

SLOWLY, THE FEAR THAT LEAH WOULD DIE SLIPPED FROM THEIR MINDS

It was hard to watch the baby writhe and scream as the surgeons pressed the long needle into the top of her cranium and drew out the fluid – and just as hard to ignore the stares and whispers of strangers.

"I never stop being afraid," Sandy confided to June Collins as November wore on. "Every morning I wake up wondering whether this will be the day we lose her."

"There isn't anyone who could do what you're doing and not feel overwhelmed," June said. "The most you can do is get through one day at a time."

VAGUELY, SANDY AND TIM knew that there was life beyond their motel room, hospitals, doctors and needles. Somewhere there was work for Tim, and a chance to begin rebuilding. But while Leah lived, there was only today.

"No child can survive this indefinitely," Dr Wood warned.

The doctor's words angered Sandy and Tim, but somewhere between the pumping and the head tapping and the waiting, they had begun to wonder just what it was they were hanging on to.

One December morning Leah gave them the beginning of an answer.

The Person Inside

"Let me get some coffee going," Sandy called to June and Tim from the motel room's kitchenette.

In the other room, Tim picked up Leah and sank into a chair, adjusting her head in the crook of his arm. She cooed softly. Suddenly, on the other side of the wall, the kettle hit the floor with a bang.

Leah startled at the noise.

Tim and June stared, and then they shouted, "Sandy! Come here!"

Sandy rushed around the corner.

"Leah heard that, Sandy!" Tim was shaking with excitement.

"Are you sure?" Sandy asked.

"She definitely heard that," said June. "She tried to turn towards it."

Later that morning Sandy told Dr Wood what had happened. "My daughter can hear! I am absolutely sure of it."

The surgeon shook his head, thinking of all the couples whose brain-damaged children he'd treated in 20 years. To hold out hope without proof, he had learned, was to set up parents for a devastating fall. He pondered Leah's CAT scan. "I simply don't see anything she could hear with," he answered finally.

But Sandy and Tim were certain she could hear. So they talked to her. While they pumped her shunt, fed her, changed her nappies, they told her all about what they were doing.

Always, Leah quieted to the sound of their voices, and cooed and kicked. When they sang to her, they were certain that she smiled.

"I feel like she's fighting to get out," Sandy told Tim.

SLOWLY, THE FEAR THAT LEAH would die slipped from their minds. It was impossible to pinpoint the exact moment when the future opened up. It might have been when the huge soft bulge on her head visibly compressed, signalling that her shunt had finally begun keeping up with

the fluid production. But whatever the cause for hope, it happened. They were able to pump the shunt less frequently, and the doctors stopped the terrible head taps. And they were seeing the feisty little person the doctors said could never exist. They saw that when they held up Leah's red teddy bear, she grabbed for it.

As winter turned to spring, Leah grew more alive. And as she did, Sandy and Tim began to rebuild.

Tim found work on a ranch 30 kilometres from Billings. Out in the April sunshine, Leah sat with Sandy in the shade of the caravan they now called home, and watched Tim driving the tractor. Sandy took Leah's tiny hand and waved it at Tim.

At night, when Tim came home, he lifted his sleeping daughter from her crib and sank into the rocker next to it. "I've been planting seed all day, Leah. It's not easy. First you have to turn the soil ..."

"Tim," Sandy would call sleepily, "let Leah get some sleep. You pick her up so much, you'll spoil her rotten."

"I know," Tim answered. "That's what I'm trying to do." Leah listened, and laughed, and drifted to sleep in her father's arms.

So softly did each night blend into the next, so gradually did days become weeks, and weeks months, that Tim and Sandy barely realised that by the time Leah was nine months old, she had achieved the impossible.

Believing In Leah

The counsellor who walked into Sandy and Tim's caravan on 4 June, 1986, had two words to describe the child nestled in Sandy's arms. "Absolutely phenomenal," Vicki McDonough said.

Sandy had half expected this visitor to recoil at Leah's scars and her huge, misshapen head. She barely knew how to react to her enthusiasm.

Vicki McDonough bent over and tickled Leah. Leah broke out in a huge, two-tooth grin. "Look at that smile!" she laughed.

Sandy was flooded with relief. They now had an ally. Even the name of Vicki's family support organisation – Special Training for Exceptional People – was filled with promise.

"This baby wants to look at everything, and we need to help her do that till she can hold her head up," Vicki concluded at the end of her first visit. The following week, she arrived with a specially made chair to support Leah's head, an activity centre, a mobile toy and information on infant stimulation.

By June, Leah had begun to try to hold up her head. By the end of July, she was saying 'Mama' and 'Dada'.

"I've been trying to get an appointment with a superb paediatric neurologist I know named Dr Mary Anne Guggenheim," Vicki told Sandy. "I'm certain she can help Leah."

Vicki was unable to get an appointment until September, but Sandy didn't mind waiting now that each

day brought something new to celebrate. Leah clapped and babbled and drank in sunlight so hungrily that Sandy and Tim forgot this was the child who was supposed to die.

Then, one night in August, Sandy awoke with an overpowering sense that something was terribly wrong. She pushed open Leah's door and flipped on the light. Leah lay rigid on her soaking-wet mattress, her eyes rolled back in her head.

"Tim! Tim!" Sandy screamed. "Leah's dead."

In an instant Tim was bending over Leah, calling her name. He lifted her from the crib and gently placed her on the floor. Her whole body was blue. Suddenly, Leah twitched and gasped for air. "We've got to get her to the hospital," Tim said.

Within moments of their arrival, the emergency-room doctor explained, "This child is having a grand mal seizure." He summoned a colleague and two nurses to a treatment room. Sandy and Tim paced the hallway, terrified.

"Your daughter will be all right," the doctor reported when he emerged from the treatment room. "Had you not found her when you did, she might have died from respiratory arrest. Hydrocephalic children can have serious seizure disorders."

When Tim and Sandy drove out of the hospital carpark at 5am, they knew that they would never relax their vigil.

A Miraculous Image

Sandy was full of questions as she and Vicki McDonough strolled Leah into Dr Guggenheim's clinic on September 16, 1986. Leah was now one year and two weeks old. It had been months since she had been seen by a specialist.

The waiting-room door opened, and Dr Guggenheim walked towards Sandy. "Hello, Mrs Church," she greeted Sandy with a smile. Then the doctor knelt down. "And this must be Leah."

Leah took her bottle from her mouth. "Hi!" she said.

Dr Guggenheim grabbed a plastic

seat with Sandy and Vicki. "What you're looking at, Mrs Church, is your daughter's brain," Dr Guggenheim said.

Although smaller than normal, there it was. A grey and white brain, well defined and dense with detail. "How can this be?" Sandy asked. "Every doctor who's seen Leah has told me that she has no brain."

"Well, the brain is like a sponge," Dr Guggenheim explained. "Leah's brain case contained such an enormous quantity of fluid that it probably made her brain so thin it was invisible. With shunting, her compressed brain tissue was able to ex-

"THE TRUTH IS THAT TOTAL MEMORY LOSS IS A POSSIBILITY," THE NEUROSURGEON SAID

frog from a pile of toys and waved it in the air. When Leah grabbed it, Sandy shot Vicki a look of triumph.

Sandy poured out every detail of Leah's early history, from the grim prognosis to the shunt-pumping and head-tapping, along with the first signs of Leah's mental development.

"We'll know a great deal more about Leah after we get the EEG and a new CAT scan," the neurologist told her.

Late that same day, the doctor emerged from the examining room and closed the inner-office door. She slipped several sheets of CAT-scan film from an envelope and took a

pand, and as that happened she began to grow and develop, to hear, see and speak."

Sandy thought of the bleak months in the motel room, of the hours spent pumping out the brain fluid, all in the hope of relieving Leah's suffering. Never had they realised that brain expansion was possible.

"Leah clearly understands most of what's going on," Dr Guggenheim said. "In her social and language development, I really think she's quite normal."

Sandy sat stroking Leah's cheek and beaming at Vicki. "There's still more water than I'd like to see, and her

READER'S DIGEST

brain structure is not entirely normal," the neurologist continued.

"Get used to the idea of operations. And I think it would be wise to continue her on seizure medication for at least the next year or two."

That night, Tim and Sandy sat up celebrating the world that had opened for Leah. They revelled in thoughts of a future filled with books and music and Leah attending school.

As they talked until dawn, they didn't know that they would soon embark on their most painful journey.

Every Chance

"Leah needs a new shunt," said Dr James Johnson, a neurosurgeon on Leah's team. Sandy felt the past coming back at her. It was as though the past 12 months had never existed.

"We knew this was coming, but now that it's here, I don't know whether I can face it," Sandy told Tim that evening, "Why is it so much harder this time?"

"Because now we know Leah," he answered.

The blonde one-year-old who teased them with peekaboo games filled the house with her impishness. When Leah spotted Tim in the doorway at night, her face lit up and her



By the age of eight, Leah had developed into a happy and active girl

arms opened wide. "Hi, Daddy!" she squealed.

How would we bear it if we lost her now? Sandy asked herself. For weeks after the visit to Dr Johnson, Sandy and Tim didn't speak a word about the shunt.

At last, Tim broke their silence.

"We really don't have a choice, Sandy. Leah is growing, and the shunt isn't. It's something we

have to do."

It was Dr Johnson who finally brought an end to the waiting. "We have watched Leah for some time now. We need to replace her shunt. Let's go ahead and schedule surgery."

Then he began reciting the risks. "Cerebral haemorrhage is the greatest risk. The smaller the patient, the greater the danger. Patients often experience some paralysis after shunt surgery. Usually it's temporary, but sometimes it's permanent."

Tim and Sandy nodded.

"Patients sometimes suffer memory loss from the procedure," the neurosurgeon continued.

"When Leah comes out of surgery, she may not remember who you are. You may have to begin all over again."

Sandy and Tim could barely breathe.

"We all hope the shunt will give

Leah a new lease on life," Dr Johnson said gently.

"The odds are that it will. But I have to be honest, and the truth is that total memory loss is a possibility."

"There really isn't anything to talk about," Tim said. Sandy nodded.

A Face Lit Up

Sandy and Tim stood by Leah outside the surgical suite on the morning of January 8, 1987.

"When you wake up, Mummy and Daddy will be right here," they kept repeating to Leah.

"Bye, Mummy. Bye, Daddy," Leah said thickly, too drowsy with sedatives to fuss at having to leave them.

"What if when she comes out again, and we say 'Hi,' she won't know enough to say 'Hi' back? What if she doesn't even know us?" Sandy said.

Tim stood looking down the long corridor. Even after the doors closed, he didn't move. Sandy had never seen such agony on his face.

"Tim, please, come and sit with me," she begged. "We've got three hours, at least, before we'll know anything."

Tim collapsed on the waiting-room sofa. Sandy was lost in thoughts of the past 16 months.

Then came the sound of Dr Johnson's voice, and Tim and Sandy bolted to the doorway. Down the hall came a gurney, several IV poles, an entourage of nurses – and in the middle of it all, Leah. They ran down the

hallway. "Leah! Leah!" they called, "Hi, Leah!"

Leah's eyes, barely visible beneath the head bandages, were closed.

"She's just coming out of anaesthetic," Dr Johnson told them. "The surgery went well."

But Sandy and Tim were not listening. They were calling Leah's name.

Leah opened her eyes. She looked at Dr Johnson and the nurses, and then her eyes focused on Sandy and Tim.

Leah's face lit up – in exactly the way it always did when Sandy or Tim came towards her. And she lifted her hand and she waved – the wave of a little girl who knew who her parents were.

LEAH SURVIVED her three-year battle with seizures. By 1993 she was attending elementary school in Manhattan, Montana, where her family, which now included four-year-old son Cody and baby daughter Jamie, lived in a small house.

Eight-year-old Leah still struggled with problems including impaired vision, a cerebral-palsy-like condition, and various developmental delays. But she was no longer in crisis, and her face was always alight with life.

The previous year, Leah had given Sandy a hand-drawn Mother's Day card.

"Mummy," she wrote in extra-big letters, "I love your heart." **R**

THIS ARTICLE ORIGINALLY APPEARED IN READER'S DIGEST IN JULY 1994.



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RD RECOMMENDS

Cooking

Taste Of Tibet: Family Recipes From The Himalayas

Julie Kleeman & Yeshi Jampa

MURDOCH BOOKS

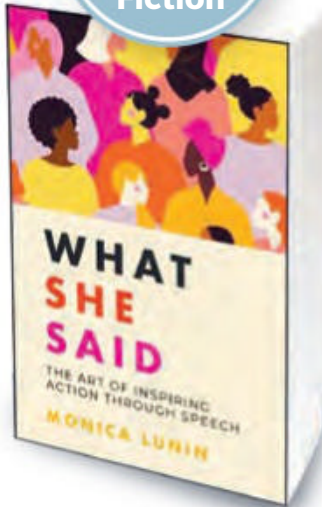
The iconic flavours in Tibetan cuisine are more similar to food from Nepal than China, according to *Taste of Tibet* co-author Julie Kleeman, who owns a Tibetan restaurant in the UK with her husband Yeshi Jampa. In this hardcover, 254-page cookbook, the authors offer 80 recipes from the Tibetan plateau for today's home cook, including comforting soups and stews, momos (dumplings) and hand-pulled noodles plus stunning photographs of Tibet.



COMPILED BY DIANE GODLEY



Non
Fiction



What She Said

Monica Lunin

JOHN WILEY & SONS

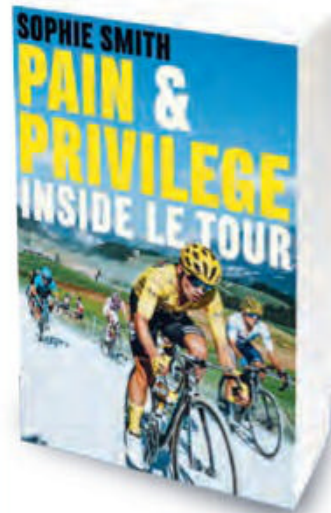
For some, the fear of public speaking or talking in a large group can be daunting. In *What She Said*, the power of the spoken word is analysed by communications expert Monica Lunin, using 40 of the greatest speeches made by a diverse group of empowering women. From Queen Elizabeth I to Greta Thunberg to Michelle Obama, Lunin takes apart the elements of great speeches. Through useful examples, readers can learn how to leverage their own voices and make an impact in their chosen field. *M.Egan*

The Plant Rescuer

Sarah Gerrard-Jones

BLOOMSBURY

Love house plants but they don't love you? If your indoor plants look sad, then you need to hear their pain. Giving voice to your house plants is Sarah Gerrard-Jones, who offers simple, clear instructions in this stylish, hardcover guide. *The Plant Rescuer* is full of gorgeous photos and practical tips. These include how to choose a plant, everyday care and symptoms your plant may be suffering from and, of course, the steps you can take to turn its life around. This book promises to help you ensure your plants not only survive but thrive.



Pain & Privilege: Inside Le Tour

Sophie Smith

ULTIMO PRESS

With the annual Tour de France taking place this month, cycling enthusiasts will want to get their hands on this little tome. Attracting competitors and spectators from around the world, the race provides tales of human endurance as well as images of stunning landscapes. But as a reporter on the ground for the past decade, Sophie Smith has witnessed the true cost of the contest at close quarters. By uncovering the politics and strategies, Smith reveals the reality of a grand sporting spectacle.

PHOTOS: (PREVIOUS PAGE) MURDOCH BOOKS; (THIS SPREAD) JOHN WILEY & SONS; BLOOMSBURY; ULTIMO PRESS



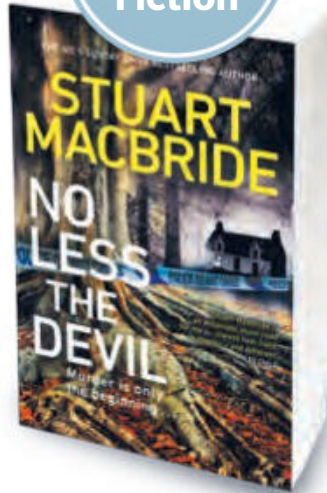
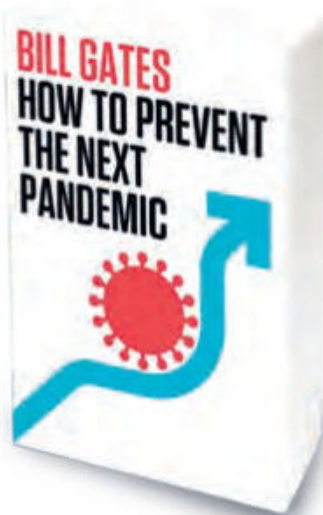
Fiction

How To Prevent A Pandemic

Bill Gates

ALLEN LANE

Fresh off the heels of his book *How to Avoid a Climate Disaster*, the billionaire philanthropist shares ideas on combating pandemics. Perhaps most interesting is his suggestion to create GERM (Global Epidemic Response and Mobilisation), a global 'brigade' of 3000 epidemiological, vaccine development and computer modelling experts. The brigade would review health systems, prepare responses, shore up defences and be ready for action in the case of more outbreaks. *M.Egan*



No Less The Devil

Stuart MacBride

PENGUIN
RANDOM HOUSE

This gritty police drama with its lashings of dark humour is not for the squeamish. DS Lucy McVeigh and her physically unfit partner, DC Duncan 'the Dunk' Fraser, are on the trail of a serial killer. But McVeigh is being stalked by a troubled Benedict Strachan, who has been recently released from internment after having killed a homeless man. There's a lot of murky happenings in the streets and surrounding gloomy woods of the Scottish town of Oldcastle, so I wouldn't advise venturing there after dark. *M.Egan*

The Mother

Jane Caro

ALLEN & UNWIN

Domestic violence is at the core of this drama by Walkley Award-winning journalist Jane Caro. Recently widowed, Miriam Duffy, a respectable real estate agent, mother and grandmother, finds herself suddenly alienated from her recently married daughter, Ally, after she moves to the countryside with her husband, Nick. But after a short stay to help Ally cope with her toddler and newborn while Nick is away, it dawns on Miriam that Nick is not the kind, loving husband he pretends to be.





Movies



Thor: Love And Thunder **Superhero**

The God of Thunder, aka Thor (Chris Hemsworth), is on a quest like none other – to find inner peace. But his retirement from saving the world is interrupted when galactic killer Gorr the God Butcher (Christian Bale) shows up with a mission to annihilate all the gods. To combat this threat, Thor

enlists the help of King Valkyrie (Tessa Thompson), Korg (Taika Waititi – the Kiwi actor is also the movie’s director), and ex-girlfriend (Natalie Portman), who inexplicably wields Thor’s hammer. Together they embark on a harrowing cosmic adventure to try and stop Gorr the God Butcher before it’s too late.

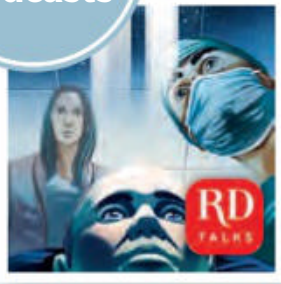


The Black Phone **Horror Thriller**

The phone is ringing ... but it’s dead. Finney Shaw (Mason Thames), a shy, 13-year-old boy, is abducted by a sadistic killer (Ethan Hawke – playing his most sinister character to date). Finney is trapped inside a soundproof basement with little else besides a disconnected phone on the wall. When it begins to ring, Finney discovers that he can hear the voices of the killer’s previous victims, who are dead set on making sure what happened to them doesn’t happen to Finney. The spine-chilling drama is produced, directed and co-written by Scott Derrickson (*Sinister*, Marvel’s *Doctor Strange*).



Podcasts

**Can't Anyone Hear Me?**

In a coma, Richard Marsh watches helplessly from his hospital bed as doctors ask his wife whether they should turn off his life support. He hears the blunt diagnosis of the doctors: a two per cent survival rate. It is up to Richard to make the medical team hear him.

**The Flying Doctor**

The life-saving work of the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) in Australia's remote and rural areas is renowned. From a baby being born mid-flight to a horse rider in a life-or-death situation, this fascinating series of podcasts introduces some amazing individuals, and the role the RFDS plays.

**Scamfluencers**

Underneath the gloss of social media lurks a dark side – insidious influencers promoting criminal scams, claiming to be everything from charismatic healers to financial insiders. Co-hosts Scaachi Koul and Sarah Hagi reveal stories of deception from the spheres of social media, fashion, finance and health.

**The New Yorker Fiction Podcast**

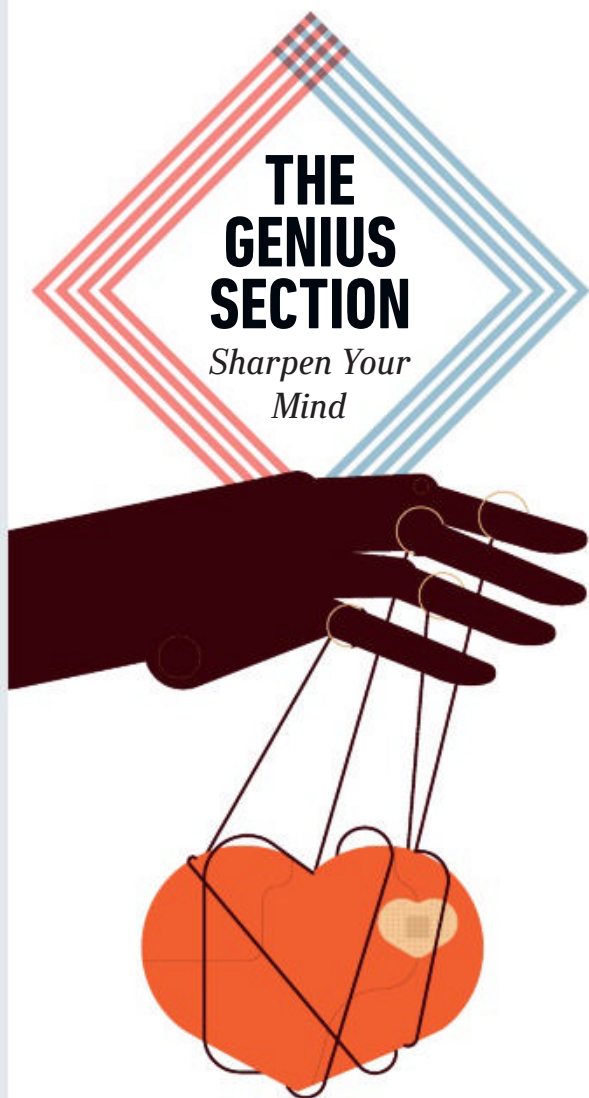
For world-class short stories, this podcast is worth dipping into. Each month a famous writer picks a story from the magazine's archives to read and discuss. Highlights include Margaret Atwood reading Alice Munro, and Paul Theroux reading Elizabeth Taylor. Find it on Apple Podcasts.



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GASLIGHTING

Red Flags

How to tell if you're experiencing this form of emotional abuse

BY Charlotte Hilton Andersen

The word *gaslighting* comes from the 1944 movie *Gaslight* which portrays a husband who convinces his wife she's going insane by manipulating the gas lights in their home. Today the term has taken on a broader meaning.

Gaslighting is when someone uses a series of manipulation and distraction tactics to distort the truth, making people question their own reality. This allows the gaslighter to control them, says psychotherapist Stephanie Sarkis, author of *Gaslighting: Recognize Manipulative And Emotionally Abusive People - And Break Free*.

"Gaslighting is brainwashing and is a type of emotional abuse and domestic violence," Sarkis says. "It's far more common than people think, partly because the victim is often unaware it's happening."

SIGNS OF GASLIGHTING. It can be difficult to recognise gaslighting while you're still in the relationship, since gaslighting depends on you not trusting your own feelings, perceptions and reality, says Dr Wyatt Fisher, a clinical psychologist and relationship counsellor. The important thing is relearning to trust yourself and your own intuition about the relationship, he says. Read through the following signs and if they start to sound familiar, you may be experiencing gaslighting.

YOU THINK YOU MIGHT BE GOING CRAZY BECAUSE YOU CAN'T REMEMBER THINGS. The hallmark sign of gaslighting is that a person doubts their own memories and experiences to the point where they replace them with the version fabricated by their abuser, Sarkis says.

YOUR RELATIONSHIP STARTED OFF VERY INTENSE. “Gaslighting often starts with the victim being ‘love bombed’ by their partner, as a way to gain control and make you trust them,” Sarkis says. “Then, little by little, the gaslighter will start to pick them apart and criticise them.” This red flag shows up as early as the first date, with the gaslighter asking a lot of personal questions, pressing for intimacy very quickly, and giving lots of gifts or declarations of love, she says.

YOU'RE TOLD THAT “YOU'RE TOO SENSITIVE” OR “YOU CAN'T TAKE A JOKE”. If the victim protests the barrage of criticism, a gaslighter will dismiss their feelings by saying that they are too sensitive or their feelings are wrong, Fisher says.

YOU FEEL DETACHED AND ISOLATED. A feeling of detachment or separation from your real self can be a sign of gaslighting, Fisher says. “When we start feeling like something is wrong with us or like we are losing touch with reality, we tend to turn inward, which makes us feel

detached from others, which makes the symptoms even worse,” he says. Gaslighters will take advantage of this vicious cycle by encouraging you to doubt yourself.

YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO SEE YOUR FRIENDS. Gaslighters will often try to physically isolate a partner from friends and loved ones as those people are the ones who could give them a reality check, proving the abuser wrong, Sarkis says. “This may take the form of shaming or guiltting the victim into avoiding gatherings by saying they don't like their friends or that their friends hate the gaslighter,” she says. “This behaviour can escalate to taking away their phone, their internet, their car keys and anything else that would allow them to communicate or escape.”

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU LIKE OR DON'T LIKE. Gaslighters like to control every aspect of their victim's lives, including things like clothing choices and food preferences, Sarkis says. “If someone asks you what kind of ice cream you like and you immediately look at your partner for the answer, that's a red flag,” she says.

YOU'RE ALWAYS APOLOGISING. Saying you're sorry is an essential part of a healthy relationship – but only when both partners do it. A red flag of gaslighting is when you constantly find yourself apologising and

sometimes you don't even know why, Sarkis says. "Gaslighters make you feel responsible for their emotions and actions," she explains. "Anything that goes wrong is your fault."

YOUR BEST IS NEVER GOOD ENOUGH. "Gaslighters are often narcissists and need a constant supply of attention. However, even if you devote 100 per cent of yourself to loving and taking care of them, it will never be enough. They will make you feel like you will never be good enough for them," Sarkis says.

YOU'RE ACCUSED OF CHEATING. Projecting is a trademark move of gaslighters as it is another way to make you responsible for their behaviour, Sarkis says. "We often see gaslighters accusing their partners of cheating because they, themselves, are cheating," she says.

YOU'RE HAPPIER AND MORE RELAXED WHEN YOUR PARTNER IS GONE. Feeling like you always have to walk on eggshells around your partner is a big sign that they are not an emotionally safe person to be around, Fisher says. When they're not around you feel happier, more relaxed and less worried.

YOU'RE PUNISHED WITH THE SILENT TREATMENT. Refusing to listen, talk or respond to a partner or rages (or alternating between the

two) are the main ways gaslighters use to punish their partners and seek control over them, Sarkis says.

THEY ACCUSE YOU OF GASLIGHTING THEM. In a darkly ironic twist, a favourite tactic of gaslighters is to accuse their victim of gaslighting them, Sarkis says. "The goal is to keep you so busy defending yourself and being emotionally distraught that you don't have enough time to pay attention to the gaslighter's own behaviour," she says. "By accusing you, the gaslighter has bought themselves time."

HOW TO ESCAPE A GASLIGHTING RELATIONSHIP. Because most gaslighters are doing it intentionally, as a way to manipulate and gain power, they will not willingly give that up and the only way to stop it is to walk away, Fisher says.

"The gaslighting is a symptom of a larger problem, this is not the type of person you should be in a relationship with," he says.

Once you decide to leave you need to do it very carefully as it's not uncommon for gaslighting to escalate to physical violence, Sarkis says. "Talk to your loved ones or a therapist and make a plan to leave safely," she says.

"Once you've left, you need to go full no-contact because they will try to 'hoover' you back in with promises and gifts." **R**

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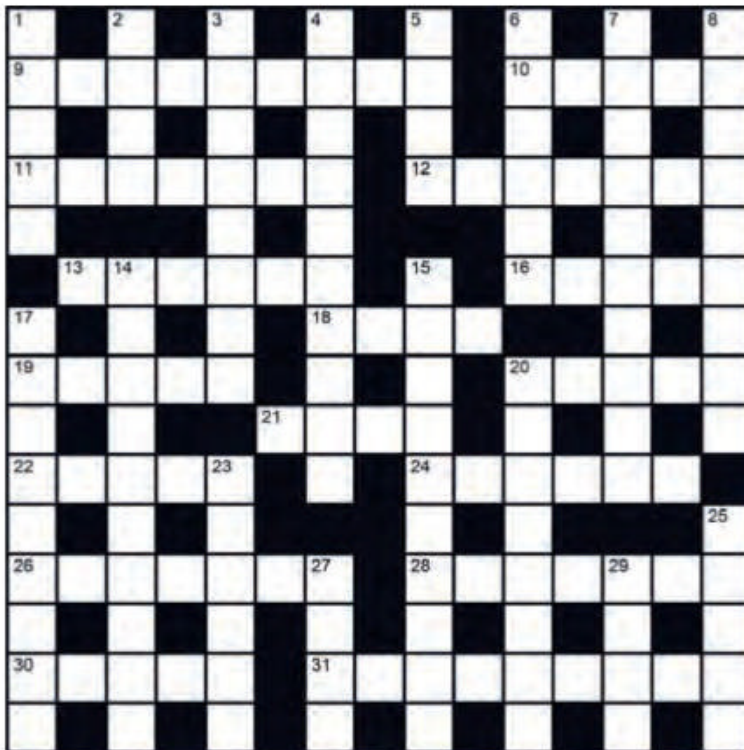
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PUZZLES

Challenge yourself by solving these puzzles and mind stretchers, then check your answers on page 150.



Crossword

Test your general knowledge.

DOWN

ACROSS

- 9** Cloudburst (9)
- 10** Move stealthily (5)
- 11** Possibly (7)
- 12** Glitter (7)
- 13** Reach one's destination (6)
- 16** Eddy (5)
- 18** Thick cord (4)
- 19** Overturn (5)
- 20** Long stories (5)
- 21** Seethe (4)
- 22** Irritably impatient (5)
- 24** Passenger ships (6)
- 26** Dental filling (7)
- 28** Out wooing (2,1,4)
- 30** Run up (5)
- 31** Christian festival (9)

- 1** Burst forth (5)
- 2** Coffin stand (4)
- 3** Betrayer (8)
- 4** Crustacean catcher (7,3)
- 5** Little devils (4)
- 6** Squirts (6)
- 7** Minstrel (4,6)
- 8** Insomniac (9)
- 14** Opposition (10)
- 15** Enchanted (10)
- 17** Southern Hemisphere continent (9)
- 20** Parched (3-5)
- 23** Curdled milk (6)
- 25** Cults (5)
- 27** Brood (4)
- 29** Extremely small (4)

Puzzle Answers

PAGES 150

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

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: To win, you have to put a number from 1 to 9 in each outlined section so that:

- Every horizontal row and vertical column contains all nine numerals (1-9) without repeating any of them;
- Each of the outlined sections has all nine numerals, none repeated.

IF YOU SOLVE IT WITHIN:

15 minutes, you're a true expert

30 minutes, you're no slouch

60 minutes or more, maybe numbers aren't your thing

To enjoy more puzzles and interactive games, go to www.readersdigest.com.au/games-jokes

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**Puzzle
Answers**
PAGE 150

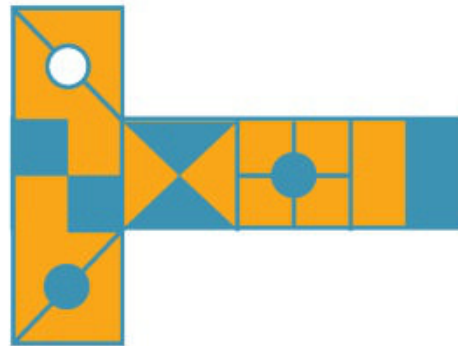
Spot The Difference

There are ten differences. Can you find them?



Spot The Cube

When the shape on the right is folded to form a cube, just one of the cubes below can be produced. Which one?



A



B



C



D

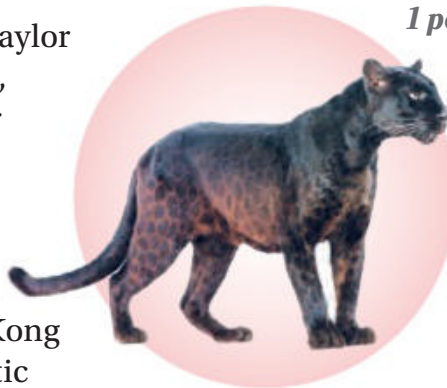


E

TRIVIA

Test Your General Knowledge

- 1.** Which country removed the British Queen as its head of state in 2021? *1 point*
- 2.** The vampire film *Nosferatu* (1922) prompted a copyright-infringement lawsuit from the estate of which writer? *1 point*
- 3.** What seafood flavoured ice-creams can you try in Japan? *2 points*
- 4.** Worldwide, what country was the top-trending news-related search on Google last year? *1 point*
- 5.** Decades before Taylor Swift was a pop star, what country singer recorded the hits 'Crazy' and 'I Fall To Pieces'? *2 points*
- 6.** The name Hong Kong came from a phonetic translation of the city's Cantonese name. What does it literally mean? *2 points*
- 7.** The majority of gallstones are mostly made up of what substance? *2 points*
- 8.** Singapore is the second busiest container port in the world. What is the first? *2 points*
- 9.** What is the top-selling video game of all time, with more than 238 million sold? *1 point*
- 10.** Nearly every country in the world has ratified the UN's Convention On The Rights Of The Child. Which one has not? *1 point*
- 11.** Phobos and Deimos orbit which planet? *1 point*
- 12.** What is Malaysia's tallest building? a) Petronas Twin Towers. b) Kuala Lumpur Tower. c) Merdeka 118 Tower. *1 point*
- 13.** How many stars are on the New Zealand flag? *1 point*



14. Roughly what percentage of leopards and jaguars have black fur? *2 points*

16-20 Gold medal **11-15** Silver medal **6-10** Bronze medal **0-5** Wooden spoon

ANSWERS: 1. Barbados. 2. Bram Stoker. 3. Squid and shark's fin. 4. Afghanistan. 5. Patsy Cline. 6. Fragrant harbour. 7. Cholesterol. 8. Shanghai. 9. Minecraft. 10. The United States. 11. Mars. 12. (c) Merdeka 118 Tower (at 679 metres). 13. Four. 14. Ten or 11 per cent, at most.

PUZZLE ANSWERS

From Page 146

Crossword



Sudoku

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

Spot The Difference



Spot The Cube

Which cube can be produced?

ANSWER: D



D

WORD POWER

Perfect Fit

Ready to try this month's quiz on for size? It's a rack full of fashion and clothing words that'll come in handy whether you're lounging in your track pants or stepping out in your glad rags.

BY Sarah Chassé

1. stiletto – A: high heel. B: body armour. C: traditional costume.

2. knockoff – A: shoulder pad. B: imitation. C: stunning beauty.

3. dapper – A: dated. B: threadbare. C: stylish.

4. anorak – A: hooded jacket. B: snowsuit. C: hiking boot.

5. houndstooth – A: belt buckle. B: hidden pocket. C: checked pattern.

6. sashay – A: drape. B: strut. C: twirl.

7. camisole – A: raincoat. B: sleeveless top. C: slipper.

8. haberdashery – A: finery. B: hatmaker. C: sewing items.

9. lapel – A: leather elbow patch.

B: jacket's front flap. C: pocket square.

10. sheath – A: crocheted shawl. B: close-fitting dress. C: long cape.

11. haute couture – A: high fashion. B: evening gown. C: off the rack.

12. beanie – A: handmade button. B: knitted cap. C: ballet flat.

13. array – A: dress up. B: collect buttons. C: embroider.

14. gabardine – A: wide-legged pant. B: clutch purse. C: woven fabric.

15. accessory – A: designer collection. B: decorative item. C: reflective vest.

16. gilet – A: light sleeveless padded jacket. B: pointed shoe. C: white coat worn in laboratories.

Answers

1. stiletto – (A) high heel.

Mariah sprained an ankle when her stiletto broke.

2. knockoff – (B) imitation. It may look like a Gucci handbag at first glance, but it's a cheap knockoff she bought for 20 bucks.

3. dapper – (C) stylish. Jim cut a dapper figure in his grey pin-striped suit and crisp white shirt.

4. anorak – (A) hooded jacket. "Does the dog really need a knitted sweater, a rain bonnet and an anorak?" Paolo asked.

5. houndstooth – (C) checked pattern. "Should I go with the houndstooth or a plain colour for my new golf pants?" Mona asked.

6. sashay – (B) strut. The models sashayed down the runway at the end of the fashion show.

7. camisole – (B) sleeveless top. Wearing a black camisole and a pink tutu, the ballerina floated onstage.

8. haberdashery – (C) sewing items. The shop sells thread, buttons, zips and other haberdashery.

9. lapel – (B) jacket's front flap. The senator always wears a flag pin on her lapel.

10. sheath – (B) close-fitting dress. Rachel chose a simple white silk sheath for her beach wedding.

11. haute couture – (A) high fashion. Al's idea of haute couture is a clean T-shirt and jeans without holes.

12. beanie – (B) knitted cap. Jess sports her trademark woollen beanie all year round, even in the middle of summer.

13. array – (A) dress up. Arrayed in an ornate gown and a tall golden crown, the queen took her seat on the throne.

14. gabardine – (C) woven fabric. "Please don't toss my school gabardine blazer into the washing machine. It's dry-clean only!"

15. accessory – (B) decorative item. Mother always said the best accessory is a big smile – or a big diamond.

16. gilet – (A) light sleeveless padded jacket. A gilet worn over a jumper will keep you warm on colder mornings.

VOCABULARY RATINGS

5–9: Fair

10–13: Good

14–16: Word Power Wizard



*Trusted
Brands*

2022

Winners

Special Supplement

Highlighting Australia's Most Trusted Brands

*The results of the 2022 survey show which brands
have received the seal of consumer approval*

The way we go about things has changed significantly in recent years, given the disruptions of the pandemic, but trust remains a key driver in the products and organisations we choose.

Trust is the reason we're willing to exchange our hard-earned cash for goods and services, walk down the aisle with someone or vote in elections for a politician who we

believe will represent our interests. At the end of the day, trust matters and that makes it powerful.

For the past 23 years, the Reader's Digest Trusted Brands survey has identified the most trustworthy brands in Australia. The survey has an established reputation as a premier consumer-based and international measure of brand preference, with a singular focus on brands Australians trust most.



One area where trust is particularly important is in the area of human service and social care institutions, including aged care and retirement villages. In addition, as a result of the current trend to 'age in place', an increasing amount of care for older people is delivered at home. This year's Trusted Brands survey covers a comprehensive range of products and services across 80 categories, including the new Regional Residential Aged Care and Regional Home Care categories, spanning the separate New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia markets.

The Winners and Highly Commended brands in these categories all have a well-deserved reputation of delivering an exceptional standard of service to senior members of the community and their families.

The results of the 2022 Reader's Digest Trusted Brand survey accurately reflects

consumer preferences, and identifies and awards brands that have earned the seal of consumer approval by maintaining brand excellence and the highest level of quality and integrity.

How the survey was conducted

The 2022 Trusted Brands survey was independently conducted by leading research company Catalyst Research. It invited a sample of over 3000 Australian adults, from every state and territory, to complete an online questionnaire. Catalyst Research first asked each individual participant to name the brands they trust for each category. This was an unprompted question to ensure the rating of top brands in each of the 80 categories, as selected by Australians, was without prejudice.

The participants were then asked to rate which was their most trusted brand in each category, and explain why.

In each category, one overall Winner was awarded, along with two Highly Commended brands. These brands scored higher in their respective categories than the other brands polled.

We are confident that the results of the 2022 Reader's Digest Trusted Brands survey provide a truly accurate measurement of Australian consumer sentiment.



2022 Australia's Most Trusted Brands

NATIONAL CATEGORY	WINNER	HIGHLY COMMEDED	HIGHLY COMMEDED
» Aged Care & Retirement Villages	Anglicare	Uniting	Australian Unity
REGIONAL HOME CARE	WINNER	HIGHLY COMMEDED	HIGHLY COMMEDED
» Home Care NSW/ACT	Anglicare	Uniting	Wesley Mission Home Care
» Home Care QLD	Blue Care	Anglicare Southern Queensland	RSL LifeCare
» Home Care SA	RDNS	Southern Cross Care	AnglicareSA
» Home Care VIC/TAS	Australian Unity	Baptcare	Mercy Health Home Care Services
» Home Care WA	Silverchain	Amana Living	Bethanie
REGIONAL RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE	WINNER	HIGHLY COMMEDED	HIGHLY COMMEDED
» Residential Aged Care NSW	Salvation Army	Anglicare	Uniting
» Residential Aged Care QLD	Blue Care	Ozcare	Anglicare Southern Queensland
» Residential Aged Care SA	Salvation Army	Resthaven	AnglicareSA
» Residential Aged Care VIC	Anglicare Victoria	Australian Unity	Bupa Aged Care
» Residential Aged Care WA	Salvation Army	Bethanie	Amana Living



Blue Care

WINNER RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE QUEENSLAND

“

“I have a grandparent in one and she is very well cared for. The staff are very friendly, entertaining and care for all the people there.”

FEMALE, 49, QLD

“Blue Care is a brand that is always there for you. The staff are caring, loving and friendly. They love what they are doing.”

FEMALE, 49, QLD

BLUE CARE WAS QUICK to implement changes to its entry screening requirements during the pandemic and it's been successful in reducing the risk to residents and staff. In the middle of 2020, Blue Care introduced its own check-in system to keep residents and staff safe – nearly a year before the Queensland government introduced its own. Blue Care's award-winning App asks visitors the most up-to-date entry screening questions required under the Aged Care Direction before staff and visitors can enter any of Blue Care's 47 residential aged care facilities.

In another innovative undertaking, Blue Care partnered with the Maggie Beer Foundation and technology company CBORD to provide intuitive food and nutrition modelling for aged care residents. Following the 15-month development phase, which included rebuilding the diet and menu system, the cloud-based food and nutrition system is rolling out across Blue Care aged care facilities. The system provides residents with tailored menu options so they can choose the food they want, when they want it, with appropriate support and assistance.

- Visit www.bluecare.org.au





Voted most trusted

For nearly 70 years, Blue Care's dedicated team has been working with Queenslanders to design and deliver the care and support you need, empowering you to live life your way. Thank you for voting Blue Care as Australia's Most Trusted Brand for Residential Aged Care in Queensland.



Proudly part of



Resthaven

HIGHLY COMMENDED RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



“

“I have heard many good things about the staff at Resthaven as well as the long-term care and support for the residents.”

FEMALE, 40-59, SA/NT

“I have worked for them. They are of a very high standard and most sought after.”

FEMALE, 40-59, SA/NT

“Personal family experience was good.”

FEMALE, 60+, SA/NT



EMERGING AT A TIME OF DIRE NEED – the Great Depression, no less – Resthaven was set up as a home mission to support elderly women who had served the Methodist Church their whole lives yet had no home or a family to care for them. Opening in South Australia on May 11, 1935, Resthaven has embodied values of trust, dignity and choice ever since. “Resthaven has remained true to its core values and purpose since 1935: working together to provide outstanding care and support for older people and their carers,” said Resthaven Chief Executive Officer, Darren Birbeck.

Today, Resthaven is one of a select few Australian providers offering the full range of services, including residential aged care, respite care and support, retirement living, in-home care, wellness and reablement services, allied health, and community nursing. Its services extend throughout metropolitan Adelaide, the lower Barossa, Gawler, Riverland, Murraylands, Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula and the Limestone Coast. Resthaven supports around 15,000 people with a workforce of around 3000 employees and volunteers.

- Visit www.resthaven.asn.au





Resthaven
Incorporated



Welcome Care

Trust
Dignity
Choice

From home help or social support to respite and clinical aged care, our trusted, friendly staff will give you as much or as little help as you need. **Visit our website: www.resthaven.asn.au**

Australian Unity

HIGHLY COMMENDED

RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE VICTORIA



“

“Reliable provider of care with great facilities and staff.”

MALE, 60+, VIC/TAS

“I believe this company to be very competitive, and above board in its dealings with the public.”

MALE, 60+, VIC/TAS

“This is where my aged mother lives and she is looked after very well.”

FEMALE, 40-59, VIC/TAS



ESTABLISHED IN 1840, Australian Unity was the country’s first member-owned wellbeing company, delivering health, wealth and care services. Being a member-governed company (or mutual) gives Australian Unity the freedom to invest money back into the services and solutions that matter most to its members.

Australian Unity has grown to become a developer of new retirement communities throughout New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, as well as a provider of aged care, home and disability services. As well as being Highly Commended in the national 2022 Trusted Brands Aged Care & Retirement Villages, Australian Unity has also received a Highly Commended in the Regional Residential Aged Care Award in Victoria.




Beverly Smith, Executive General Manager of Residential Communities, said community connectedness is one of the seven pillars of Australian Unity’s Wellbeing Index and is a guiding principle of their holistic model of care called Better Together®.

“This model of care creates a sense of connection and community for residents and is expressed in built form through the creation of small households with higher staff-to-resident ratios, and is consistent with the Aged Care Royal Commission’s recommendations.”

Consistent with Australian Unity’s pursuit of accelerated-growth opportunities in healthy ageing precincts, the mutual has acquired the Greengate retirement and aged-care business, comprising three established communities – two in Sydney and one in Brisbane.

● Visit www.australianunity.com.au



Join a community that celebrates ageing

It's important to look after your wellbeing as you age. It's why our Better Together® model of care puts your wellbeing first, so you can keep enjoying the life you always have.

Learn more at australianunity.com.au/readersdigest

Blue Care

WINNER HOME CARE QUEENSLAND



“

“Blue Care provided palliative care to my terminally ill mother. The quality of care and professionalism was impeccable. My family was treated with compassion and offered respite when needed.”

FEMALE, 50-59, QLD

“They do a great job, very caring and dedicated.”

FEMALE, 50-59, QLD



EMPOWERING PEOPLE TO LIVE LIFE THEIR WAY has been a commitment Blue Care has made to its customers for nearly 70 years. In their distinctive fleet of vehicles, Blue Care’s dedicated and passionate team of more than 8000 staff are on the road every day, meeting people from 80 communities across Queensland, from Cape York to Coolangatta. Today Blue Care’s people make more than three million visits each year.

Putting customers and their loved ones first, Blue Care provides simple and honest care and support, and delivers outcomes that best suit the individual, which makes decision-making easier for all. Blue Care’s dedication to caring has helped it evolve to become one of Queensland’s largest and most-trusted not-for-profit providers of in-home care, residential aged care, disability services, independent and supported retirement living, and allied health services.

Blue Care is also excited to introduce the Blue Care App – enabling home care customers and their loved ones to manage their appointments, access scheduling information securely and communicate with their Blue Care home care workers.

- Visit www.bluecare.org.au





Voted most trusted

For nearly 70 years, Blue Care's dedicated team has been working with Queenslanders to design and deliver the care and support you need, empowering you to live life your way. Thank you for voting Blue Care as Australia's Most Trusted Brand for Home Care in Queensland.



Proudly part of





Australian Unity

WINNER HOME CARE VICTORIA/TASMANIA

“

“Transparent, capable and caring brand.”

MALE, 75+, VIC

“I’ve had a good experience with Australian Unity. They are helpful and friendly.”

FEMALE, 40-44, VIC

“Have a good reputation ... a caring and well-respected company.”

FEMALE, 45-49, VIC



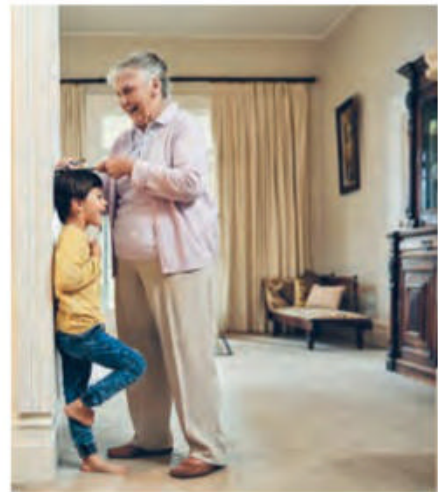
ESTABLISHED IN 1840, Australian Unity was the country’s first member-owned wellbeing company, delivering health, wealth and care services.

“We’re committed to real wellbeing for all Australians,” said Australian Unity’s Independent and Assisted Living CEO, Kevin McCoy. “For us, that means so much more than physical health. It’s about your standard of living and feeling safe in your home. It’s your personal relationships and being connected to your community. It’s about what you want to achieve in life, while having the security to get out and do what makes you happy.”

Over the years, Australian Unity has grown and changed, but it continues to focus on enhancing the wellbeing of its members, customers and the community. Today Australian Unity provides a range of high-quality support services – from dignified personal care and help around the home, through to companionship and in-home health care services such as nursing.

Currently Australian Unity is proud to support around 38,000 home care services customers. Something else the company is proud of is being named one of Australia’s Most Trusted Brands. “Every time we speak to our customers, trust is what they say they value the most,” Mr McCoy said.

● **Visit australianunity.com.au/homecare**



Real Wellbeing starts with quality home care

For over 180 years, Australian Unity has been helping improve the wellbeing of Australians. With our home care services, you'll get tailor made support, delivered by a team of highly trained care workers and health care professionals.



Enquire now 1300 160 170
australianunity.com.au/homecare



Fujitsu General

WINNER AIR CONDITIONER



“

“I’ve used Fujitsu air conditioners. They’re always efficient and effective.”

FEMALE, 60-64, ACT

“Been around a long time. Never heard a bad thing.”

FEMALE, 30-34, SA/NT

“Always provided a good service.”

MALE, 35-39, VIC/TAS

“They all seem extremely reliable and long-lasting.”

FEMALE, 18-24, QLD

FUJITSU

AUSTRALIA'S FAVOURITE AIR®

TO BE AUSTRALIA'S FAVOURITE

AIR® means more than simply being a leading air conditioning brand; it means being the best air conditioning



company to deal with. Committed to creating a holistic customer-care experience, Fujitsu General ensures they are there for the entire customer journey. Fujitsu General Assist, the brand’s comprehensive service network, deploys Fujitsu-trained technicians to all Australia’s major capital cities and provides access to dedicated Service Agents in other parts of the country.

With over 100 models of air conditioners on offer across wall mounted, cassette, ducted and floor and ceiling consoles, Australian consumers are spoilt for choice. However, customers may not realise that to ensure products are developed to suit Australia’s range of climates and conditions, the local Fujitsu General team works closely with the Japanese R&D department, and before a product is released to market it undergoes extensive testing in Fujitsu’s state-of-the-art R&D centre in Japan.

This year, Fujitsu General added more R32 refrigerant products to their range, demonstrating their ongoing commitment to lowering the environmental impact and global warming potential of its products.

● Visit www.fujitsugeneral.com.au

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Fujitsu General is honoured to be voted the most trusted air conditioning brand, 5 years in a row. We understand that our customers are investing in our brand and trusting that we will provide their families with a comfortable living environment, all year round.

Fujitsu General has an extensive range of efficient air conditioning solutions to meet the cooling or heating requirements of a single room or multiple rooms within your home.

So, if you're buying new or upgrading, trust an award winning brand.

Fujitsu, it's Australia's Favourite Air®.

Visit fujitsugeneral.com.au for more details.

AUSTRALIA'S FAVOURITE AIR®



The Value Of Trust

Being trustworthy is one of the hallmarks of being a good friend and a good person.

JENNIFER FREED IN CHARACTER

“

**“Don't assume, ask.
Be kind.
Tell the truth.
Don't say anything you
can't stand behind fully.
Have integrity.
Tell people how you feel.”**

WARSAN SHIRE, POET

”

As you go to work, your top responsibility should be to build trust.

ROBERT ECKERT, CEO, MATTEL

“

Losers make promises they often break. Winners make commitments they always keep.

DENIS WAITLEY,
MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER

”

“

**TRUST IS BUILT
WHEN SOMEONE
IS VULNERABLE
AND NOT TAKEN
ADVANTAGE OF.**

BOB VANOUREK, AUTHOR OF TRIPLE
CROWN LEADERSHIP

”

“

**TRANSPARENCY, HONESTY, KINDNESS, GOOD STEWARDSHIP,
EVEN HUMOUR, WORK IN BUSINESSES AT ALL TIMES.**

JOHN GERZEMA, COLUMNIST

”

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AUSTRALIAN-MADE **CADBURY** SINCE 1922



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CONFECTIONERY BRAND

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