

BLAINES WORLD

#1108

12.18.2017

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1. Reflections

If you're reading this via Facebook or LinkedIn, please be advised that you will get it quicker if you get it via email. Another advantage: You'll never miss it that way because you may not have logged in for a day or two. And in the unlikely event you're not already a subscriber, all you need to do is send an email to: bginbc@aol.com and put SUBSCRIPTION in the subject line.

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I, had a memorable day this past week. Here's how I described it on Facebook:

HEALTH UPDATE ... That's me you see with Cynthia, my beautiful bride, in a picture taken last night at Mission Hospital. I was rushed there after a session with my physical trainer. ... They did both blood work and a brain scan, then the doctor called Cynthia aside and said, "Your husband has a serious disease. You must follow a certain regimen or else he'll die. Every day, bathe his feet. Cook three meals for him. And most importantly, make love to him daily and twice a day on weekends. If you do this, your husband should regain his health." ... Cynthia returned to the room and when I asked what she was told, she replied, "The doctor says you're gonna die." ... (JUST KIDDING about what the doctor said. See next paragraph for the rest of the true story.)

I started my session with the physical trainer by jumping rope. She always has me do some warm-up activity, but this one got my heart beating really fast--something it doesn't ordinarily do. ... I then lifted some weights and recall saying to myself, "Self, those weights look heavy." Nevertheless, I got through one set without too much difficulty, did a few other sets of exercises and sometime while doing them, I lost my memory for about an hour. I apparently started pacing the gym, telling the trainer, "I'm usually very crisp." ... She called the hospital and by the time the emergency vehicle

arrived, I was doing better; i.e., I could answer the questions I was being asked. (Though come to think of it, when they asked me who the president was, I had some trouble coming up with Trump's name. Maybe I was blocking that?). ... I got to the hospital, they ran the indicated tests and by then, I was doing fine. The doctor eventually came back and told me I had suffered a bout of something called transient global amnesia. Fortunately, this is a rare condition and one that rarely happens again. I also was given the green light to go home. ... For more information about transient global amnesia. please click:

[Here](#)

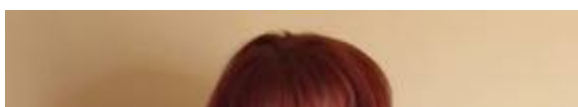


B. During the week, we also:

(1) Were joined by this friendly Buddha for a tasty dinner at Yao Buffet.



(2) Got Cynthia a new sweater that expresses her soooo well!





C. WPVM/FM invites you to listen to the BLAINESWORLD show from Wed., December 20, 2017. ... Guest (first half): Robin Myer, Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of WNC; for more information: [Here](#) ... Guest (second half): Judith Loniak, Owner/Photographer at Judith Loniak Photography; for more information: [Here](#)... Pictured, l-r: Robin Myer, Blaine Greenfield and Judith Loniak.

To listen to the show, please click:

[Here](#)



D. During the week, I had the pleasure of attending the Biltmore Lake Holiday Party. To see more pictures from the event, as well as the chance to watch Peter Blau and the Biltmore Lake Singers perform, please click:

[Here](#)





E. Condolences to:

- (1) Marvin Sadovsky and family on the passing of Barbara DeMartino, Marvin's sister.
- (2) Donna Giovannetti and family on the passing of John Persi, Donna's uncle.
- (3) Susan Harper and family on the passing of both Susan's father and father-in-law.
- (4) Kristin Pedemonti on the passing of her Uncle Bob.

F. Congratulations to:

- (1) Pat Hannigan on the film he made for Saint Andrew Catholic Church in Newtown.
To view it, please click:
[Here](#)
- (2) Dean Jones on having his shop and the great work it does featured on WLOS. To see the clip, please click:
[Here](#)
- (3) Jesse McCreadie and Meredith Breen on their marriage.
- (4) Taylor Henderson on her marriage to Kurt Henderson.
- (5) Julie Stehling and King Daddy's Chicken & Waffles on being featured on WLOS.
To view the clip, please click:
[Here](#)
- (6) Maria and Jason Ervin on the birth of Catherine Grace Ervin, their beautiful baby girl, and to Tom and Valerie Giraldi, the baby's grandparents.
- (7) Bob Pompeo, winner of Contest #25: copy of REMEMBER ME AS LOVING YOU: A DAUGHTER'S MEMOIR by Kimberly Childs. All told, there were just two entries. And that reminds me that it's now time for:

***** CONTEST #1 (for 2018) *****

One lucky reader will win a copy of THE ART OF CONNECTION, Michael Gelb's fantastic new book . To find out more about it, please listen to his recent interview on my radio show: [Here](#) and go to the December 13 show. ... To enter, send an email to: bginbc@aol.com and put CONTEST #1 in the subject line, then include your snail mail address in the body of the email. All entries must be received by 9 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 1, 2018.

***** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD *****

Thanks, Jenny Bunn, marketing director for Asheville Community Theatre, for this week's nomination:

Shari Smith (pictured below in the center, in-between Blaine Greenfield and Susan Harper) has managed the ACT Mainstage Box Office for almost every performance since September of 2010. She has been the first introduction to ACT for thousands of people over those years. Her service to patrons is impeccable--always kind, always thoughtful, always helpful. If ever there's a problem, and frequently there are none thanks to her hard work and her ability to think three steps ahead, Shari calmly and confidently solves it. Her presence in our Box Office has been a constant balm. Shari's life path takes her to Atlanta, and we wish her all the best in this new adventure. But she will be so missed!

Note: I second Jenny's nomination. Shari's friendly personality has always made ticket-buying an enjoyable experience for me.



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2. FYI

How to maximize your Social Security survivor benefit
by Bray Creech

So, what can be done to maximize the Social Security survivor benefit?

One important factor is the age at which the first-to-die spouse, usually the husband who has a higher earnings record, begins to collect his own Social Security retirement benefit. If he files at his "full retirement age" (a term used by Social Security) of 66 or

67, depending on the year he was born, he will receive 100 percent of his retirement benefit.

For the rest of this informative article, please click:

[Here](#)



FYI, part 2

To read each of the following contributions in full, please click:

[Here](#)

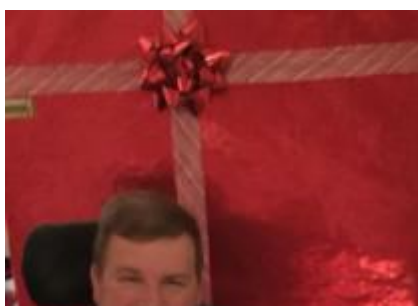
(1) Birth Control and Breast Cancer: Putting the Risk in Perspective. (2) Art Mayhew: In my newspaper career, one of my joys was, believe it or not, reading obits.(3) Uproar Over Purported Ban at C.D.C. if Words Like 'Fetus.' (4) Ken Greenfield: Thank you for introducing us to Mrs Maisel. (5) Trissa King: 5 Research-Based Ways to Say No During the Holidays. (6) Mary Lou Sartoris: Have you seen LOVING VINCENT? (7) Mark Beloyan: Toilet seat shows how much weight is lost after taking a dump. (8) Rob Eblen: Crowdfuding campaign for AMY'S ALIEN. (9) Mike Martinelli: THE GREATEST SHOWMAN ** 1/2.

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3. Joke 1

My funny friend, Bill Lewis, has outdone himself with some recent Facebook posts leading up to Christmas. Here's just one of them:

9 days till Christmasfor those of you who don't know, my mother's name was Eleanor. In my younger days, I always took great delight around Christmas when my mom would ask me to take out the trash or empty the dishwasher so I could say, "No-EI." Mom is decorating in heaven now, and I miss her (dad, too) each and every day!





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4. Reviews

A. Saw WONDER WHEEL, a drama about four characters whose lives intertwine amid the activity taking place at the Coney Island amusement park in the 1950s. Kate Winslet, Justin Timberlake, Junoe Temple and Jim Belushi are all fine in the leading roles, but overall, this latest film written and directed by Woody Allen felt flat. What I did like very much was the set design. Rated PG-13.

Note: This was the first time I used my MoviePass card. What a deal. You can watch a movie every day for just \$9/95/month. Thanks, Emily Shaules, for putting this on my radar screen. For more information, please click:

[Here](#)

B. Heard THE SUBTLE ARTS OF NOT GIVING A F*CK : A COUNTERINTUITIVE APPROACH TO LIVING A GOOD LIFE (Audible Audio Edition), read by Mark Manson and read by Roger Wayne ... The author, a superstar blogger, points out that there are only so many things we can give a f*ck about, so we need to figure out which ones really matter. The book has both entertaining stories and profane humor and though it is not for everybody because of the language, I found it interesting. .. in addition, I enjoyed learning about:

Manson's Law of Avoidance: The more something threatens your identify, the more you will avoid it. That means, the more something threatens to change how you view yourself ... how successful or unsuccessful you believe yourself to be ... how well you see yourself living up to your values ... the more you will avoid to ever getting around to doing it. There's a certain comfort to knowing how you fit into the world. Anything that shakes up that comfort, even if it could potentially make your life better, is inherently scary. Manson's Law applies to both good and bad things in life.

And I thought the examples really drove this law home. For example:

You avoid writing that screenplay you've always dreamed of because doing so would question your identify as a practical insurance adjuster; and

You avoid telling your friend you don't want to see him anymore because ending the friendship would conflict with your identify as a nice, forgiving person.

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5. TV alert

A. CALL THE MIDWIFE CHRISTMAS SPECIAL: Monday, Dec. 25, at 9 p.m. on PBS (check local listing at www.pbs.org)

The midwives face even greater challenges than usual in this episode set amid the Big Freeze of 1963, the U.K.'s coldest winter in 200 years.

B. KENNEDY CENTER HONORS: Tuesday, Dec. 26, at 9 p.m. on CBS

Honorees this year are Norman Lear, Lionel Richie, LL Cool J, Gloria Estefan and Carmen de Lavallade.

C. AMERICAN MASTERS: THIS IS BOB HOPE: Friday, Dec. 29, at 9 p.m. on PBS (check local listings at www.pbs.org)

The film traces Hope from his vaudeville and radio days to his many decades as a Hollywood icon and entertainer of wartime troops.

D. ROYAL NEW YEAR'S EVE: Saturday, Dec. 30, at 8 p.m. on Hallmark Channel

An aspiring designer meets the perfect guy on the same day she lands her dream job to create a New Year's Eve gown for a socialite. Then she learns the socialite and the guy are dating.

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6. Joke 2

If you're like me, and you celebrate all holidays (more food, fun and friends that way);, MERRY CHRISTMAS! ... My hope is that you got everything you desired--even this one if it was on your list. (Thanks, Chuck Welsh, for sharing.)



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7. Clips/Websites

A. Check out these clips at your convenience:

(1) Cynthia Greenfield: I Think You're Wonderful

[Here](#)

(2) Lois Rosenthal: GOLDEN BUZZER - Florent & Justin - France's Got Talent 2017

[Here](#)

(3) Doug Hauschild: The Best Christmas Song I've Ever Heard. It Will Give You Chills.

[Here](#)

(4) Anita Samuel: How Scammers Are Using Familiar Phone Numbers To Steal Information

[Here](#)

(5) Ed Nasta: Jeff Foxworthy, Larry the Cable Guy, Bill Engvall Do Gymnastics
Learn More

[Here](#)

(6) Mark Beloyan: Do hotels really change the bedsheets before new guests arrive?

[Here](#)

B. Ask a question about fixing just about anything at Fixya, which can be accessed by clicking:

[Here](#)

There are over 20 million Fixya users. It's easy to ask about whatever needs fixing and receive answers quickly. Categories range from apparel & accessories to weddings, and there's a whole lot in-between.

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click:

[Here](#)

D. Are you on Facebook? In the unlikely event we have not yet connected as friends there, please feel free to send me an invite by clicking:

[Here](#)

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8. Technology tip

Finding Your Roots, Free
by J. D. Biersdorfer

Q. Why do genealogy sites charge money for access to public records that are supposedly free? Is there any easy way to get to this information anyway?

A. Viewing public records is typically free if you go to the municipal or religious archives and look them up yourself, or the organization has digitized and posted them. However, if a genealogy company took the time to scan paper-based records from various sources around the world, index them and make it easy to search through mountains of material from the comfort of your own home, you will mostly likely be charged at some point.

For the rest of this informative article, please click:

[Here](#)



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9. Joke 3

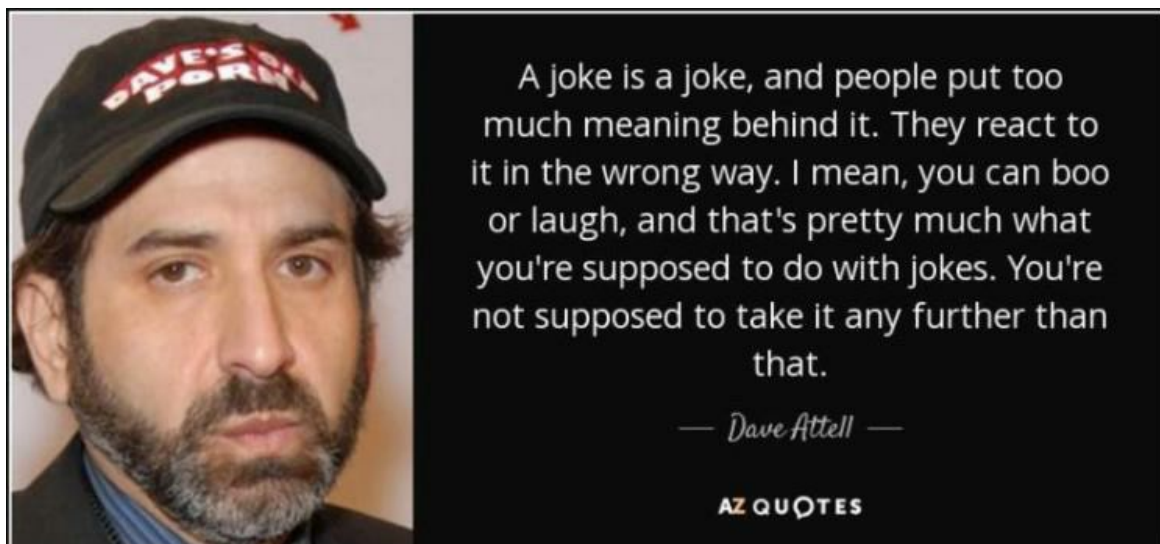
One more holiday for you to celebrate (in addition to Section 6): HAPPY KWANZAA! ... The holiday begins on Tuesday, Dec. 26, and runs through Jan 1. And make sure you do what's written below as you also get psyched to see STAR WARS: THE LAST JEDI in the unlikely event you haven't seen it already.



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10. A quote I like

David Attell (born 1965) is an American stand-up comedian, actor and writer, best known as the host of Comedy Central's INSOMNIAC WITH DAVE ATTELL, which gave him a cult following.



11. Thought for the day

Trendy Words Eclipsed Eloquence in '17
by Rob Kyeff*

This past year's language was a fright!
We traded barbs from left and right.
Insults, jeers and accusations,
Eloquence was on vacation.
Media buzzwords sang like Latifah:
"Narrative," "pivot," "alt-right," "antifa."
Widespread "harassment" by men with great power:
Weinstein and Franken and even Matt Lauer.
"Russian hackers," malevolent "trolls,"
"Collusion," "complicit" were all on a roll.
While Vladimir Putin continued to peddle
The dubious notion that he didn't "meddle."
"Partisan politics," "palpable" dangers,
As "tribal" divisions spawned two "echo chambers."
Hurricanes "barreled," and wildfires "raged,"
Rain totals "historic," clichés at "flood stage."
"Millennial" "squads" "threw shade" now and then,
So "woke" and so "salty," we called them "Nextgen."
On college campuses, "snowflakes" flew:
"Discourse," "engagement" and "hashtagMeToo."
In corporate lingo, with "swim lanes," "deep dives,"
"Intentional" "stakeholders" "monetized."
Marketers monitored all the "crowd cultures,"
As "buy-ins" and "bandwidth" were lurking like vultures.
Trump often surprised us with his feisty tweets.
Acclaim and aspersions cascaded like sleet.
His friends were "tremendous," and always "great guys,"
Including "some very fine people" (both sides).
His foes, they were "stupid," "disasters," "sore losers,"
Reporters, "believe me," were always "fake newsmen."
His "Rocketman" was "short and fat."
And, as for the nukes, he'll "take care of that."
Inaugural "carnage" took some folks aback.
And that overblown crowd count? -- "Alternative fact!"
"Repeal and replace" became the new fad;
When that didn't happen, Trump called it "so sad."
The hapless Sean Spicer elicited gasps
With "lasterday," "althewise," Holocaust gaffes.
Just one wondrous word on our nation's lips
Brought total agreement, and that was "eclipse."
Overall, our language flopped,
So we'll just skip a boastful "mic drop."

* Reprinted with the gracious permission of Rob Kyeff, a teacher and writer in West Hartford, CT. He invites your language sightings. Send your reports of misuse and abuse, as well as examples of good writing, via e-mail to Wordguy@aol.com.

To read about each of the following events in full, please click:
[Here](#)

A. NC events

(1) Tracey Schmidt: Asheville friends, join us for some holiday quiet...Rumi, Hafiz and my own work (new work by the way) at White Horse Black Mountain. (2) Rodney Smith: The First Annual Superhappy Telethon.

B. PA/NJ events

(1) Actors' Net of Bucks County: Our next production, WITNESS FOR THE PRODUCTION, opens on Jan. 19. (2) Broadway Blockbuster, 'West Side Story,' Coming to MCCC's Kelsey Theatre for Three Weekends, Jan. 5 to 21.

PS. Make it a wonderful week!

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