

BLAINES WORLD

#1109
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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:

(1) Loved seeing Maria Buchanan (center) star in a performance of THE TWELVE DATES OF CHRISTMAS at NC Stage. Her performance was delightful. ... Kudos, also, to Callan White for her spot on direction, Charlie Flynn-McIver for his sound design and all the others involved in making the show the success that it was.





(2) From there, we went for some tasty hamburgers at The Bier Garden.



(3) We also got to try Marco's Pizzeria (the Hendersonville location) for the first time. It won't be our last!



(4) And we had fun surprising our friend, Annemarie Brown (with her husband Marvin Sadovsky) on her birthday celebration at Plant. We just stopped by and didn't join them for dinner.





B. WPVM/FM invites you to listen to the BLAINESWORLD show from Wed., December 27, 2017. ... Guest (first half): Rodney Smith, Associate Producer at The Magnetic Theatre and Writer/Producer at SuperHappy Productions; for more information: <http://www.themagnetictheatre.org> ... Guest (second half): Marci Bernstein, Executive Director and Co-founder of Attic Salt Theatre Company; for more information: <http://www.atticsalt.org> Pictured, l-r: Rodney Smith, Blaine Greenfield and Marci Bernstein.

To listen to the show, please click:

[Here](#)



C. I updated my cellphone to an iPhone 7, thanks to the fine help I received from Juan Ortiz. He covered my options very well, and he also answered my many questions. ... I especially appreciated the fact that he was then able to program my new phone right then and there, and that didn't take very long--unlike previous times when I've upgraded my phones at the Tunnel Road store.

In addition, I'd like to express my thanks to Gabby Gamez (a trainee in the office). When I went back with a few questions about my email, Juan was busy with another customer. So he arranged for me to meet with Gabby, and she was able to get me straightened out in just a few minutes.



D. And I enjoyed getting the chance to chat briefly with my friend, Michelle Baker, at ACT's recent Holiday Party.



E. Condolences to:

- (1) Jessica Curry-Ellison and family on the passing of Jessica's father.
- (2) David Greenfield and family on the passing of Chris "Tipher " Greenfield, David's brother.
- (3) Chuck Welsh and Zuzu Welsh on the passing of their aunt.

F. Congratulations to:

- (1) Carol Duermit on her engagement to Tom Crook.
- (2) Billie Lyons-Super on the birth of Kamila Carreno Tobin, her granddaughter.
- (3) Matt Spiegel and Christine Dominguez Varsbergs on their engagement.

(4) Asheville on being named one of the 30 Most Exciting Food Cities in America for 2017. To read more, click the following link and go to #30 (at the top):

[Here](#)

(5) Matt Zipin on being named youth programming coordinator for Newtown Township Parks and Recreation.

(6) Maureen Lederer on the birth of Penelope Harper Canizares, her granddaughter.

(7) Michelle Monet on the publication of her book, CREATIVE PEOPLE ... AND WHAT MAKES THEM KICK. (Please also see Section 11 for more information about Michelle.)

Note: To save \$12, you can purchase a copy of the this book by clicking:

[Here](#)

(8) Judith Loniak on being profiled in the above book.

(9) Carole Reese on the birth of Madison Leigh, her granddaughter.

(10) Asheville on being named on one of the 15 coolest places to go. For more information, please click:

[Here](#)

(11) Julia VanderVeen on her new job at Royal Caribbean Productions, starring as Prudy Pingleton/Gym Teacher in Hairspray.

(12) Jim Chewning and family on the birth of Jim's fourth grandchild, David James.

G. Reminder: There's still time to enter ...

***** 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: <http://wpvmfm.org/show/blainesworld/> 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 *****

This week, it goes to Alok K., a representative with Amazon.com ... I'm a big fan of the company, but recently, I had a rare problem with an order. I went to buy something and when I went to check it out, the price was a few dollars more than had been advertised on the website. ... So I wrote Amazon on a Sunday night and within a few hours, I received a first response from Alok. I was told that Amazon would correct the website and that I should check back to see if it was working properly. When I did, I found out that price had been changed--but was now even higher. ... When I notified Alok of that fact, I got a second response (again within a few hours). ... The result: I only had to pay the initial, low price. My account was immediately credited for the difference.

Wow, was I impressed! But just about all my dealing with Amazon are equally as great. The company is great on returns. I love reading the reviews of products before I buy them. And I'm a big fan of the TV show, THE MARVELOUS MRS. MAISEL, that I get via streaming.

Here's still another reason I like the company ... it saves me time and effort. The other day, I needed a replacement band for my fitness tracker. I went to six stores and couldn't find it. within seconds, I found it online, and it was delivered to me two days later.

The few extra bucks I pay for a Prime membership is soooo worth it!

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2. FYI

The five-minute trick that helps Instagram's CEO crush procrastination
by Leah Fessler

Kevin Systrom may be CEO and co-founder of Instagram-but he's still susceptible to procrastination. And so the 33-year-old billionaire has come up with a simple trick to tackle the tasks he tends to put off. "If you don't want to do something, make a deal with yourself to do at least five minutes of it. After five minutes, you'll end up doing the whole thing," he recently told Axios when asked about his favorite life hack.

Systrom is hardly the first to promote the magic of the five-minute rule and its variations. As I write this article, my Tomato Timer (a website that lets you set a 25-minute timer to complete your tasks) is set. But to fully capitalize on Systrom's tip, it's essential to understand why it works so well.

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) Relive your favorite "A Christmas Story" moments at the real house in Cleveland. (2) Barbara Firestone: Is the movie deal for real and did you join it? (3) Jean Brenner: I am so glad Cynthia did everything she was told. (4) John Murray: Suffered a bout of that global amnesia a while ago. (5) Herb Spiegel: I had TGA. (6) Susan and George Beck: We are so glad you are okay. (7) Bray Creech: Great weekly email. (8) Julien: I wish you good health. beautiful bride. God bless. (9) Gladys Podhurst: That was quite a scare you had. (10) How to Combat Your Anxiety, One Step at a Time.

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3. Joke 1

A juggler, driving to his next performance, was stopped by the police. "What are those knives doing in your car?" asked the officer. ... " I juggle them in my act." ... "Oh yeah?" says the cop. "Let's see you do it." ... So the juggler starts tossing and juggling the knives. A guy driving by sees this and says, "Wow, am I glad I quit drinking! Look at the test they're making you do now!"





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4. Reviews

A. Saw THE SHAPE OF WATER, a fairy tale about a woman who discovers a secret classified experiment that changes her life forever. Sally Hawkins is outstanding in the leading role, and I also found Michael Shannon to be quite menacing as the villain. The cinematography was top notch, too. ... Yet overall, I didn't find this quite as good as many of the critics did. It was watchable, but not much more than that for me. ... Rated R.

B. Read I SUCK AT GIRLS (It Books) by Justin Halpern ... The author had me laughing out loud at many of the stories about his relationships with members of the opposite sex--many of them that I could personally relate to .. I also got a kick out of the advice he received from his father and, as a result, I now want to read Halpern's first book, SH*T MY DAD SAYS.

One passage from SUCKS, in particular, caught my attention:
I have never been what you would call "a good dancer" I have one move: reaching my arms out wide, leaning back, and lurching my chest forward to the rhythm of the music, like a guy being shot repeatedly in the back. But that night, I pushed that move to its absolute limits.

That was me; i.e., with one move. I still use it to this day!

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5. TV alert

A. DAVE CHAPPELLES EQUANIMITY: Now available via Netflix
The comic's last two gigs are the networks most popular stand-up specials, so it will be interesting to see if he can top them this time around.

B. Decisions, decisions ... what should you watch on New Year's Eve? Starting at 8 p.m., you can catch DICK CLARK'S NEW YEAR'S ROCKIN' EVE WITH RYAN SECRETS 2018 on ABC. He'll be teamed with Jenny McCarthy in Times Square, along with headliners Sugarland and Nick Jones. Ciara presides from the West Coast with Kelly Clarkson, Shawn Mendes and Charlie Puth among the performers. ... Other alternatives: Steve Harvey co-hosting with Maria Menounos on Fox with Celine Dion, Backstreet Boys and Flo Rida headlining, while on CNN, Anderson Cooper hangs with Andy Cohen (subbing for the fired Kathy Griffin).

C. ELLEN'S GAME OF GAMES: Tuesdays at 9 p.m. on NBC
Ellen DeGeneres hosts this show that features such challenges at Blindfolded Musical Chairs. I saw one episode and found it to be goofy fun.

D. THE X-FILES: Returns on Wednesday, Jan. 3, at 8 p.m. on Fox
I can't believe that Scully (Gillian Anderson) and Mulder (David Duchovny) are still around, but they are in this revived cult thriller, and now they're desperate to locate their son.

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6. Joke 2

FAVOR REQUEST ... please tweet the White House that you are offended by such pictures from the NFL. Disgusting! (Thanks, Lee White, for sharing.)



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7. Clips/Websites

A. Check out these clips at your convenience:

(1) Michael Gelb: Deborah Domanski sings O Holy Night

[Here](#)

(2) Susanne Steele: Christmas in Australia

[Here](#)

(3) A woman treats a computer like a typewriter

[Here](#)

B. If you're into tech for your connected self, check out Wareable by clicking:

[Here](#)

You'll find news, reviews, information on smartwatches, fitness trackers, running, VR, hearables and a whole lot more. There are also some useful buying guides.

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

Bluesmart Series 2 calls itself "the most powerful luggage system in the world." That might well be the case. It enables your phone to lock, track its location, get notifications and even charge your devices on the move. At \$450, it's just a tad bit pricey for me, but I'll look forward to the time when prices will drop. The company also offers a laptop bag, a password pouch and some other neat products that are worth checking out. To do so, please click:

[Here](#)

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9. Joke 3

MR. HELPFUL HERE ... I've also prepared your resolution; i.e., to keep reading my Facebook posts for some other great jokes, as well as my BLAINESWORLD blog. (In the unlikely event you don't yet get that, just message me with our email address.). ... And in the meantime, enjoy your New Year's Eve ... I look forward to again being with you next year!



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10. A quote I like

If you're like me, and you celebrate all holidays (more food, fun and friends that way), HAPPY NEW YEAR! ... And as you enjoy yourself, contemplate this oh-so-profound quote ... Dieting on New Year's Day isn't a good idea as you can't eat rationally but really need to be free to consume whatever is necessary, moment by moment, in order to ease your hangover. I think it would be much more sensible if resolutions began generally on January the second."--Renée Zellweger in BRIDGET JONES DIARY, a 2001 film that earned her an Academy Award nomination





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11. Thought for the day

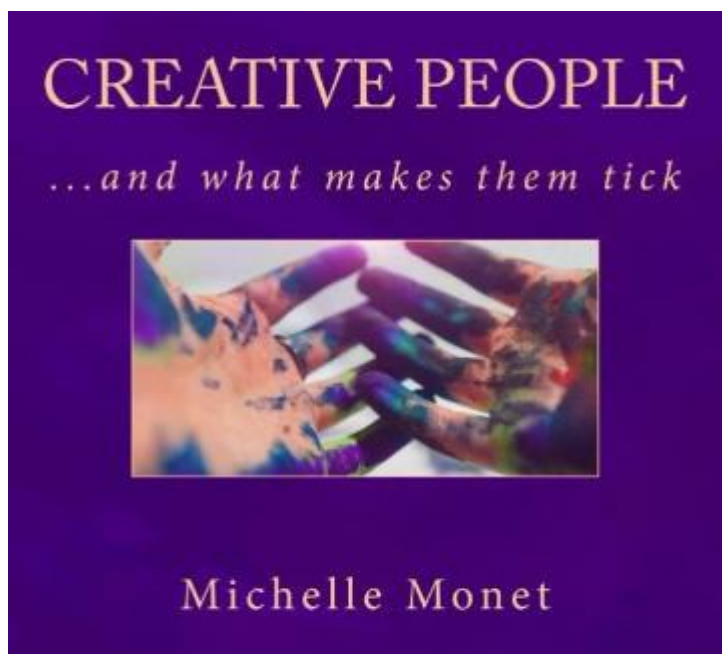
Note: Please don't let the title of the following article fool you. It should be read not only by authors, but also by artists, those interested in creativity, etc. ... Thanks to my friend, Michelle Monet, for graciously allowing me permission to run it.

8 things I learned from writing my latest book
by Michelle Monet

This morning I felt like sharing a bit of my process while writing my latest book
Creative People...and what makes them tick.

It has taken me about a year to compile, research, write, revise and edit this book--
although it wasn't nearly as creative as my last three poetry books. The poetry books
had my brain in full creative mode. This book "Creative People..." was more about
arranging elements and a bit of storytelling, other than creative writing, but it was still a
fun writing experience and I am proud of it! It includes 28 creative people from
photographers to sculptors, authors to sculptors.

For the rest of this informative article, please click:
[Here](#)



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12. Advance planning department

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

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A. NC events

(1) Poetry Night with Barbie Angell. (2) Open Auditions hosted by Attic Salt Theatre Company.

B. PA/NJ event

Andy Borowitz in Philadelphia.

PS. Make it a wonderful week!

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