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BLAINESWORLD

Teaching
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Blaine's Best
About Cynthia

Welcome to **BLAINESWORLD**, the only official guide to the workings of the mind of yours truly, Blaine Greenfield. **BLAINESWORLD** is the first and only complete work known to modern man that addresses the burning question of what it is, exactly, that I do with my every waking hour. It is also a treasure box of selected gems that I hope will enlighten, enhance and inspire you, my esteemed guest.

Best,
Blaine

What's New at
BLAINESWORLD.NET

What's new? EVERYTHING is new! **BLAINESWORLD** is now officially on the Internet, and your opinion really matters. Whether you're a student, client, coworker, radio fan, loyal newsletter follower, or even a family member, I hope you let me know what you think. Your opinion really matters!

While you're getting your thoughts and notes together, please note our email address, should you wish to contact us: bginbc@aol.com. Please change your contact manager, address book and palm pilot to reflect that address.

If you are a new visitor to our site, please take a few seconds to let us know how you discovered our place. Just click [here](#) and your own email program will be set up to send us your comments. Thank you, in advance.

Upcoming Events

Please see weekly newsletter, Section 12, for events you might want to attend. In the unlikely event you're not already getting this missive, see below (for the "Special Offer").

Special Offer

Sign up for free to receive the infamous **BLAINESWORLD** Newsletter. To get this weekly missive, please [click here](#).



073537⁵ 735⁵ 53

(You may have seen other counters, but I bet none are as impressive as mine.)

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BLAINES WORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#482

12.26.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I will probably be on the way to Florida by the time you get this . . . hence, my getting it to you early.

We'll be visiting my daughter, Risa, and her boyfriend JP in West Palm Beach where we'll be celebrating her birthday . . . from there, we'll head up to Atlanta to visit with Cynthia's niece Rachel . . . so if you don't hear from me for a while, that's the reason.

In my absence, to help in your celebration over the next few days, please click this website (and put on your sound card):

<http://www.jacquelawson.com/viewcard.asp?cont=1&hdr=0&pv=XS02EN>

B. Many non-Christians tend to celebrate Christmas by going to the movies and then eating at a Chinese restaurant . . . since Cynthia and I will be traveling on that day, we decided to honor the tradition one day early; i.e., on Saturday . . . as indicated in Section 4A, we saw BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN and followed that up with dinner at Ya Ya Noodles (609.921.8551) in Skillman, NJ . . . we enjoyed the boneless spare ribs and a delicious chicken dish in garlic sauce, as well as the fact that they custom make this for us and put in any vegetables that we want . . . I don't think we've ever had a bad meal there!

C. SPECIAL THANKS to the many readers who respond not only to my requests for help, but to those submitted by others . . . I truly appreciate the fact that many of you are so willing to share with your expertise . . . which leads to me to being:

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

Do you know anything about cleaning air ducts; e.g., is this procedure worth doing? Have you ever done it? Noticed any improvement? (If so, what?) Any recommendations you care to make on who to hire? Thanks, in advance, for any

help you might provide.

**** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD ****

This week, it goes to Dr. Alan Levine (609.587.0600)--a friend and reader who happens to be my longtime dentist.

Dr. Levine also directs the day-to-day operations of the Eastern Dental Center in Hamilton, NJ . . . I've always received excellent service at this facility from both Dr. Levine and the members of his staff.

2. FYI

Jim Henson in IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11) by Jim Henson, the Muppets and friends:

From my own point of view, I can only tell you what has worked for me--find something you really enjoy doing and pursue it. For me it was artwork. Since other subjects come to me with more difficulty, I tried to combine art with them. So, for example, in history, I would often provide drawings depicting a particular period or situation--bringing together both cultural and historical elements. It did not necessarily bring up my history grade, but it did keep my mind open to history as it related to something I love.

MY TWO CENTS:

The above happened to me when I switched my major as a Rider undergraduate from Journalism to Marketing Education . . . helped by my mentor, Dr. Al Sternberg, I all of a sudden began making connections in every class and saw how any material could be related to teaching . . . I now try to share this idea with all my students and when they buy into it, they too find that what they learn makes sense--and is a lot more interesting.

FYI, part 2

* Annemarie in New Jersey, who also happens to be my favorite personal organizer, graciously allowed me to share the following that she based on the work of Barbara Hemphill:

7 Tips to Be Organized and Clutter-Free in the New Year!

1. LOVE IT OR LOSE IT PRINCIPLE: Every item around you represents a choice you made. You either went out and selected it, or it came to you, and you accepted it. Look at that item now with fresh eyes. If you do not know that item to be useful, believe it to be beautiful, or love it for personal reasons, it's time to get rid of it.

2. DESIGN YOUR VISION of how you want to live and work. What is your ideal environment? Look at where you are now and document your current condition. Then write down where you want to be and what budget and time frame you are working in.

3. ELIMINATE YOUR EXCUSES that undermine that vision. Take the time to list the excuses. Decide what natural talents and skills will help you get organized--and get assistance for the areas that are difficult for you.

4. COMMIT YOUR TIME to take positive action. Think about how much time you spend now looking for things. Then think about how much time getting organized will take--especially if you break projects into bite sized pieces. Now block out time on your calendar--when are you getting started?

5. RESEARCH IDEAS through the Internet, magazines and books. Do not feel like you have to reinvent the wheel--rather learn from others that have put together the information for you. Remember though that there is not just one solution for your organizing challenge . . . rather many ways and options to investigate. Find the right answers for YOU!

6. SELECT YOUR TOOLS to match your personality and organizing style. Think about what you need every day, and arrange these items in a system that works for you. Support yourself with innovative options and use technology to your advantage.

7. MAINTAIN YOUR SUCCESS and keep the process flowing, revel in your success. Notice new habits you have developed and what is making it easy for you to maintain those habits. Make organizing and de-cluttering a regular part of your day. Reevaluate the systems you created on a continual basis--make sure they still work for you.

NOTE:

For more information about Annemarie, please click: <http://www.ORDERandEfficiency.com>

* Robin in Pennsylvania:

As always, I'm amazed at the breadth and depth of your social life! You go, guy.

Wanted to take the no cards philosophy a step further to no gifts--no shopping, buying, wrapping, unwrapping, exchanging, etc. That is, no participating in the planet destroying, soul negating extreme consumerism of the holiday season. No giving more stuff to folks who already have most everything they have/want/need. In lieu of gifts the last several years, I have requested donations to favorite charities in my name and likewise, have given donations as gifts. I think it's time we all become more conscious about the cost of our brainwashed state of consumerism with regard to both the cavalier use of the world's resources and contributing to the perception of Americans worldwide as "pigs" (for lack of a better word). Donating to preserve the planet and contribute to the betterment of the world's populations is good for all of us. In fact, to my way of thinking, it's the best thing we can do.

Happy holidays!

* Pat in Pennsylvania (REQUEST FOR HELP):

Not sure if you want to put this question to your BLAINESWORLD readers--or maybe you want to answer it yourself too. But here are a few questions I have on software and was curious to get your opinion and more input.

1. Do you or any of your readers use File maker pro? I've seen it advertised but not sure if it is really worth buying and or what it does and or if I really need it of have any use for it. Are there any special benefits over the windows explorer file management tools that come with Windows XP??

2. I came across the site below. Please check it out:

<http://www.conceptworld.com/>

They offer a post it notes program that looks pretty neat. But they also offer a program called RECENTX that allows you to easily track and pull up files, letters and web sites you've been to. So you can easily see, choose and click on where you were last without opening Windows explorer and clicking through all kinds of files to find where you were. I downloaded their free trial version. It automatically installs four tabs on the right of your screen that allow you to easily click on the appropriate pull down page for files, web sites or programs you recently used. Pretty neat.

3. I am just wondering if this recent X program does the same or similar thing as file maker pro and maybe it is a cheaper alternative for a single user?

Any thoughts would be appreciated on recent X and/or the post it notes program.

3. Embarrassment

Last New Year's Eve my wife stood up at the local pub and said that it was time to get ready. At the stroke of midnight, she wanted every husband to be standing next to the one person who made his life worth living.

Well, it was kind of embarrassing. The bartender was almost crushed to death.

4. Reviews

A. Add BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN to the list of films that have gotten great reviews, but that have disappointed both Cynthia and me . . . it is the story of two young men who meet while lining-up for employment with a local rancher . . . they forge a lifelong connection that is maintained despite the fact that both get married . . . we found it overlong and didn't feel any real connection to the characters, despite a superb acting performance by Heath Ledger (who was so unlike anything he's ever been in previously) . . . that said, we did enjoy both the music and cinematography . . . rated R.

B. THE 40-YEAR-OLD VIRGIN is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #465 follows:

Cynthia and I were mildly amused by THE 40-YEAR-OLD VIRGIN, a goofy comedy about a guy who had never had sex before . . . so his friends decide help him out, and as you can imagine, there are complications aplenty . . . some scenes even had me laughing out loud, including the one where Steve Carell (as the virgin) has his chest hair waxed . . . ouch! . . . others fell a bit flat, but overall, I'd recommend the film . . . Catherine Keener, always one of my favorites, is good as his girlfriend, and I Seth Rogen stood out as one of Carell's sidekicks . . . rated R.

C. Loved IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11) by Jim Henson, the Muppets and friends . . . it is a compilation of quotes, stories, anecdotes, songs and

insights, all of which gave me insight into the magical world of the late Jim Henson.

I especially liked the introduction, written by his daughter Cheryl . . . as she notes, her dad's approach to life made it possible for him to create "some of the most beloved characters the world has known and to use them to spread social values that were important to him, such as inclusiveness, tolerance, humor, and kindness."

Wouldn't it be great if we all could do something even remotely similar!

For example, along the lines of what Henson did when he expressed the desire for simpler life . . . according to his daughter Lisa, he once "admired the job of the man who walks along the road picking up trash with a long stick. He thought that guy had a great job, walking along with a stick, . . . enjoying the road, and doing only good in the world, with hundreds of small actions."

There were so many other memorable passages in IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN that it's difficult for me to cite just a few to include in this review . . . yet try I must, so here's but a sampling:

* If just one person believes in you
Deep enough and strong enough
Believes in you hard enough and long enough
Before you knew it, someone else would think
"If he can do it, I can do it"
Making it two. Two whole people who believe
in you.
And maybe even you can believe in you
too.--Robin and the Muppet Gang

* My name is Jim Henson and I am a puppeteer.
I'm called a puppeteer because I do puppets.
There are all different kinds of puppets . . .
There have been puppets almost as long as there have been people.

One of the nice things about puppets is that it's your own hand
in there.
You can make it do anything you want it to.--Jim

* I don't resent working long hours. I shouldn't--I'm the
one who set up my life this way. I love to work. It's the thing that
I get the most satisfaction out of--and probably what I do best. Not
that I don't enjoy days off. I love vacations and loafing around. But
I think much of the world has the wrong idea of working. It's one of
the good things in life. The feeling of accomplishment is more real and
satisfying than finishing a good meal--or looking at one's accumulated
wealth.--Jim

Jim Henson's accompanying illustrations added to my enjoyment
of this book.

D. Heard BOGART: IN SEARCH OF MY FATHER, written and
read by Stephen Humphrey Bogart . . . his son was only eight
when he died and for a long time, it was difficult for him to

deal with his legendary father . . . only with the encouragement of his famous mother, Lauren Bacall, was he finally able to come to terms with some of the anger he felt toward his father.

I'm still quite sure that I understand this feeling; it's almost as if he blamed his father for dying . . . however, Stephen Bogart did a good job of researching his father Humphrey, and he shares many amusing anecdotes that I not heard previously.

In addition, I enjoyed reading about how Bogart and Bacall met and fell in love.

BOGART: IN SEARCH OF MY FATHER gave me the impression that Humphrey had no idea how to raise his children, but it was clear that he did love them . . . Stephen Bogart now appreciates this fact, too.

5. VCR alert

A. Are men better behind the wheel than women? DR. KNOW examines entrants of both sexes at an urban road rally to find out . . . Tuesday at 8:30 p.m. on Discovery Health.

B. FUNNIEST COMMERCIALS OF THE YEAR: 2005 airs on Wednesday at 9 p.m. on TBS.

C. SURRENDER DOROTHY stars Diane Keaton in what TV GUIDE calls an "award-worthy TV appearance in this poignant adaptation of Meg Wolitzer's novel about a devastated mother welcomed by her late daughter's colorful circle of friends" . . . Sunday, January 1, at 9 p.m. on CBS.

6. Mrs. Jones

Mrs. Jones sat nervously before the psychiatrist and said, "I caught my son and the girl next door examining each other with their pants down."

"That's not so unusual," said the psychiatrist, "children often do that. I wouldn't get too upset about it."

"I'm already upset about it" said the woman, "and so is my son's wife!"

7. Websites

A. Imagine being able to find anything on your computer . . . instantaneously . . . you can now do so by clicking:
<http://www.desktop.yahoo.com/>

This is sooooo cool . . . for example, I used it recently to locate something I had once run in this newsletter . . . methinks you'll like seeing what I found:

Life's beginning

Moses' account of the creation in the book of Genesis is so familiar and so entrenched in our cultural heritage that many accept as actual historic fact the assertion that Woman was created from one of Adam's ribs. Science has railed against such simple beliefs for centuries; last week, at a dig in the escarpments along the western shore of the Dead Sea, archeologists have uncovered ancient, original texts that pre-date Moses' writings by 1,300 years. Translated, their account of life's beginnings on earth are much more scientifically plausible:

"... and God created Woman, giving her three breasts to succor her young. And God spake, saying to her, "I have created thee as I see fit, but mine is no longer the only opinion in the universe (sigh). Is there anything about thee that thou would prefer differently?"

And Woman spoke, saying, "Lord, I am not made to birth whole litters; I do not need but two breasts."

And God said, "Thou speak wisely, as I have created thee with wisdom."

There was a crack and a lingering odor of ozone, and it was done, and Woman stood holding her third breast in her hand.

"Now just what am I gonna do with this useless boob?" Woman exclaimed.

And so it was, God created Man.

B. The fine folks at jibjab.com are at it again . . . this time, they've produced the George Bush 2005 movie . . . see it yourself by clicking: <http://www.jibjab.com/Home.aspx>

It will take a minute to load and, also, make sure you turn up the sound on your PC when viewing it.

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click: <http://www.blainesworld.net>

THANKS to Dan Becker, my webmaster, who has done a great job putting past issues back on the website . . . just click above, then Newsletter, Past issues, and you'll be taken to an area where you can see what you may have missed and/or want to revisit.

8. Computer tip

When working at my computer, I most often don't want my sound on . . . it typically distracts me . . . even worse, I hate when AOL announces that "you've got mail" . . . so what I do is just turn off the sound at my speakers.

The rare times that I want to listen to something (for example, see Section 7B of this week's newsletter), I just turn on the sound for that particular instance.

9. Things to be thankful for

When I was younger, I remember receiving the inevitable homework assignment to write an essay on "something I am thankful for." Then I'd spend a lot of time sitting in my room trying to figure out just what in the world that could possibly be; and I'd end up writing down everything I could think of from G-d to environmental consciousness. But after having children, my priorities have clearly changed:

BEFORE CHILDREN: I was thankful to have been born the USA, the most powerful free democracy in the world.

AFTER CHILDREN : I am thankful for Velcro tennis shoes. As well as saving valuable time, now I can hear the sound of my son taking off his shoes -- which gives me three extra seconds to activate the safety locks on the back seat windows right before he hurls them out of the car and onto the freeway.

BEFORE CHILDREN: I was thankful for the recycling program which will preserve our natural resources and prevent the overloading of landfills.

AFTER CHILDREN : I am thankful for swim diapers because every time my son wanders into water in plain disposables, he ends up wearing a blimp the size of, say, New Jersey, on his bottom.

BEFORE CHILDREN: I was thankful for fresh, organic vegetables.

AFTER CHILDREN : I am thankful for microwavable macaroni and cheese -- without which my children would be surviving on about three bites of cereal and their own spit.

BEFORE CHILDREN: I was thankful for the opportunity to obtain a college education and have a higher quality of life than my ancestors.

AFTER CHILDREN : I am thankful to finish a complete thought without being interrupted.

BEFORE CHILDREN: I was thankful for holistic medicine and natural herbs.

AFTER CHILDREN : I am thankful for pediatric cough syrup guaranteed to "cause drowsiness" in young children.

BEFORE CHILDREN: I was thankful for all of the teachers who had taught, encouraged and nurtured me throughout my formative years.

AFTER CHILDREN : I am thankful for all of the people at Weight Watcher who let me strip down to pantyhose and a strategically placed scarf before getting on the scale each week.

BEFORE CHILDREN: I was thankful for the opportunity to vacation in exotic foreign countries so I could experience a different way of life in a new culture.

AFTER CHILDREN : I am thankful to have time to make it all the way down the driveway to get

the mail.

BEFORE CHILDREN: I was thankful for the Moosewood Vegetarian cookbook.

AFTER CHILDREN : I am thankful for the Butterball turkey hotline.

BEFORE CHILDREN: I was thankful for a warm, cozy home to share with my loved ones.

AFTER CHILDREN : I am thankful for the lock on the bathroom door.

BEFORE CHILDREN: I was thankful for material objects like custom furniture, a nice car and trendy clothes.

AFTER CHILDREN : I am thankful when the baby spits up and misses my good shoes.

10. A quote I like

The attitude you have as a parent is what your kids will learn from more than what you tell them. They don't remember what you try to teach them.

They remember what you are.--Jim Henson, quoted in IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11) by Jim Henson, the Muppets and friends

11. Thought for the day

As you probably know by now, I REALLY like a book if I mention it on four separate occasions in BLAINESWORLD . . . such is the case with IT'S NOT EASY BEING GREEN (see also Sections 2, 4C and 10) by Jim Henson, the Muppets and friends, from which I took the following passage from Jim:

I've discovered that homework assignments aren't much different from work assignments in the grown-up world. That's whether you're a farmer or a man who makes Muppet productions. With homework you've got spelling, math and history. A farmer has peas, beans and corn to grow. A Muppet man has FRAGGLE ROCK, THE MUPPETS TAKE MANHATTAN and a whole lot of upcoming Muppet productions.

First you decide which job gets priority. Then you knuckle down and get to work. The more you stock with your plan and work at what you have to do, the more time you'll save for the things you love to do. It so happens that what I have to do is what I love to do. But since I know that isn't true for everyone, here's a secret: Once you've decided on priority, do the jobs you like least first! It makes each successive job easier.

If you care about what you do and work hard at it, there isn't anything you can't do if you want to.

12. Advance planning department

A. Last week, I shared information from Kathy in Pennsylvania--a hypnotist and longtime reader . . . some of what she sent me was inadvertently left out, so please find the whole announcement below:

I have classes that will be starting in January for Weight Loss and will be meeting one night a week for 6 weeks, Smoking Cessation classes for 3 weeks, and other classes for Stress and Fears. Along with the hypnosis that I will be doing with the classes, I will also teach self-hypnosis for each person to practice and reinforce at home.

And I am going to teach EFT: Emotional Freedom Technique. This is an amazing modality, in which you tap on the different meridians of the body. Amazingly, nobody really knows how it works--but the results have been unbelievable. This has helped with people to lose weight and stop smoking, as well as to deal with their anger and stress.

With both the hypnosis and EFT, the results have been amazing. Please feel free to call me and discuss the opportunities that await for yourself.

The above classes will be in the Chester/Delaware County (PA) area. In addition, I'm willing to travel and am available for group sessions in the workplace or home and private sessions

For more information, I can be reached as follows:

Kathleen Malen: 610-496-8101; or
holisticcare4u@aol.com

B. David Brahinsky and Friends (including Gail Frantz, our very special friend/talented violinist) will be appearing at the Princeton Yoga Center on Saturday, January 28 at 7:30 p.m. . . . the concert will feature the words of Bob Dylan . . . be there or be square . . . for more information, please click: <http://www.princetonyoga.com/>

PS. Here's hope that you are like me, in that you'll get to celebrate New Year's Eve, Day and all of 2006 with both loved ones and friends . . . and that the coming year is YOUR YEAR; you deserve it!

Also, don't forget to join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane Katrina's wrath (Wilma's also), as well as for a quick return of ALL the remaining soldiers back from Iraq.

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:

BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#481

12.19.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I marked our two year anniversary this past week . . . we met two years ago and to celebrate the occasion, we went back to the restaurant where we had our first date: Pheasant's Landing (908.281.1288) in Hillsborough, NJ . . . my prime rib was superb, as was Cynthia's duck breast . . . each order was accompanied by perhaps our favorite side dish, spätzle . . . this is a coarse German noodle made from flour, eggs, oil, and water, which is cooked then fried in butter . . . it is sooooo good!

For dessert, we just had to go to MaggieMoo's (908.359.6020), also in Hillsborough . . . though we did not go there on our first date, you will probably recognize the name as the place where we had a mini celebration after our July 10 wedding of this year . . . in case you missed the account of that event, please click:

<http://www.c-n.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050731/FEATURES02/507310310/1023>

MaggieMoo's is also one of our favorite ice cream establishments.

B. On Sunday, we met a group of friends for brunch in New Hope, PA . . . we went to Mother's Restaurant (215.862.5857), a place we all had previously enjoyed . . . notice my use of the word "previously" . . . this time, the food wasn't good; the service was even worse . . . I'll be curious if I'm contacted about the comment card that I handed on the way out.

From there, we stayed in New Hope to see IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE, the musical, at the Bucks County Playhouse (215.862.2041) . . . though it doesn't compare to the movie version--what could?--we nevertheless enjoyed several of the songs and the enthusiasm of the cast . . . Jim Lynch, a Playhouse regular, seemed to be born to the role of George Bailey . . . he was excellent . . . we also liked the work of Erik H. Reid as the

not so lovable Henry Potter.

Seeing the show got me thinking about whether we do make a difference in the lives of people . . . in addition, it got me to appreciate Cynthia even more than I do--if that's possible . . . she seemingly spends every day spreading love, joy and ease to others.

For example, during one of our recent visits to her mother's nursing home this past week, she was sitting in the hallway with her mother and the other residents . . . it was a delight to just watch her interact with everybody, drawing them out with questions about what they had enjoyed when they were younger . . . one woman sparkled when telling us about how she had loved dancing with her husband . . . another man was touched when Cynthia asked him about his poetry; she then proceeded to read it aloud to rest of the group.

C. The end of the semester proved eventful at Bucks County Community College . . . I was especially pleased that both my evening classes did fine jobs on their marketing strategies for their clients . . . the Tuesday night group worked with dotphoto, a company I've also started to use with great success for my online processing photo needs . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.dotphoto.com/>

And my Thursday night students did their project in conjunction with the Bucks County Bar Association.

Things also were busy on the Union front . . . we had our first informal discussion with the Board of Trustees to discuss the possibility of a four-year contract extension, something that could benefit all concerned . . . and earlier in the week, we met with representatives of PSERS, a Pennsylvania agency which manages a governmental pension plan for public school employees, in an attempt to resolve a problem that could prevent retirees from teaching at the College . . . it is both my belief and hope that this session marked the beginning of what could be a resolution to a rather complex problem . . . SPECIAL THANKS to Sue Clarke, the College's HR director, for arranging the session . . . and to Jeff Clark, executive director of PSERS, who came from Harrisburg to speak to us, along with Veronica Thomas, Chuck Serine and Frank Ryder of his staff.

**** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD ****

This week, it goes Lorraine Allen (609.989.5232)--regional director of The College of New Jersey Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

She has done an excellent job in heading that particular organization, providing both free consultations and low cost training to small businesses in the Mercer/Middlesex County part of New Jersey . . . personally, she is always the first person I contact whenever I have any question with regard to entrepreneurship.

Lorraine has also been a marvelous resource for many of my students and clients . . . and when I hosted a radio show (see also Section 7C), she was a frequent and most informative guest.

For more information the Mercer/Middlesex SBDC, please click:
<http://www.njsbdc.com/contact/mercercer.asp>

From there, you can also get a link to the following link for several articles that I have written on marketing-type subjects (see the middle of the page):
<http://www.njsbdc.com/marketing/>

And if you're interested in small business assistance elsewhere, please click:

For other New Jersey SBDC locales:
<http://www.njsbdc.com/about/hosts.asp>

For SBDC locales in other states:
<http://www.sba.gov/sbdc/sbdcnear.html>

2. FYI

It's that time of year again; i.e. for you join me in NOT sending out holiday greeting cards . . . what I instead do is take the money and instead make a contribution--on behalf of my friends, relatives and YOU (the reader of BLAINESWORLD)--to the annual Holiday Fund run by the BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES . . . that way, others can benefit.

If you'd like to do the same, make checks or money orders out to the Holiday Fund. Send donations to: Holiday Fund, BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES, 8400 Route 13, Levittown, PA 19057.

And try not to be too disappointed if you don't get a card from me . . . you're in my thoughts, which is even more important!

FYI, part 2

* Rita in New Jersey (with a REQUEST FOR HELP):
As ever, I enjoy your newsletters, and this time I have an information request that I am hoping you (and your readers) can help me with. My mom and I have decided that she should move back up here to an assisted living facility sometime this spring. There seems to be a true "plethora" of them, but no place that rates them . . . or not that I have been able to find, anyway.

I would be interested in hearing of your readers' experiences with them and whether they can recommend any. My mom is still pretty active and sharp (still works one day a week), but just not up to preparing all her meals, driving, and spending a lot of time on her feet anymore. We would want a place that has activities for her to participate in, a sunny little apartment where she can have some of her own furniture, and in the area between Trenton and Philadelphia, either side of the river. Any recommendations?

Thanks for your help . . . and continued joy and happiness with Cynthia!

* Carol in New Jersey, a reader and my helpful educational representative for the WALL STREET JOURNAL:

I have great news!

Effective December 15, 2005, the educational rate for THE WALL STREET JOURNAL has been temporarily reduced.

15 weeks - \$19.95, 26 weeks - \$32.95, 52 weeks - \$59.95.

And don't forget, WSJ.com [the online version] is still included with your print subscription.

NOTE:

This rate is open to students, teachers, etc. . . . if you'd like to have me enter your subscription, just send me an e-mail with your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address, along with desired length of subscription . . . please put JOURNAL SUSCRPTION in your subject line.

* You may well have seen the following information about strokes that many readers have sent me . . . yet before I decided to forward it, I checked it out with my favorite neurologist (Dr. Emil Matarese; 215.741.9555)---and he said it made sense to him . . . in addition, I wanted to see what this well-respected website had to say about it: <http://www.snopes.com/medical/disease/stroke.asp>

Since it passed muster there, too, I now feel confident in sharing it with you in the unlikely event you've never seen it before:

Recognizing a stroke

A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within 3 hours, he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke. He said the trick was getting a stroke recognized, diagnosed and getting to the patient within 3 hours.

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke.

YOU can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:

1. Ask the individual to SMILE.
2. Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH ARMS.
3. Ask the person to SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE (Coherently).
For instance, "It is sunny out today."

If he or she has trouble with any of these tasks, call 911 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

After discovering that a group of non-medical volunteers could identify facial weakness, arm weakness and speech problems, researchers urged the general public to learn the three questions.

3. Easier said than done

A farmer passed away and left seventeen mules to his three sons. The instructions left in the will said that the oldest boy was to get one-half, the second oldest one-third, and the youngest one-ninth.

The three sons, recognizing the difficulty of dividing 17 mules into these fractions, began to argue. Their Uncle Clarence heard about the argument, hitched up his mule and drove out to settle the matter. Uncle Clarence added his mule to the 17, making 18.

The oldest therefore got one-half, or 9, the second oldest got one-third, or 6, and the youngest got one-ninth, or 2. Adding up 9, 6 and 2 equals 17.

Then Uncle Clarence, having settled the argument, hitched up his mule and drove home to his day job as a justice for the Supreme Court.

4. Reviews

A. Catch *THE FAMILY STONE*, an enjoyable romantic comedy about the reaction of a New England family to the eldest son's new girlfriend . . . it will make you appreciate your family more, no matter how dysfunctional you may think it is.

Parts of the film had me laughing out loud; others left me feeling quite touched . . . Diane Keaton and Craig T. Nelson were touching as the parents, and Sarah Jessica Parker and Luke Wilson had several funny moments . . . Dermot Mulroney and Claire Danes, part of a large ensemble cast, were also quite good . . . rated PG-13.

B. *MUST LOVE DOGS* is now out in DVD format . . . my review from *BLAINESWORLD #463* follows:

MUST LOVE DOGS had a great beginning, then went downhill from there . . . it's a romantic comedy that just wasn't very romantic or funny . . . the premise was promising; i.e., the world of cyberdating . . . and I've almost always enjoyed the work of the two main stars, Diane Lane and John Cusack . . . but they have little chemistry here, and their dialogue is stilted . . . rated PG-13.

Nevertheless, even though I don't recommend this film, I still thought you'd find the following tips--from Lane, as cited in a recent newspaper article--of interest:

* DO go where you can meet potential dates. "Going to yoga would be pretty much an opportunity for men."

* DO take a risk. "My dad always got the pretty girl in college because everybody was afraid to call the pretty girl."

* DO be open-minded. "I never thought I would date a father."

* DON'T put on a show. "My mom always said, 'Don't do in the beginning of a relationship what you're not willing to be doing throughout the relationship.' "

C. A long time ago, I remember liking *THE KENNEDY WIT*--edited by Bill Adler . . . he then came out with several books of a similar nature, including *THE UNCOMMON WISDOM OF JACQUELINE KENNEDY ONASSIS* and *THE QUOTABLE GUILIANI* . . . in

all of these, he collected memorable quotes and comments (by others) about the personality involved and put them into a short, but insightful book that gave me a real feel for the person.

Adler does the same with his latest, *THE WORLD ACCORDING TO MARTHA* . . . he presents Martha Stewart in her own words and in doing so, gave me a glimpse into her world . . . it almost felt like she was talking to me directly.

I also liked the accompanying photos.

But best of all were Stewart's musings on a wide variety of subjects, including:

* What do they need and want? These are our mantras.

* I think animals really add something to a household. I can't imagine a house that's empty, quiet, without any animals. I just think animals are charming. . . . The animals are always bringing me joy and always bringing me happiness. And when they're ill, I worry a lot about them. . . . All my animals are extremely pampered. In fact, most of my friends said they would like to come back as one of my pets.

* I'm bothered by things that hurt people, like smoking, like drinking in excess, like being mean. If people choose to paint their house a hideous color, that doesn't bother me. I won't tell them outright their choice is really bad. But I'll do that for smoking.

Naturally, there was even some useful homemaking advice:

* Get that stuff off the bookcases that doesn't belong there and give those books you'll never read to the library for a sale. Get rid of that faddish junk you never use in those kitchen drawers. And take out that rosebush you hate. It's simplify, simplify, simplify.

* This may seem backward to some, but it makes perfect sense. When you fold the sheet back, the finished edge, monogram or other decorative detail faces up.

D. Heard *HAVING OUR SAY* by Sadie and A. Elizabeth Delany with Amy Hill Hearth, a delightful true account of two black women who are the daughters of a freed slave . . . 104 and 102, respectively, at the time of the book's publication, the Delaney sisters came to professional prominence in Harlem's heyday . . . their story makes for an inspiring history lesson.

It also enabled me to learn more about notable black leaders and entertainers, such as Marian Anderson, Langston Hughes, Paul Robeson, Cab Calloway, and Booker T. Washington.

Whoopi Goldberg's enthusiastic narration added to my enjoyment of the cassette program.

5. VCR alert

A. *A HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS* raises awareness for adoption with musical performances by Yolanda Adams, Mary

J. Blige, Sheryl Crow, the Goo Goo Dolls, Jessie McCartney, and Kelly Rowland . . . Wednesday at 8 p.m. on CBS.

B. There are four classic repeats of SEINFELD on Thursday at 9 p.m. on TBS, including "The Strike" . . . this was the episode that introduced the holiday of Festivus.

C. Robert Redford chats with Paul Newman on ICONOCLASTS on Thursday at 10 p.m.. on Sundance.

6. Living will

A man and his wife were sitting in the living room and he said to her, "Just so you know, I never want to live in a vegetative state, dependent on some machine and fluids from a bottle. If that ever happens, just pull the plug."

His wife got up, unplugged the TV and threw out all of his beer.

7. Websites

CORRECTION:

Some people reported that they had an incorrect link to the following website, cited in last week's issue . . . sorry 'bout that . . . please see the following version that was correct--at least at the time that I wrote this:

Alex Tew of Great Britain was stumped about how to pay for college . . . so he decided to sell advertising space on his website by the pixel . . . see for yourself by clicking:
<http://www.milliondollarhomepage.com>

The last time I checked, he had raised \$855,200 . . . methinks that should make a pretty plushy stay at the school of his choice!

A. If you are a lover of words, like me, the following website may be of interest to you. The author researches the meaning of words and phrases, then gives you the story behind them. There are more than 1,500 pages of interesting entries. There's a "Weird Words" section, as well as a free newsletter. For more word information, please click:
<http://www.worldwidewords.org/>

For example, I looked up the word "bodacious" and here is what I learned about its meaning:

Blatant, remarkable, audacious, impressive, or attractive.
" . . . this American word is one of those wide-ranging superlatives to which speakers turn when they want to say that some quality is present in large degree; that quality might be unreasonableness, impressiveness, insolence, or (most recently) female attraction."

B. It has been said that humor is good for your health. Therefore, I bring you the following website because I care about your well-being. For some good laughs and perhaps good health,

please click:
<http://www.jumbojoke.com/>

And in case you haven't heard this one yet, here is an example of the type humor you can get from this website:

Road rage

A man noticed he was being tailgated by a stressed-out woman on a busy boulevard. Suddenly, the light turned yellow, just in front of him. Not wanting to let the crazed woman push him, he stopped at the crosswalk, even though he could have beaten the red light by flooring it.

The tailgating woman slammed on her brakes, then her horn, screaming in frustration as she missed her chance to get through the intersection with him. As she was still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her window and looked up into the face of a very serious police officer.

The officer ordered her to exit her car with her hands up. He took her to the police station where she was searched, fingerprinted, photographed, and placed in a cell. After a couple of hours, the jailer approached the cell and opened the door. She was escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer was waiting with her personal effects.

"I'm sorry for this mistake," he says. "You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, flipping the guy off in front of you and cussing a blue streak at him. I noticed the 'Choose Life' license plate holder, the 'What Would Jesus Do' bumper sticker, the 'Follow Me to Sunday School' bumper sticker, and the chrome-plated Christian fish emblem on the trunk."

"Yeah, so?" she says.

"Naturally," he concluded, "I assumed you had stolen the car."

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click:
<http://www.blainesworld.net>

On the left, you'll see "Radio Show" . . . go to that link if you want to see a history of my radio career . . . you can also hear one of my shows.

As you may have read in a past issue, a recent management change at WWFM has resulted in my show being taken off the air . . . but, hopefully, I'll resurface soon again . . . on another station and/or even with my own cable show.

Please do keep me in mind if you have any media contacts for me to pursue with respect to the above possibilities.

8. Computer tip

If you wish to research mutual funds online, there's lots of data at your fingertips . . . these websites can help you crunch the numbers:

<http://www.betterinvesting.org>

"Trend report" shows quarterly changes in a fund's portfolio. 90 days free; \$50 per year thereafter.

<http://www.indexuniverse.com>

Detailed screening tool for index funds and ETFs. Free.

<http://www.morningstar.com>

Portfolio analysis tools; research on fund holdings and managers. Premium membership is \$13.95 per month or \$125 per year.

<http://www.nasd.com>

Fund expense analyzer and commission discount search tool. Free.

<http://www.personalfund.com>

Calculates cost of trading one fund for another. \$19.95 per month or \$200 per year.

SOURCE:

Adapted from "How to check up on your mutual fund, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, 12.14.2005, p. D1

9. Christmas vs. Chanukah

Now if anyone asks you what the difference is between Christmas and Chanukah, you will know what and how to answer by taking note of the following:

1. Christmas is one day, same day every year, December 25. Jews also love December 25th. It's another paid day off work. We go to the movies and out for Chinese food and Israeli dancing. Chanukah is 8 days. It starts the evening of the 24th of Kislev, whenever that falls. No one is ever sure. Jews never know until a non-Jewish friend asks when Chanukah starts, forcing us to consult a calendar so we don't look like idiots. We all have the same calendar, provided free with a donation from the World Jewish Congress, the kosher butcher or the local Sinai Memorial Chapel (especially in Florida) or other Jewish funeral home.
2. Christmas is a major holiday. Chanukah is a minor holiday with the same theme as most Jewish holidays. They tried to kill us, we survived, let's eat.
3. Christians get wonderful presents such as jewelry, perfume, stereos, etc. Jews get practical presents such as underwear, socks or the collected works of the Rambam, which looks impressive on the bookshelf.
4. There is only one way to spell Christmas. No one can decide how to spell Chanukah, Chanukkah, Chanukka, Channukah, Hanukah, Hannukah, etc.
5. Christmas is a time of great pressure for husbands and boyfriends. Their partners expect special gifts. Jewish men are relieved of that burden. No one expects a diamond ring on Chanukah.
6. Christmas brings enormous electric bills. Candles are used for Chanukah. Not only are we spared enormous electric bills, but we get to feel good about not contributing to the energy crisis.

7. Christmas carols are beautiful . . . Silent Night, Come All Ye Faithful, etc. Chanukah songs are about dreidels made from clay or having a party and dancing the hora. Of course, we are secretly pleased that many of the beautiful carols were composed and written by our tribal brethren. And don't Barbara Streisand and Neil Diamond sing them beautifully?

8. A home preparing for Christmas smells wonderful. The sweet smell of cookies and cakes baking. Happy people are gathered around in festive moods. A home preparing for Chanukah smells of oil, potatoes and onions. The home, as always, is full of loud people all talking at once.

9. Christian women have fun baking Christmas cookies. Jewish women burn their eyes and cut their hands grating potatoes and onions for latkes on Chanukah. Another reminder of our suffering through the ages.

10. Parents deliver presents to their children during Christmas. Jewish parents have no qualms about withholding a gift on any of the eight nights.

11. The players in the Christmas story have easy to pronounce names such as Mary, Joseph and Jesus. The players in the Chanukah story are Antiochus, Judah Maccabee and Matta; whatever. No one can spell it or pronounce it. On the plus side, we can tell our friends anything, and they believe we are wonderfully versed in our history.

12. Many Christians believe in the virgin birth. Jews think, "Yossela, Bubela, snap out of it. Your woman is pregnant, you didn't sleep with her, and now you want to blame God? Here's the number of my shrink."

13. In recent years, Christmas has become more and more commercialized. The same holds true for Chanukah, even though it is a minor holiday. It makes sense. How could we market a major holiday such as Yom Kippur? Forget about celebrating. Think observing. Come to synagogue, starve yourself for 27 hours, become one with your dehydrated soul, beat your chest, confess your sins, a guaranteed good time for you and your family. Tickets a mere \$200 per person. Better stick with Chanukah!

10. A quote I like

There are some things in life where it's better to receive than to give, and massage is one of them. -- Al Michaels on MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL

11. Thought for the day

I received this from a female friend and wanted to share it with you. Please read it and though I'm not typically big into asking you to forwarding such messages to others, I'll make an exception with this one. (Feel free to do the same.)

To all of the beautiful women in my life . . .

HELLO, Beautiful!!!!

Did you know that it's Beautiful Women Month?

Well, it is and that means you and me. I'm supposed to send this to FIVE BEAUTIFUL WOMEN, and you are one of them!!!

Facts on figures:

There are 3 billion women who don't look like super models and only eight who do.

Did you know Marilyn Monroe wore a size 14?

If Barbie was a real woman, she'd have to walk on all FOURS due to her proportions!

The average woman weighs 144 pounds and wears between a size 12-14.

One out of every 4 college-aged women has an eating disorder.

The models in the magazines are AIRBRUSHED!!! . . . NOT Perfect!!

A psychological study in 1995 found that 3 minutes spent looking at a fashion magazine caused 70% of women to feel depressed, guilty and SHAMEFUL!

Models 20 years ago weighed 8% less than the average woman. Today, they weigh 23% less.

Beauty of a woman:

The beauty of a woman is not in the clothes she wears,
The figure she carries or the way she combs her hair.
The beauty of a woman must be seen from her eyes,
Because that is the doorway to her heart,
The place where love resides.
The beauty of a woman is not in a facial mole,
But true beauty in a woman is reflected in her soul.
It is the caring that she lovingly gives,
The passion that she shows.
The beauty of a woman
With time, only grows.

An English professor wrote the words: "WOMAN WITHOUT HER MAN IS NOTHING" on the blackboard and directed the students to punctuate it correctly

The men wrote: "Woman, WITHOUT HER MAN, is nothing."

The women wrote: "WOMAN!! WITHOUT HER, man is nothing!"

The Images of Mother:

4 YEARS OF AGE: My Mommy can do anything!

8 YEARS OF AGE: My Mom knows a lot! A whole lot!

12 YEARS OF AGE: My Mother doesn't really know quite everything.

14 YEARS OF AGE: Naturally, Mother doesn't know that, either!

16 YEARS OF AGE: Mother? She's hopelessly old-fashioned.

18 YEARS OF AGE: That old woman? She's way out of date!

25 YEARS OF AGE: Well, she might know a little bit about it.

35 YEARS OF AGE: Before we decide, let's get Mom's opinion.

45 YEARS OF AGE: Wonder what Mom would have thought about it?

65 YEARS OF AGE: Wish I could talk it over with Mom.

Now kindly forward this to at least one phenomenal woman that you know . . . if you do, something good will happen--YOU will boost that woman's self-esteem!

Author Unknown

(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

12. Advance planning department

A. Kathy in Pennsylvania, a hypnotist and longtime reader, has asked me to announce the following:

I have 2 classes at the moment that I have that are meeting once a week for 6 weeks, starting in January of 2006. They will be held in the Chester/Delaware County (PA) area. Along with the hypnosis that I will be doing with the class, I will also teach self-hypnosis for each person to practice and reinforce at home.

Along with this, I am going to teach EFT: Emotional Freedom Technique. This is an amazing modality, in which you tap on the different meridians of the body and amazingly no one really knows how it works--but the results have been unbelievable.

I also do group sessions in the workplace or home and private sessions, and I'm willing to travel to New Jersey too.

For more information, I can be reached as follows:

Kathleen Malen: 610-496-8101; or
holisticcare4u@aol.com

B. Bucks CCC's Occupational Program Support Services is hosting a "Getting Your Foot in the Door" workshop to assist alumni and graduating students with their job search. The interactive workshop is scheduled for Monday, January 9, 2006 from Noon to 3:30 p.m. in the Gateway Center, Room 129, on the College's Newtown campus.

This is a valuable workshop for both the beginner job-searcher as well as the seasoned professional needing a refresher.

Topics of discussion will include resume and cover letter writing, networking, interview dos and don'ts, dressing for success, and job search strategies. For more information, call Marian Colello at 215.968.8140. Seating for this popular workshop is limited so reserve your spot today.

PS. Here's hope that you are like me, in that you get to celebrate each and every holiday with family and friends . . . my theory is that the more such occasions, the better . . . so hoping I don't leave out anybody, please accept my best wishes for a joyous Christmas, Kwanzaa and Chanukah celebration.

And toward that end, if you're in the mood to be moved by some touching music for the season, please click:

http://www.americancomedynetwork.com/FLASH/my_menorah.htm

Also, don't forget to join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane Katrina's wrath (Wilma's also), as well as for a quick return of ALL the remaining soldiers back from Iraq.

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#480

12.12.2005

In this issue:

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I were told by friends about a community theater we had never visited: The Playmasters (215.245.7850) in Bensalem, PA . . . we decided to check it out this past Saturday, going there to see BERMUDA AVENUE TRIANGLE, a comedy written by Renee Taylor and Joseph Bologna.

We were not disappointed . . . this was a funny show about the adventures of two widows, one Jewish and the other Italian, who share a retirement condo in Last Vegas . . . on an excursion, they are saved from a mugging by a charming if not quite sober gambler who is short on cash . . . Richard Iano played this latter character; he was excellent . . . we also liked the work of Eileen DeNinnis and Joanne Brecht as the two widows.

Unfortunately, by the time you read this, BERMUDA AVENUE TRIANGLE will have ended its run . . . but do look for other upcoming comedies at the website of the Playmasters:
<http://playmasters.org/index.html>

I was most impressed to find out that this group has been serving the local community since 1952!

B. The longer we are "the Greenfields of Belle Meade," the more we are enjoying our house . . . it was fun being snowbound for the first time this season on Friday, seeing the snow cover the trees in our backyard . . . and we continue to enjoy having friends visit, giving them the grand tour and hosting them for brunch--as we did on Sunday.

C. You know what burns my a*s? This is a visual thing . . . put your hand down to your side, palm down . . . a flame that high!

Seriously, though, there are two things that do bug me . . . for one, I

hate to lose readers of this newsletter, so please be sure to notify me when and if your e-mail address ever changes.

And secondly, I don't take kindly to the fact that readers die from time to time . . . this is something that I wish would NEVER happen 'cause then I can't get BLAINESWORLD out to them.

I mention this because I just heard of the death of Ray Considine, a longtime reader and co-author (with Murray Raphel) of one of my all-time favorite marketing books: THE GREAT BRAIN ROBBERY.

He was an amazing guy who began his career as an advertising salesman in Boston. In 1966, Metromedia hired him to start their West Coast branch in Los Angeles. Considine subsequently launched a new career as an independent consultant, speaker, teacher, and writer.

Multinational corporations and organizations hired him to speak at conventions and conferences in Europe, Asia, South America, Australia and all over North America.

He also co-authored W.A.Y.M.I.S.H. - WHY ARE YOU MAKING IT SO HARD FOR ME TO GIVE YOU MY MONEY? with Ted Cohn.

Family members said he was working on a book about his World War II experiences, and another about customer service, the subject of his most recent speaking engagements, when he died.

Considine earned a degree in economics from Harvard. He joined the Army at the beginning of WWII, serving as both an MP and entertainer in Europe. He married his wife, Betty, in 1951. They were together 50 years, until her death in 2000.

A natty dresser, in the 1950s Considine was a successful model in the Philadelphia area, where he was born the son of a paper company executive, according to his family.

His great passion was jazz music, which he promoted through volunteer roles in radio and nonprofit organizations.

His daughter Lisa called him a man of boundless energy and enthusiasm who maintained a lifelong interest in sports cars, racing and collecting exotic automobiles.

He is survived by one son, Christopher, one daughter, Lisa, granddaughters Isabel and Aislynn, brother Richard, nieces Ellen and Susie, and his companion and partner of the last few years, Lynn Rogers, who shared his life and travels and cared for him when he became ill.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the L.A. Jazz Society, Mentoring Program, 5959 W. Century Blvd., Los Angeles, Ca., 90045.

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

This week, it goes Anthony Loscalzo (215.968.5500)--an attorney in Yardley, PA that I've used for the past several years . . . he has done an excellent job in drafting my wills, as well as various trusts I have established for Risa.

He is extremely knowledgeable in the whole field of estate planning.

Also, he returns e-mails and calls in a timely fashion, and he has

a most helpful office staff.

2. FYI

During the 6 years I spent working for my father with the Chicago White Sox, I never once saw him in a lousy mood. If you can emulate a person like that, pretty soon that's the cloak you will wear. People have a driving need to be happy, and it's a tough act to pull off if it's not genuine.

So how do you pull it off? First, find that role model. Second, try and hang out with people who are more upbeat than you. Third, try to find something to laugh about or have fun with in everything you do.

SOURCE:

FUN IS GOOD (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11) by Bill Veeck and Pete Williams

FYI, part 2

* Bob in Pennsylvania:

Sooooo nice to get your newsletter. What a break from the junk I am FORCED to read!

I just saw the photos of your wife. . . . she IS lovely. Many men call their wives "beautiful." For sure your Cynthia is lovely on the outside, and I'll bet, on the inside, too.

Thanks for sending the newsy stuff along. Cheers and Happy Holidays.

* David in New Jersey:

I was at Maggie Moo's [on Route 206 in Hillsborough] a few nights ago with the kids and saw your picture there. I asked the owner what the hell she was doing with your photo, and she replied that you got married there. Very cool!

THE REST OF THE STORY:

Cynthia and I weren't married there, per se, but we did meet a bunch of friends for ice cream after our small wedding (for family only) in New York City . . . if you ever stop by, make sure you get some of the great ice cream . . . and if you look closely, you'll find a total of four different photos of us on display.

* Robyn in Pennsylvania:

I am writing to see if you or anyone know of a good jeweler around Levittown or Newtown [PA] that can repair diamond rings at a reasonable price?

* Barbara in Pennsylvania:

I would like to say thank you for your prayers for the survivors of Katrina and Wilma. Lord knows we need it. I was just reading in the newspaper the other day that our area (Broward County) had more debris than Katrina, Frances and Jeanne combined!

We may not have had the intensity of Katrina, but I still see trucks and

trucks of debris every day.

* THANKS to Miriam in Pennsylvania and several others who responded to an e-mail request I made [trying to locate a lawyer in Allegheny County, PA]:

Sorry, Blaine. I don't know anyone in Allegheny County who does probate work. I hope one of your other readers has that information. If not, the Allegheny County Bar Association has an online Lawyer Referral Service. There is a \$25 fee, and for that, the client gets a panel of names and then a 1/2 hour consultation with one of the attorneys. If more services are required, they can establish a fee arrangement.

The link to get started is:

[Click here: LRX](#)

And the home link for the referral service of the Allegheny County Bar Association is:

[Lawyer Referral Service -- Allegheny County Bar Association - Pittsburgh, PA](#)

MY TWO CENTS:

Good advice there . . . in general, if you're in need of a lawyer anywhere, ask your friends and relatives first for somebody they have used and liked in the past . . . but if you don't come up with any names that way, then check out your local bar association . . . you'll most often be able to find some sort of referral service there, often at very reasonable rates.

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

I'm looking for a hanger-type device that enables you to hang several shirts vertically (to save space in the closet) . . . it is a plastic thing that has several holes in it for you to directly put hangers into it.

Other stores sell several hangers in one piece; this is not what I'm looking for . . . I find this a pain when it comes to putting shirts on and off . . . the type where you use your own hangers works much better, but for the life of me, I can't seem to find it in any local store.

I've also looked on the Internet, but haven't yet found the above.

3. Handbag photo

"I noticed you always carry my photo in your handbag. Why?" a husband asked his wife.

"When there is a problem, no matter how impossible, I look at your picture and the problem always disappears," she said.

The man smiled. "You see how good I am for you?" he asked.

"Yes," she said. "I see your picture and say to myself, 'What other problem can there be worse than this one?' "

4. Reviews

A. SAVE YOURSELF MONEY DEPARTMENT:

Miss SYRIANA, billed as a political thriller yet probably the worst film we saw this past year . . . despite what you may have thought from seeing the trailers (that actually made it look fairly interesting), this is a boring, incoherent mess about oil in a fictional Middle East nation that also had scenes in Geneva, Spain, Washington, and probably other locales that we missed because we walked out after 45 minutes . . . much of the dialogue that we did hear was muddled and difficult to decipher . . . we cared nothing about any of the characters . . . and from what we heard afterwards, we were fortunate to have missed a violent torture scene . . . the only good thing was that we got our money back! . . . rated R.

B. MR. AND MRS. SMITH is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #455 follows:

Don't believe some good reviews you may have seen for MR. AND MRS. SMITH . . . it is not worth your time or money . . . the romantic action thriller starring Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie about a married couple who hide the secret that they are both paid assassins starts off OK, then collapses with far too many violent fight scenes that don't even appear real . . . rated PG-13.

C. When I was 10 years, I wrote Bill Veeck--the innovative baseball promoter--a letter . . . he responded, and that began a period of occasional letters that ended when he died several years later . . . his creativity inspired me then--and still does to this day.

I still chuckle at some of the things that Veeck did to enliven the game . . . he introduced exploding scoreboards, popularized postgame fireworks and provided nurseries at the ballpark for children . . . in addition, he staged special nights for every group imaginable and was the first to popularize ballpark giveaways.

His son, Mike Veeck, has carried on his legacy with a series of equally unique promotions that he writes about with co-author Pete Williams in FUN IS GOOD (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11) . . . but you don't have to be a baseball fan to love this book, in that the ideas contained can be applied to any profession . . . or as the subtitle points out, you'll learn HOW TO CREATE JOY & PASSION IN YOUR WORKPLACE & CAREER.

Many times, authors promise outrageous things in their titles and/or subtitles . . . this is not the case here; Veeck and Williams actually show you how this can be done in a step-by-step approach that's both easy to follow and apply.

I kept jotting notes down as I read FUN IS GOOD, which is always a good sign . . . it means that I plan to go back to use much of it . . . the only negative to this practice is that it makes it difficult to choose just a few ideas to share in this brief review, in that there were so many . . . yet that said, these tidbits did stand out:

* If you're someone still trying to find your way, let your passions serve as your guide. Look for environments where people are having fun. When I hire people, I seek out passionate folks with an array

of interests, no matter how eclectic. If I need an accountant, for instance, I don't look for just someone with the proper credentials. I go in search of an experienced accountant with other interests, someone I know might not only be fun to be around by perhaps have non accounting skills that might be valuable. Perhaps this person is a fly-fisherman or guitar player. That kind of focus and creativity manifests itself in the workplace

* Jim Lucas, who was the assistant general manager of our Charleston RiverDogs team a few years ago, issued pins to 10 or 15 fans before each game, with instructions to give them to employees who provided great customer service. The 3 employees who collected the most pins at the end of the season received cash prizes. These pins cost us only about 60 cents apiece, but you would have thought they were precious gemstones. Employees proudly displayed them on hats and worked tirelessly to obtain them. Since nobody knew who had the pins, everyone was treated extraordinarily well by employees with upbeat attitude.

* You don't need a ballpark to try things like Mime-O-Vision. [Veeck hired a bunch of mimes to reenact plays before instant replays became popular.] Years ago, people would win shopping sprees where they had 90 seconds to grab whatever they could. Pizzerias would award a year's worth of pizza to the winner of a pie-eating contest. My dad used to say that it's barely noteworthy to give one bottle of beer to each of a thousand fans, but it's a big deal to give a thousand bottles of beer to one lucky winner.

Looking for an idea holiday gift this upcoming season? You certainly won't go wrong giving FUN IS GOOD to somebody you care about . . . or want to inspire.

D. Heard the CD program, RECEIVING PROSPERITY--written and read by Louise Hay . . . its subtitle says it all: HOW TO ATTRACT WEALTH, SUCCESS AND LOVE INTO YOUR LIFE.

Hay, long one of my favorite authors and speakers, says you can have it all; i.e. provided you use the power of your mind to attract what you want . . . the key is to put a halt to self-criticism, a task often easier said than done.

What I really liked about this particular program is that it was taped live at an actual seminar Hay was presenting . . . my only regret was that I wasn't in attendance.

There were many useful ideas I gained from listening; among them:

Say an affirmation: I am open and receptive to all good.

Ask yourself, Do you feel you have an abundance of joy? Or is that just something you allow yourself a little of now and then.

What we concentrate on increases. Don't concentrate on debt and bills and negativity.

Don't give money away because you feel guilty.

Clean out your closets so you have room for new things in your life.

Say this affirmation: My income is constantly growing.

If a negative thought comes into your mind, say thank you for sharing it.

Learn to receive. You don't always have to exchange.

If somebody gives you a compliment, smile and say thank you.

(looking at a mirror) Ask: What can I do to make you happy?

Practice gratitude.

5. VCR alert

A. **SIT DOWN COMEDY WITH DAVID STEINBERG** debuts on Wednesday at 10 p.m. on TV LAND . . . Steinberg, a director and humorist, interviews such comic greats as Bob Newhart, Martin Short, George Lopez, Jon Lovitz, and Larry David over the next six weeks.

B. **CELEBRITY AUTOBIOGRAPHY: IN THEIR OWN WORDS** has actors reading from the autobiographies of other actors . . . I'll be watching to see Fred Willard and Cheryl Hanes do Burt Reynolds and Loni Anderson . . . Thursday at 10 p.m. on BRAVO.

C. **ONCE UPON A MATTRESS** features Carol Burnett as the evil queen, along with Tracey Ullman, in a TV remake of the '59 musical that made her a star . . . Sunday at 7 p.m. on ABC.

6. Accident

Her car breaks down on the Interstate one day, so the driver eases it over onto the shoulder. She carefully steps out of the car and opens the trunk. Out jump two men in trench coats, who walk to the rear of the vehicle where they stand facing on-coming traffic and begin opening their coats and exposing themselves to approaching drivers. Not surprisingly, one of the worst pile-ups in the history of this highway occurs.

It's not very long before a police car shows up. The cop, clearly enraged, runs toward the driver of the disabled vehicle yelling, "What the hell is going on here?"

"My car broke down," says the lady, calmly.

The cop screams back, "Well, what are these perverts doing here by the road?"

"Those are my emergency flashers," she replies.

7. Websites

A. If you want to find out information about famous people,

here's a most useful website to check out:

<http://www.who2.com>

Infamous people are there as well, as indicated by a look at the most popular Who2 pages (updated hourly) . . . among those on the list when I just checked: Stanley Tookie Williams, co-founder of the Crips street gang; Paris Hilton, Hilton Hotel heiress and star of TV's THE SIMPLE LIFE; and Bianca Jagger, first wife of rock star Mick Jagger.

B. Alex Tew of Great Britain was stumped about how to pay for college . . . so he decided to sell advertising space on his website by the pixel . . . see for yourself by clicking: <http://www.milliondollarhomepage.com>

The last time I checked, he had raised \$855,200 . . . methinks that should make a pretty plushy stay at the school of his choice!

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click: <http://www.blainesworld.net>

As you hopefully know by now, you should ALWAYS feel free to mention this newsletter to your friends, relatives, etc. . . . should they want to subscribe (AT NO COST), all they have to do is go to my homepage . . . then click on "Special Offer" at the bottom . . . it's that simple!

8. Computer tip

When you order something online, you are often added to an e-mail list whether you want to be or not . . . most legitimate businesses have an unsubscribe option . . . take it to reduce the amount of e-mail you get on a daily basis.

I did this recently and no longer receive e-mail from Kohl's, Strawbridge and a whole host of other retailers.

The key: Only unsubscribe if you recognize the business and where your e-mail is being sent . . . it should go to an address that contains the name of the business; otherwise, you might be spammed even more than is the case now.

9. Fun in the workplace

1. Page yourself over the intercom. Don't disguise your voice.
2. Find out where your boss shops and buy exactly the same outfits. Wear them one day after you boss does. This is especially effective if your boss is of a different gender than you.
3. Make up nicknames for all your coworkers and refer to them only by these names. "That's a good point, Sparky." "No, I'm sorry, but I'm going to have to disagree with you there, Cha-cha."
4. Send e-mail to the rest of the company telling them exactly what you're doing. For example: "If anyone needs me, I'll be in the bathroom."

5. Hi-Lite your shoes. Tell people you haven't lost them as much since you did this.
6. While sitting at your desk, soak your fingers in Palmolive liquid. Call everyone Madge.
7. Hang mosquito netting around your cubicle. When you emerge to get coffee or a printout or whatever, slap yourself randomly the whole way.
8. Put a chair facing a printer. Sit there all day and tell people you're waiting for your document.
9. Every time someone asks you to do something, anything, ask them if they want fries with that.
10. Send e-mail back and forth to yourself engaging yourself in an intellectual debate. Forward the mail to a co-worker and ask her to settle the disagreement.
11. Encourage your colleagues to join you in a little synchronized chair-dancing.
12. Put your trash can on your desk. Label it "IN".
13. Feign an unnatural and hysterical fear of staplers.
14. Send e-mail messages saying there's free pizza or donuts or cake in the lunchroom. When people drift back to work complaining that they found none, lean back, pat your stomach and say, "Oh you've got to be faster than that."
15. Put decaf in the coffee maker for three weeks. Once everyone has withdrawn from caffeine addiction, switch to espresso.

10. A quote I like

Dad [Bill Veeck] died of a heart attack, but the WASHINGTON POST sportswriter Tom Boswell had a better explanation. "Cause of Death: Life." Nancy Faust, the longtime organist for the Chicago White Sox, believed Dad actually lived much longer. "With the amount of sleep he didn't get, Bill probably died at 85 instead of 71."

SOURCE:

FUN IS GOOD (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11) by Bill Veeck and Pete Williams

11. Thought for the day

As you probably know by now, I REALLY like a book if I mention it on four separate occasions in BLAINESWORLD . . . such is the case with FUN IS GOOD (see also Sections 2, 4C and 10) by Mike Veeck and Pete Williams, from which I took the following passage:

Where do your passions lie? What brings you joy? Consider for a

moment where you are at this stage of your life. If during your childhood years you had received a visit from the Ghost of Christmas Future and were able to see where you are right now, how would you have felt? Most of us take the wrong approach to our career. We look at what's out there, and then try to fit ourselves to a role. Shouldn't it be the other way around? We ought to examine what brings us joy, and then find the role where we can best put those passions to work.

12. Advance planning department

A. Bucks County Community College's Occupational Program Support Services is hosting a "Getting Your Foot in the Door" workshop to assist alumni and graduating students with their job search. The interactive workshop is scheduled for Monday, January 9, 2006 from Noon to 3:30 p.m. in the Gateway Center, Room 129, on the College's Newtown campus.

This is a valuable workshop for both the beginner job-searcher as well as the seasoned professional needing a refresher.

Topics of discussion will include resume and cover letter writing, networking, interview dos and don'ts, dressing for success, and job search strategies. For more information, call Marian Colello at 215.968.8140. Seating for this popular workshop is limited so reserve your spot today.

B. David Brahinsky and Friends (including Gail Frantz, our very special friend/talented violinist) will be appearing at the Princeton Yoga Center on Saturday, January 28 at 7:30 p.m. . . . the concert will feature the words of Bob Dylan . . . be there or be square . . . for more information, please click:
<http://www.princetonyoga.com/>

C. The Foundation at Bucks will be having its annual "Meet the Author" Business Seminar on Wednesday, March 15 from 9 a.m.-noon . . . this year's speaker will be Roger HB Davies, author of an informative book on communications: PAWTALK . . . more details to follow.

Third Federal Bank is the Presenting Sponsor, but other sponsorship opportunities (including a bunch of free tickets, mention in the program, etc.) start at \$495. . . if interested in more information, call the Foundation at 215.968.824.

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane Katrina's wrath (Wilma's also), as well as for a quick return of ALL the remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

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To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#479

12.5.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I do tend to eat out a lot, so we do appreciate the recommendations that readers graciously provide us with . . . sometimes, though, we just find a restaurant on our own, as was the case with Thai Garden (908.874.5088) in Hillsborough, NJ, which we found out about via a menu that was left at our mailbox.

We checked it out shortly thereafter and liked it from the minute we walked in . . . its decor is sparse, but attractive . . . the place has a clean feeling about it . . .and we liked the background music.

The food was quite good, too . . . we very much enjoyed our order of pineapple fried rice, which served as a perfect complement to Pad Prew Wan: stir fried chicken with onion, pepper, cucumber, tomato, scallion, carrot, pineapple, and sweet and sour sauce (that wasn't overly powerful, as it sometimes can be).

We'll be back, though we do wish that they included tea with all orders.

B. On Saturday, we hosted Cynthia's sister and brother-in-law for dinner at the Greenfields of Belle Meade . . . from there we went to an outstanding production of DO BLACK PATENT LEATHER SHOES REALLY REFLECT UP? . . . this was put on by the Actor's Net of Bucks County at the Heritage Center (215.428.0217) in Morrisville, PA . . . it is a coming of age musical comedy about life in parochial schools that you most definitely don't have to be Catholic to enjoy.

Kevin Palardy and Eleanor Kiel made a cute leading couple . . . however, it was the acting of Matt South that most caught our attention . . . he stole just about every scene he was in, causing us to laugh out loud constantly . . . we've seen Matt in several other productions; it

has been a real pleasure to see him develop as a performer in each role . . . Ed Patton as Father O'Reilly was also excellent . . . one song he sang, "Private Parts," was as funny as we've ever seen . . . Joe Doyle's crisp direction added to our enjoyment.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE:

This show runs until December 18, but get tickets now for they are very scarce (the performance we attended was a sell-out) . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.actorsnetbucks.org>

C. CONGRATULATIONS to Steven Seidner, a longtime friend and reader . . . after 11 hours of testing and years of courses, he recently attained designation from the International Business Brokers Association as a Certified Business Intermediary--a level of professionalism that less than 700 business brokers in the world have reached.

In case you're wondering what such work entails, Steve wrote me: On a daily basis I am meeting with business owners, sellers, buyers, and I network with many high net worth influential individuals and groups. I love this business because I find great satisfaction fulfilling the American Dream of many individuals, whether it be owning your own business or exiting a business and funding retirement with the proceeds.

We also expertly package SBA-backed loans. And we are #17 on the list of fastest growing companies in the Philadelphia Region. So basically we list a business, find a buyer and then help get the buyer funded.

We do all of the loan packaging for MAACO, AAMCO, MEINEKE, and SALAD WORKS franchisees . . . with many more engagements daily. I also sell businesses in many different industries in cooperation with IBBA members across the world.

I will always pay a generous referral fee for a buyer or seller that I take through closing. Some of my listed businesses can be found at this website: <http://www.siegelfg.com>

TO REACH STEVEN SEIDNER DIRECTLY:

There are only three other brokers in his office. He can be contacted at the above website or feel free to call him at his cell number, 609.468.6315 . . . his e-mail address is:

sseidner@siegelfg.com

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

This week, it goes Richard Wasserman--a jeweler I've grown to both trust and like . . . he was the guy who sold us Cynthia's engagement ring, then our wedding bands . . . we just used him again for a belated birthday gift for my beautiful bride: a bracelet.

Richard provides great service, often going above and beyond what ordinarily might be expected . . . he is a wholesaler, so his prices tend to be most reasonable . . . his main showroom is in New York City (212.302.4266); in addition, we appreciate being able to do business with him at his convenient Millburn, NJ (973.467.1616) location, where he sees customers by appointment.

2. FYI

I've long been a fan of Wrigley's Extra sugarfree gum . . . it has by far the longest-lasting taste of any gum I've ever tried, and I love the taste of such flavors as peppermint and winterfresh . . . other flavors includes spearmint, classic bubble, cinnamon, polar ice, wildberry frost and if memory serves me correctly, a new one: sour apple.

It has just 5 calories per stick and no sodium . . . I find that chewing it helps me stay awake when driving or trying to concentrate, plus it freshens my breath at the same time.

And here's an added plus: It can help you when and if you're quitting smoking . . . recently, when discussing the marketing of cigarettes with my students, I'll ask them: who is interested in quitting? . . . when a few raise their hands, I'll give them some Extra gum and suggest that they try it every time they are in the mood for a smoke . . . a few have reported that it works; i.e., it got them past that particular urge!

FYI, part 2

* Jean in Pennsylvania, commenting on last week's Thought for the day:

I thought this entry from the Urban Legends Reference Pages at snopes.com might interest you: <http://www.snopes.com/glurge/price.htm>

* Bob in Pennsylvania had this to say about the use of butterfly needles for drawing blood:

I showed this to my Lab experts. They think that the butterfly is perfect for 98% of the tests people get. It is much more comfortable, and for the people who know how to use it, it is as painless as it gets.

Those who KNOW prefer the butterfly----including nurses and doctors! It is true that for a rare test or two it would not be appropriate.

What great medical insights we get from your newsletter! If Ginger can get blood from a stone, I know a lawyer who specializes in collections who would like to meet her!

* Robin in Pennsylvania:

Glad to hear you enjoyed the Thanksgiving holiday, but I expected nothing less from you!

FYI on two things:

I saw CAPOTE on Friday and while it was a tad slow, I thought it was absolutely fantastic. Hoffman's performance is over the top and supported by a number of other good performances. It's going to be tough betting on best actor this year--Joaquin Phoenix was also superb in WALK THE LINE, as was David Strathairn in GOOD NIGHT, GOOD LUCK (although not on the same level by any stretch).

Also, I highly recommend Steven Levitt's FREAKONOMICS. Highly readable (I actually listened to it on CD) and very interesting. When you hear how he debunks all of the theories about lower crime rates or what factors influence children's test scores, I think you'll be quite astounded.

MY TWO CENTS:

Definitely do get FREAKONOMICS (reviewed in BLAINESWORLD #462), despite the fact that you may think that you're not interested in the topic;

i.e., economics . . . this book will pleasantly surprise you!

* Brenda in New Jersey, commenting on my inclusion of pictures in last week's issue:
[writing about Cynthia] She's a star. She is beautiful, and you look so happy. Glad you were able to find your soul mate.

* Sandy in Pennsylvania added:
I love it when you send photos, and I especially liked the one of you and your beautiful bride Cynthia in front of the plane. "The plane, the Blaine!"

* Denise in New Jersey:
I love this department! [Pet peeve department from last week.] Wish there was a way to do away with blister packaging that is almost impossible to manage without harming oneself. And while they are at it, they can get rid of all that sticky hard to get off label sealers they put on dvd's and cd's. I one time asked the clerk in Coconuts if he would remove it, then I'd buy it. It would be so nice to open things without a knife!

They also should sell that glue that is on those post office boxes. If the little strip to pull is covered with tape, it's impossible to open those end flaps. Imagine all the fixing we could do with that glue. . . . AM I VENTING???

3. Harvard reading test

This was developed as an age test by an R&D department at Harvard University. Take your time and see if you can read each line aloud without a mistake. The average person over 40 years of age can't do it!

1. This is this cat
2. This is is cat
3. This is how cat
4. This is to cat
5. This is keep cat
6. This is an cat
7. This is old cat
8. This is person cat
9. This is busy cat
10. This is for cat
11. This is forty cat
12. This is seconds cat

Now go back and read the third word in each line from the top down, and we betcha you can't resist passing this on!

NOTE:

Most of us fall into the category referred to so no getting offended allowed!

4. Reviews

A. We had looked forward to seeing RENT, the rock opera based on the opera LA BOHEME . . . it looked great in coming attractions, especially the one song "Seasons of Love" . . . that we enjoyed; the movie, much less so . . . it is the tale of young New Yorkers, struggling to live

and pay their rent . . . there's lots of music, but much of it is just loud . . . many of the songs seem the same, and that same comment applies to the dancing . . . almost all the actors appear too old for their roles . . . rated PG-13.

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY:

If you'd like to hear three of the songs, please click:

http://music.aol.com/videos/sessions/sessions_flash When the program loads, click "Come on in" . . . you'll be able to

listen to three of the songs . . . I'm now enjoying "Seasons of Love" as

I type this and, also, looking forward to another one I liked:

"Tango: Maureen."

B. CINDERELLA MAN is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #454 follows:

Very much liked CINDERELLA MAN, the true story of James J. Braddock--an impoverished prizefighter who captured the hearts of America during the Great Depression with a comeback that took him to a championship fight . . . Russell Crowe and Renée Zellweger were both fine as, respectively, Braddock and his wife Mae . . . but as good as they were, I was blown away by the work of Craig Bierko as Max Bear, the heavyweight champion who killed two men in the ring . . . Paul Giamatti, as usual, scored in a supporting role as Braddock's trainer . . . and another of my favorite character actors, Bruce McGill, was terrific as a fight promoter . . . the fight scenes were quite realistic, though methinks they're perhaps too bloody for some viewers . . . rated PG-13.

C. I loved NICKEL AND DIMED by Barbara Ehrenreich, her tale of how difficult it is to exist in low-wage jobs . . . so it was with great anticipation that I read her follow-up, BAIT AND SWITCH.

This latest effort takes a look at another hidden group in the economy: the white-collar unemployed . . . it made me realize how grateful that I not only have a job, but one that I enjoy.

In contrast, there are a lot of folks who have done everything right . . . yet even with a college degree and an impressive resume, they can't find meaningful work that pays a living wage and/or any sort of benefits.

Ehrenreich, attempting to see this for herself, goes through career coaching and personality testing . . . and then a series of boot camps, job fairs, networking events, and evangelical job-search ministries . . . she pays a lot of money to do all this, and all she gets is rejection--and more rejection.

As she notes, "Once you fall into the low-wage, survival-job trap, there's a good chance that you will remain there--an unwilling transplant from a more spacious and promising world."

There were several memorable passages; among them:

* Looking for advice and, better yet, company, I Google all possible combination of unemployed, white-collar, professional, and jobs. These are not the best keywords, I discover. First, jobless white-collar people are not "unemployed"; they are "in transition" or perhaps engaged in a "job search." Only the lowly-the blue-and pink-collar people-admit to actual "unemployment." Second,

avoid the word job, which, unless carefully modified, will lead to numerous sites in which it is prefaced by hand or blow.

* All the web-site advice I have gleaned about job searching emphasizes the importance of "networking." At first, in my innocence, I had envisioned this as a freewheeling exercise in human sociability, possibly involving white wine. Joanne and Kimberly, though, have impressed on me that networking phase, she caught me up short with a demand to hear my "elevator speech." This, it turns out, is a thirty-to forty-five-second self-advertisement, which in my case, Kimberly suggests, should begin with "Hi, I'm Barbara Alexander, and I'm a crackerjack PR person!" In one of our phone sessions, Joanne shared with me her own elevator speech--it turns out that she too is job searching--and when I ventured that it sounded a bit stiff, she confessed to not having fully memorized it yet.

* He moves along to color in general, where I receive a major blow: I can never wear gray or black again, because they drain the color from my face. This pretty much condemns me to nudity, since my entire wardrobe is black and gray, and not because I'm striving for New York City-style coolness, circa 1995. The truth is I spill on everything, so no peach or yellow item has ever survived more than two or three wearing. Even my conservative silver brooch, a gift from my Norwegian publisher, is deemed "not corporate" by Prescott. All this time I had thought I was a perfectly presentable-looking middle-class professional, when in fact I must come across as a misfit, a mess.

D. Heard the cassette program, HOW TO SAY NO WITHOUT FEELING GUILTY--written and read by Patti Breitman and Connie Hatch . . . and am so glad that I did, in that it contains much useful advice on this useful topic that nobody ever teaches us about.

Think about it . . . we get bombarded with requests and, at the same time, we are told to be polite, kind and considerate of others . . . so too often, we fail to stand up for ourselves and just take on more and more responsibilities.

Or we find ourselves burdened with having to deal with (still another) request for money . . . even turning down invitations to social engagements can often prove irksome.

What made HOW TO SAY NO so useful to me was the fact that it covered all these areas, as well as such topics as demanding friends and family members, unreasonable assignments at work and telemarketers.

I'm not sure that will become the expert as a result of having heard this book, but having such techniques as the following will certainly help make my life easier:

Buy time before responding to a request; e.g., I need to check a policy.

Say, "I have a policy" . . . e.g., about lending money.
Or: It's our policy to have dinner together every Friday night.

Say, I have plans. Don't go into too much detail when declining an invitation.

Ask: Will your quality of life improve with another job?

When asked out, you can say, I think I have plans; thanks anyway.
(If you do have plans and they change, you can always call back
if the initial invitation is still open.)

If asked if somebody can bring children, you can say, "This
party is for grownups only."

Give a child two choices to get them a manageable freedom of choice.

When you buy something new, get rid of something old.

5. VCR alert

A. Ted Danson stars in KNIGHTS OF THE SOUTH BRONX, the
inspiring true story of how schoolteacher David MacEnulty helped
several pupils to become champion chess players . . . Tuesday
at 9 p.m. on A & E.

B. ONLY THE STRONG SURVIVE is a 2004 documentary, recalling
the glory days when Chicago and Memphis pulsated with the soul
power of Otis Redding, Al Green, Sam and Dave, Paul Butterfield,
Wilson Pickett, and Carla Thomas . . . 7 p.m. on VH1.

C. CODEBREAKERS debuts at 9 p.m. on ESPN . . . this is a
dramatic look at the 1951 cheating scandal, in which 37 football
players were reported to have not followed the code at the U.S.
Military Academy to "not cheat, lie or steal."

6. Logic

Two mountain boys, Joe and Bob, are sitting at their favorite bar, drinking
beer. Joe turns to Bob and says, "You know, I'm tired of goin' through
life without an education. Tomorrow I think I'll go to the community college
and sign up for some classes."

Bob thinks it's a good idea, and the two leave.

The next day Joe goes down to the college and meets the dean
of admissions, who signs him up for the four basic classes: math,
English, history, and logic.

"Logic?" Joe says. "What's that?"

The dean says, "I'll show you. Do you own a weed eater?"

"Yeah."

"Because you own a weed eater, I think that you would have a yard."

"That's true, I do have a yard."

"I'm not done," the dean says. "Because you have a yard, I think logically
that you would have a house."

"Yes, I do have a house."

"And because you have a house, I think that you might logically have a family."

"I have a family."

"I'm not done yet. Because you have a family, then logically you must have a wife."

"Yes, I do have a wife."

"And because you have a wife, then logically you must be a heterosexual."

"I am a heterosexual. That's amazing, you were able to find out all of that because I have a weed eater."

Excited to take the class now, Joe shakes the dean's hand and leaves to go meet Bob at the bar. He tells Bob about his classes, how he is signed up for math, English, history, and logic.

"Logic?" Bob says, "What's zat?"

Joe says, "I'll show you. Do you have a weed eater?"

"No."

"Yore queer, aintcha Bob?"

7. Websites

A. Before you donate any money to a charity, check it out at: <http://www.guidestar.org>

You can find how much money went to "overhead" (salaries, parties, etc.) and how much went to the actual benefit of the people it is supposed to benefit . . . methinks that you should seek charities where at least 90% goes directly to benefit the people.

In addition, you can find out whether your deduction is tax deductible or not.

B. This website will drive you nuts: http://i.euniverse.com/funpages/cms_content/6489/amaze-ing_new_cursor3.swf

But it's challenging, and if you can get through it, you're a better person than I am--at least with respect to this particular activity!

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click: <http://www.blainesworld.net>

THANKS to Dan Becker, my webmaster, who has done a great job putting past issues back on the website . . . just click above, then Newsletter, Past issues, and you'll be taken to an area where you can see the past month's issues . . . more will be added.

Best of all, if you go to any past issue, you'll be able to "jump" from

one section to the next--much like I plan to do with future current issues of BLAINESWORLD.

8. Computer tip

Most online providers enable you to get more than one e-mail address . . . take advantage of this capability and establish multiple e-mail addresses for such diverse purposes as personal mail, online banking, e-bay, and even BLAINESWORLD (you could get all the issues delivered to just that address) . . this will make information retrieval so much easier.

9. Politically correct holiday greeting

Best wishes for an environmentally conscious, socially responsible, low stress, non-addictive, gender-neutral, winter solstice holiday, practiced within the most joyous traditions of the religious persuasion of your choice, but with respect for the religious persuasion of others who choose to practice their own religion as well as those who choose not to practice a religion at all;

plus:

A fiscally successful, personally fulfilling, and medically uncomplicated recognition of the generally accepted calendar year 2006, but not without due respect for the calendars of choice of other cultures whose contributions have helped make our society great, without regard to the race, creed color, religious, or sexual preferences of the wishes.

DISCLAIMER:

This greeting is subject to clarification or withdrawal. It implies no promise by the wisher to actually implement any of the wishes for her/himself or others and no responsibility for any unintended emotional stress these greetings may bring to those not caught up in the holiday spirit.

10. A quote I like

Love doesn't make the world go 'round. Love is what makes the ride worthwhile.--Franklin P. Jones (1887-1929), U.S. business executive

11. Thought for the day

No regrets
by Steve Goodier, author and speaker

At the 1924 Olympic Games in Paris, the sport of canoe racing was added to the list of international competitions. The favorite team in the four-man canoe race was the United States team. One member of that team was a young man by the name of Bill Havens.

As the time for the Olympics neared, it became clear that Bill's wife

would give birth to their first child about the time that the U.S. team would be competing in the Paris games. In 1924 there were no jet airliners from Paris to the United States, only slow ocean going ships. And so Bill found himself in a dilemma. Should he go to Paris and risk not being at his wife's side when their baby was born? Or should he withdraw from the team and remain with his family?

Bill's wife insisted that he go to Paris. After all, competing in the Olympics was the culmination of a life long dream. But Bill felt conflicted and, after much soul searching, decided to withdraw from the competition and remain home, where he could support his wife when the child arrived. He considered being at her side his highest priority, even higher than going to Paris to fulfill his dream.

As it turned out, the United States four-man canoe team won the gold medal in Paris. And Bill's wife was late in giving birth to their child. She was so late, in fact, that Bill could have competed in the event and returned home in time to be with her when she gave birth.

People said, "What a shame." But Bill said he had no regrets. For the rest of his life, he believed he had made the better decision.

Bill Havens knew what was most important to him. Not everybody figures that out. And he acted on what he believed was best. Not everybody has the strength of character to say no to something he or she truly wants in order to say yes to something that truly matters. But for Bill, it was the only way to peace; the only way to no regrets.

There is an interesting sequel to the story of Bill Havens.

The child eventually born to Bill and his wife was a boy, whom they named Frank. Twenty eight years later, in 1952, Bill received a cablegram from Frank. It was sent from Helsinki, Finland, where the 1952 Olympics were being held. The cablegram read: "Dad, I won. I'm bringing home the gold medal you lost while waiting for me to be born."

Frank Havens had just won the gold medal for the United States in the canoe racing event, a medal his father had dreamed of winning but never did. Like I said, no regrets.

Thomas Kinkade eloquently said, "When we learn to say a deep, passionate yes to the things that really matter, then peace begins to settle onto our lives like golden sunlight sifting to a forest floor."

12. Advance planning department

SAVE THIS DATE:

Wednesday, March 15 from 9 a.m.-noon . . . that is when the Foundation at Bucks County Community College will be having its annual "Meet the Author" Business Seminar . . . this year's speaker will be Roger HB Davies, author of an informative book on communications: PAWTALK . . . more details to follow.

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane Katrina's wrath (Wilma's also), as well as for a quick return of ALL the remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD (with 2 attached photos: [1](#) [2](#))

#478

11.28.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had an enjoyable Thanksgiving break . . . for the holiday, we went to her sister Joyce's for a delicious turkey dinner . . . our only regret was that her mother was not up to joining us; however, we were grateful that we were able to visit her at her nursing home.

On Friday, we joined friends for dinner . . . OK, OK, if you must know we went to what is seemingly becoming our regular hangout: the Hillsborough Star Diner (908.281.9696) in Hillsborough, NJ . . . but they had never been there before, so they enjoyed the experience . . . and also the fact it was Turkish-owned, in that one of our friends was born in Turkey . . . we also learned something new; i.e., that a great many diners in New Jersey are now Turkish . . . it seems that is the case for anything below the central part of the state; anything north tends to be run by Greek families . . . our friends also enjoyed the excellent service provided by the waitress, Anneliese Gubista . . . an added plus for them: she's German and so are they, so that added to their enjoyment of the whole meal.

From there, we went a fun-filled comedy show at Catch a Rising Star (609.987.8018) in the Hyatt Regency in Princeton, NJ . . . Steve Trelise did a nice job as emcee, introducing the various acts . . . he first brought up Bill McCarty, a guy I had never seen before . . . he had us laughing with his droll humor . . . when he specifically heard Cynthia, he exclaimed, "That high pitch will bring the dogs out!" . . . the headliner was The Legendary Wid, somebody I first saw some 20 years ago . . . he is still just as crazy (and funny), using a series of props that filled the entire stage . . . if you ever get a chance to see him, do so; you won't be disappointed . . . in the meantime, I'm trying something here by attaching one of two photos in this issue . . . that's yours truly in the middle and on the floor and in the background, you can see just a small sampling of the props that were used.

B. On Saturday, we went with other friends to the Morristown Airport in Morristown, NJ . . . our friend Mark had purchased a most generous birthday gift for me several months ago (a trial flying lesson), and I hadn't been able to use it until then . . . Cynthia joined me, along with Mark's wife Gail and the pilot: Mark Voytac . . . he did a nice job giving me some basic instructions and then even let me make some turns . . . he also let me make the plane go higher into the air; fortunately, for all involved, he handled the landing.

It was a beautiful night and, overall, quite an experience . . . if you'd be interested in something similar, please visit:
<http://www.flyskyblue.com>

And if you want to see us by the plane, please see the second attached photo.

From there, it was on to Bennigan's (973.538.9885)--also in Morristown, NJ . . . the Monte Cristo sandwich I had was as good as I've ever had; this chain always excels with that item . . . Cynthia enjoyed her rib eye steak, and we all shared a delicious apple crisp/vanilla ice cream/caramel dessert.

C. Earlier in the week, I had the pleasure of being invited for lunch at the King George II Inn (215.788.5536) in Bristol, PA . . . I hadn't been there for quite some time; it remains an attractive locale for dining . . . I was in the mood for a hamburger, and it didn't disappoint . . . nor did the fries.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a project my marketing students will be doing in conjunction with the Bristol Riverside Theatre in the spring . . . it promises to be a good learning experience.

I was then invited to stay for an afternoon performance of MOON OVER BUFFALO, a farce that had its moments . . . though this is typically not my favorite type play, I did find myself laughing several times . . . and did enjoy the work of the talented cast.

This play runs until December 4 . . . for more information and/or the schedule of other productions (including THE FANTASTICKS and BABY), please click:
<http://www.brtstage.org>

D. CONGRATULATIONS TO Scott Little, a former student and longtime friend, who was just promoted to vice president of commercial lending for 3rd Federal Bank . . . Scott's motto is, "Think of me when you need money."

He is a member of various community organizations, including the Community Lenders CDC, Business Network International, Lower Bucks County Chamber of Commerce, Central Bucks County Chamber of Commerce, and the Lymphoma & Leukemia Society's Light the Night Committee.

He can be reached at 3rd Federal Bank's Doylestown Branch at 215.348.9021.

CONGRATULATIONS, also, to Hillary in New Jersey . . . she is now

the third person who saw the blurb in a newsletter about giving up smoking . . . way to go!

**** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD ****

This week, it goes to Belinda Jefferson--one of the many fine nurses attending to Cynthia's mom Elsie at Daughters of Israel, her nursing home, in West Orange, NJ.

I've personally gotten to see Belinda in action . . . she is both professional and compassionate, not only with Elsie but with Cynthia's entire family, the other residents and her colleagues . . . she is also extremely hard-working, as evidenced by the fact that it seems like she practically lives there . . . for instance, she worked many hours on Thanksgiving, then was there the very next day for another long period of time . . . she told us she would be leaving in the early afternoon, but we still saw her near dinner time because somebody else had to leave early and Belinda took it upon herself to stay on.

Working in a nursing home can be a thankless task . . . fortunately, Daughters of Israel has Belinda Jefferson on staff . . . and though I'm mentioning just her in this issue of BLAINESWORLD, let me assure readers that there are many other equally dedicated nurses, attendants, etc. who are also doing an excellent job there.

2. FYI

Set a time limit to go through your in-basket; e.g., 2 minutes, 1 minute or 30 seconds. Then only spend that amount of time on each piece of paper you handle.

SOURCE:

GETTING THINGS DONE (see also Section 4D) by David Allen

FYI, part 2

* Lorraine Allen, regional director of The College of New Jersey Small Business Development Center, notified me of this job opening:

Assistant Director for Operations

Reporting to the Regional Director of The College of New Jersey Small Business Development Center(SBDC), assists in managing free management and technical assistance and low-to no cost training to existing and start-up companies in the Mercer/Middlesex county region. Assists in administering, developing and implementing the program, policies and procedures of the center.

Some responsibilities include: Managing delivery of training and counseling services, coordinating distribution of bi-monthly brochures and newsletters, representing center at meetings and business events where required, preparing timely reports, maintain basic purchasing and recordkeeping as well as managing administrative or student employees.

Bachelor's degree in business or related field plus experience in managing operations, staff and coordinating events operations required.

Candidates must be assertive, highly organized, very creative, take great pride in their work, thrive on challenges, be proficient at multi-tasking and prioritizing, have excellent communication and computer skills including Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Outlook. Bi-lingual Spanish is a plus. This position is grant funded on a year-to-year basis. Excellent benefits package including health, dental and prescription plans as well as generous vacation and sick leave allowances. Please fax or e-mail resumes with salary requirements to: Attention SBDC Fax 609.637.5129. E-mail: lallen@tcnj.edu

Salary range starts at \$32,000 but will not exceed \$36,000 (budget) depending on the candidate.

Deadline for applicants: December 16.

* Brian in Pennsylvania [writing about a Computer Tip from last week]: I've been PayPal phished, and I canceled the account, then canceled the credit card. No damage, but I got caught in a moment of weakness.

* Maryann in Pennsylvania [disagreeing with a recent recommendation from a book I reviewed]: I found that if spoons are together in the dishwasher, sometimes they go together and don't get clean.

* Ginger in Pennsylvania [disagreeing with a reader's recommendation to ask for a butterfly needle when giving blood]: Couldn't resist commenting on this one. Being a nurse and phlebotomy expert, I have to correct you. The butterfly is shorter not any smaller in width. The reason we like the fat vein at the crook of the arm is because when a small needle is used, it sometimes cannot accommodate the size of the red blood cells causing what is called hemolization (the breaking up of the blood cells.) This can then affect the true test value.

Also, hand veins are more fragile and used only when a patient is difficult to get blood from. Besides, butterflies are harder to handle and take experience.

Not to brag, but I can start an IV on a stone and get blood. LOL.

PS. Love to hear how much fun you and your beautiful bride Cynthia have together.

* Barbara in Pennsylvania [on a film that was mentioned by another reader]: My husband and I saw the film ARYAN COUPLE Saturday at Neshaminy complex. Sorry to say there were only about 6 other people in the theatre. I felt so sorry that other Jews didn't think it was inviting enough to see.

My husband and I were the only ones in there for about the first half hour. That part was really embarrassing! I told the woman who was first to come in after we were there, "thank goodness!"

When we left, she and I shared some feelings about the film. We enjoyed it very much! I told her I would be anxious to buy it in DVD and let the kids see it. It will probably be the only way they will see it, and it's important to see how Jews were treated back then.

We are so fortunate! We should never forget and get complacent. (It wasn't all that long ago, and it still goes on in France.)

3. Experimentation

An industrious turkey farmer was always experimenting with breeding to perfect a better turkey.

His family was fond of the leg portion for dinner and there were never enough legs for everyone. After many frustrating attempts, the farmer was relating the results of his efforts to his friends at the general store. "Well, I finally did it! I bred a turkey that has 6 legs!"

They all asked the farmer how it tasted. "Don't know," said the farmer. "Never could catch the SOB!!!"

4. Reviews

A. Cynthia and I both loved PRICE AND PREJUDICE, the latest version of the Jane Austen novel of the same title . . . it is the classic tale of love and misunderstanding in class-conscious England near the close of the 18th century . . . everything is just about perfect: the acting, the costumes, the music, and the scenery . . . and the ending was perhaps the best we have ever seen.

Keira Knightley, who first caught my attention in BEND IT LIKE BECKHAM and then PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN, radiates as Lizzie Bennet . . . rated PG.

B. MURDERBALL is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #468 follows:

If you want to stop feeling sorry for yourself (forever), catch the documentary MURDERBALL while it may still be in the area . . . this is an inspiring film about a group of quadriplegic men who participate in the dangerous sport of "quad rugby" . . . rather than give up on life, these guys prove that they can still be active--and make it with women, too . . . it starts out as very violent, then settles down into a film makes you really care about the individuals on screen . . . rated R, though methinks it is both appropriate and worthy for any teenager to see.

C. Sometimes just seeing a title will catch my attention . . . such was the case with IT!: 9 SECRETS OF THE RICH AND FAMOUS THAT WILL TAKE YOU TO THE TOP by Paula Froelich . . . she is the gossip columnist for THE NEW YORK POST'S "Page Six," and I figured if anybody would know about such a subject, she would be the person.

Her book is very quick reading . . . and though it contained no brilliantly-new insights, I enjoyed reading it--and think you will too . . . particularly if you are looking for some juicy tidbits on Tom Cruise, Paris Hilton and a bunch of other celebrities.

Yet Froelich goes beyond name-dropping; she actually gives you some advice that can be applied to virtually any situation.

For example:

* The second rule [taught by her neurotic Jewish mother], even more important, was "Always notice how your date treats your waiter, because in the end, that's how he will treat you." I have used this rule over and over again in my life. The older I get, the more I realize it's a small world, and those you treat badly will come back to bite you!

* Up until 1998, Tara Reid's biggest claim to fame was one line in the Coen Brothers' film THE BIG LEBOWSKI. Prior to that, there had been years of walk-on appearances on D-list soap operas and the mystifyingly long-running after-school sitcom HEAD OF THE CLASS. A close pal of Lizzie's introduced Tara and Lizzie and credits Lizzie with whatever success Tara ultimately achieved. She recalls, "Lizzie used to take Tara out to all of her parties and yell out, 'Oh my God! That's the girl from THE BIG LEBOWSKI!' or just go up to photographers and tell them to take Tara's picture because she was 'in THE BIG LEBOWSKI and was going to be HUGE!' " Grubman then beat photographers and photo editors at the major New York papers into using the shots of Tara. It might not have been the most sophisticated publicity campaign, but it worked! (Tara later dumped Lizzie and hired another big PR firm, which is probably why she's having so many problems right now.)

* [one of five questions to ask a PR person before hiring him or her] What would you do if, God forbid, something really bad should happen and I was arrested?

D. Heard the Simon and Schuster audio program, GETTING THINGS DONE (see also Section 2)--written and read by David Allen . . . he's a management consultant and trainer, dubbed "the personal productivity guru" by FAST COMPANY magazine.

I can now see why, having finished this excellent program . . . although I've read a great deal about various time management and organizing practices, Allen managed to teach me still more.

One principle, in particular, stood out; his Two-Minute Rule . . . he says that if there's anything you absolutely must do that do right now that can be done in two minutes or less, then do it . . . this will free up your time and mind over the long term . . . I know that I often forget to do this and regret the fact long afterwards.

Other valuable tidbits I gained included the following:
Setting up a tickler (reminder) file is simple. Just get 43 folders: one for each day in the current month, then one for each month.

Ask yourself, "Wouldn't it be great if . . . " This is a powerful way to get you thinking about a situation.

What you wear can get you going; e.g., exercise clothing if you're trying to get in the mood to exercise.

Consider setting up a satellite work station at home.

Married couples should have two separate work stations.

Use fresh folders whenever you hang something.

Keep drawers 3/4 full.

Process your in-basket one item at a time. In order!

Constantly ask yourself: What's the next physical action that I can take to move something along?

GETTING THINGS DONE, by the way, will prove helpful not only to business-type folks but to students, stay-at-home moms and just about anybody else looking to gain productivity and reduce stress.

This fine program is available for purchase or rental . . . if you want to get it, please click:

<http://www.achievement.com>

Above is the tape rental club I belong to; i.e., the Achievement Tape Library . . . this a great way to hear CDs and/or audio cassette tapes, view videos, etc.--all for a fraction of what it would cost to buy them . . . call the head of the firm (Paul Arroyo) directly at 1.800.735.3660 and mention my name . . . that way, you'll be sure to pay even higher prices . . . NOT.

5. VCR alert

A. Ordinarily, I wouldn't care to listen to a group that hasn't been together for 37 years . . . yet I'll probably make an exception on Wednesday at 9 p.m. on PBS to view GREAT PERFORMANCES and a chance to listen to Cream, featuring Eric Clapton . . . PBS times and dates vary, so check your local listings.

B. If you were like me and a KNOTS LANDING junkie, then you can catch the now older group on KNOTS LANDING REUNION: TOGETHER AGAIN on Friday at 9 p.m. on CBS.

C. ROBERT KLEIN: THE AMOROUS BUSBOY OF DECATUR AVENUE airs on Saturday at 10 p.m. on HBO . . . Klein, always one of my favorite comedians, reflects on his childhood in the Catskills.

PET PEEVE DEPARTMENT:

Perhaps my favorite TV show is CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM, which ends its current season this coming Sunday at 10 p.m. on HBO . . . yet that said, it really bugs me that some episodes run over the allotted 30-minute time slot . . . I try to allow for this with my taping, typically starting all shows 2 minutes before the official start time and ending them 2 minutes afterwards . . . yet even that did not help when CURB had a recent show that ran for 33 minutes.

CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM is not the only program that does this; in fact, I've been noticing in TV GUIDE that there are programs that now start at the .59 minute mark of the previous hour . . . what stupidity!

6. Gloves

"I'd like to buy some gloves for my wife," the young man said, eyeing the attractive salesgirl, "but I don't know her size."

"Will this help?" she asked sweetly, placing her hand in his.

"Oh, yes," he answered. "Her hands are just slightly smaller than yours."

"Will there be anything else?" the salesgirl queried as she wrapped the gloves.

"Now that you mention it," he replied, "she also needs a bra and panties."

7. Websites

A. Do you have a problem with chronic disorganization? If so, please click:

<http://www.messies.com/howto.htm>

This will take you to a very useful page from the website of Sandra Feldon, the founder of Messies Anonymous . . . if you then take the time to read this material, you'll be given an actual plan that will enable you to get started on the many piles you may have around your home or office.

B. Last week, I reviewed a book that I enjoyed: JUMP THE SHARK by Jon Hein . . . methinks you will have fun at Hein's website, even if you did not yet read his book . . . to see for yourself, please click:

<http://www.jumptheshark.com>

You can view comments a list of over 2,000 TV shows with respect to when they started to go downhill and, also, my favorite: when they started featuring the same character with a different actor.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

To see the many books I've reviewed and generally enjoyed, go to Blaine's Best (on the left) and then letter "O" . . . check the second paragraph there, and you'll be taken to my reviews that have been posted at amazon.com's website.

If you like any of these past reviews and/or find them helpful, please indicate that is the case by doing the following:

1. Take a book I reviewed previously, say (from last week).

2. Go to amazon.com website:

<http://www.amazon.com>

3. Type: THE ONE-MINUTE ORGANIZER PLAIN & SIMPLE

4. Find my review (it will usually be toward the top).

5. At the end, you are asked: Was this review helpful to you? Indicate YES.

Doing so will enable me to move up in amazon's list of "Top 500" reviewers . . . currently, I'm #447 based on 2,108 favorable comments on my 475 reviews.

D. Sharyn of Pennsylvania, a former student and longtime reader, recommends that you check out the following website of her boss if you're looking for a well-informed insurance broker who has been in the industry for the past 25 years:
<http://www.finsvcs.com/efelt>

Sharyn notes:

He is located in Southampton, PA. His expertise includes group and individual health insurance (very well-versed in the new Medicare RX program) life, short and long term disability, and very important "long term care".

Many of our clients are children of elderly parents who are now caring for them in their homes. Needless to say, caring for an elderly parent can disrupt your lifestyle especially when you have young children--not to speak of many inconveniences and healthcare issues. Eric is an extremely caring and helpful individual in all phases of insurance.

8. Computer tip

If you use Internet Explorer, there's a useful tool at the toolbar that enables you to block those annoying pop-up ads . . . go to Tools, Pop-up Blocker and then Turn-Off Pop-up Blocker if that's what you want to do.

Occasionally, you might want to turn it on; e.g., if you want to do a specific activity that requires a Pop-up (such as to see an article) . . . you can easily do this via the above method; just make sure you turn it back off when done.

9. Catholic dictionary

This information is designed primarily for Catholics, but can freely be shared with non-Catholics as well. Only agnostics and atheists should stop reading immediately.

AMEN: The only part of a prayer that everyone knows.

BULLETIN: Your receipt for attending Mass.

CHOIR: A group of people whose singing allows the rest of the Parish to lip-sync.

HOLY WATER: A liquid whose chemical formula is H₂O.

HYMN: A song of praise usually sung in a key three octaves higher than that of the congregation's range.

INCENSE: Holy Smoke!

JESUITS: An order of priests known for their ability to find colleges with good basketball teams.

JONAH: The original "Jaws" story.

JUSTICE: When kids have kids of their own.

KYRIE ELEISON: The only Greek words that most Catholics can recognize besides gyros and baklava.

MAGI: The most famous trio to attend a baby shower.

MANGER: Where Mary gave birth to Jesus because Joseph wasn't covered by an HMO. (The Bible's way of showing us that holiday travel has always been rough.)

PEW: A medieval torture device still found in Catholic churches.

PROCESSION: The ceremonial formation at the beginning of Mass consisting of altar servers, the celebrant, and late parishioners looking for seats.

RECESSIONAL: The ceremonial procession at the conclusion of Mass led by parishioners trying to beat the crowd to the parking lot.

RECESSIONAL HYMN: The last song at Mass often sung a little more quietly, since most of the people have already left.

RELICS: People who have been going to Mass for so long, they actually know when to sit, kneel, and stand.

TEN COMMANDMENTS: The most important Top Ten list not given by David Letterman.

USHERS: The only people in the parish who don't know the seating capacity of a pew.

10. A quote I like

If you treat an individual as he is, he will stay as he is; but if you treat him as if he were as he ought to be and could be, he will become what he ought to be and could be.--Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), German dramatist

11. Thought for the day

Miracle for sale

A little girl went to her bedroom and pulled a glass jelly jar from its hiding place in the closet. She poured the change out on the floor and counted it carefully. Three times, even. The total had to be exactly perfect. No chance here for mistakes.

Carefully placing the coins back in the jar and twisting on the cap, she slipped out the back door and made her way 6 blocks to Rexall's Drug Store with the big red Indian Chief sign above the door.

She waited patiently for the pharmacist to give her some attention, but he was too busy at this moment. Tess twisted her feet to make a scuffing noise. Nothing. She cleared her throat with the most disgusting sound she could muster. No good. Finally, she took a quarter from her jar and banged it on the glass counter. That did it!

"And what do you want?" the pharmacist asked in an annoyed tone of voice. "I'm talking to my brother from Chicago whom I haven't seen in ages," he said without waiting for a reply to his question.

"Well, I want to talk to you about my brother, Tess answered back in the same annoyed tone. "He's really, really sick . . . and I want to buy a miracle."

"I beg your pardon?" said the pharmacist.

"His name is Andrew, Tess replied, and he has something bad growing inside his head and my Daddy says only a miracle can save him now. So how much does a miracle cost?"

"We don't sell miracles here, little girl. I'm sorry but I can't help you," the pharmacist said, softening a little.

"Listen, I have the money to pay for it. If it isn't enough, I will get the rest. Just tell me how much it costs."

The pharmacist's brother was a well-dressed man. He stooped down and asked the little girl, "What kind of a miracle does your brother need?"

"I don't know," Tess replied with her eyes welling up. "I just know he's really sick and Mommy says he needs an operation. But my Daddy can't pay for it, so I want to use my money."

"How much do you have?" asked the man from Chicago

"One dollar and eleven cents," Tess answered barely audibly. "And it's all the money I have, but I can get some more if I need to."

"Well, what a coincidence," smiled the man. "A dollar and eleven cents---the exact price of a miracle for little brothers." He took her money in one hand and with the other hand he grasped her mitten and said, "Take me to where you live. I want to see your brother and meet your parents. Let's see if I have the miracle you need."

That well-dressed man was Dr. Carlton Armstrong, a surgeon specializing in neurosurgery. The operation was completed free of charge, and it wasn't long until Andrew was home again and doing well.

Mom and Dad were happily talking about the chain of events that had led them to this place. "That surgery," her Mom whispered, "was a real miracle. I wonder how much it would have cost?"

Tess smiled. She knew exactly how much a miracle cost . . . one dollar and eleven cents . . . plus the faith of a little child..

In our lives, we never know how many miracles we will need. A miracle is not the suspension of natural law, but the operation of a higher law. I know you'll keep the ball moving.

Here it goes. Throw it back to someone who means something to you!

A ball is a circle with no beginning and no end. It keeps us together like our Circle of Friends. But the treasure inside for you to see is the treasure of friendship you've granted to me.

Today I pass the friendship ball to you.

Pass it on to someone who is a friend to you.

MY OATH TO YOU:

When you are sad, I will dry your tears.

When you are scared, I will comfort your fears.

When you are worried, I will give you hope.

When you are confused, I will help you cope.

And when you are lost and can't see the light,
I shall be your beacon . . . shining ever so bright.

This is my oath.....I pledge till the end.

Why you may ask? Because you're my friend.

Signed,

Your friend

Author Unknown

(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

12. Advance planning department

A. According to Kitty Getlik, artistic director of the Kelsey Theatre at Mercer County Community College (West Windsor, NJ), "CHRISTMAS CAROL, the musical, is awesome."

It closes this coming weekend.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.mccc.edu/kelseytheatre/>

B. Joe Doyle, managing director of Actors' Net of Bucks County, had similar good words for DO BLACK PATENT LEATHER SHOES REALLY REFLECT UP?:

Appropriate for all. It lovingly pokes fun at some Catholic attitudes, but is mostly a coming of age story--and all can identify with kids coming to terms with awareness of their sexuality. Quite a charming show, actually.

This show runs from December 1-18.

For more information, please click:

<http://actorsnetbucks.org/>

It's a fun show with some great kids singing and dancing their way into your heart. Appropriate for all.

It lovingly pokes fun at some Catholic attitudes, but is mostly a coming of age story--and all can identify with kids coming to terms with awareness of their sexuality. Quite a charming show, actually.

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane Katrina's wrath (Wilma's also), as well as for a quick return of ALL the remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

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To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINES WORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#477

11.21.2005

In this issue:

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had a marvelous Saturday . . . in the morning, we joined my folks for breakfast . . . afterwards, we sat around looking at pictures and were struck by something my dad said in showing us an album from his first trip to Europe with my mom . . . he said something to the effect that he recalled at the time, the experience was "as good as it gets" . . . they were both healthy and happy, their children were well and life was good . . . this got me thinking that I should do this more often; i.e., treasure each and every moment . . . I'm grateful for ALL that I have and feel truly blessed for everything that has come my way.

That evening, we joined a bunch of friends for dinner at Acqua Ristorante (908.707.1777) in Raritan, NJ . . . this is a tastefully-decorated establishment that serves many fine Italian specialties . . . just about everybody in our group had some sort of pasta dish that was quite tasty . . . Cynthia and I somehow managed to share just one dessert: apple strudel with vanilla ice cream and hot caramel sauce . . . needless to say, we enjoyed it--along with the service provided by our waiter, Driss El Bovazzaoui . . . though he did not write anything down, he managed to get every order exactly right . . . we were impressed.

We also liked the music of HourGlass, a talented duo who performed easy listening music . . . best of all: after dining, we all stayed around and danced.

B. On Sunday, we met other friends and went to the Livingston Theatre Company's production of WORKING . . . this is a touching musical, in which various American workers talk and sing about a wide range of jobs ranging from waitress to teacher and including telephone operator, firefighter, cleaning woman, parking lot attendant,

and many others . . .it made us appreciate our jobs, as well as the fact that any work deserves to be valued.

The ensemble cast was excellent, though three members in particular stood out: Kate Black-Regan, Mike Brennan and Brendan Gulya . . . we also liked the accompanying orchestra.

And perhaps our biggest enjoyment was staying around afterwards to see these talented college students come out . . . we got a kick out of thanking them for their efforts . . . as one person told us, rehearsals went on for some two months . . . and the show was only run for one weekend.

We plan to return to see other shows produced by the Livingston Theatre Company; for more information, please click: <http://www.rultc.org/home.htm>

From there, it was to the Somerset Diner (732.828.5424) in Somerset, NJ, for sandwiches that were quite good . . . we were again fortunate to have a most helpful server, Sandy . . . it is amazing how much of a difference such a person can have on your evening's enjoyment . . . en route home, Cynthia and I stopped off at an ice cream place: Sundae in the Park (732.271.8333), also in Somerset . . . the pineapple/coconut flavor I had tasted like a Pina Colada; it was that good.

C. I'm pleased to announce that two of my nominees, Rebecca Stevenson and Janet Puente (who are also BLAINESWORLD readers), were among the five individuals who have been chosen to receive Administrative Special Recognition Awards at Bucks County Community College this year . . . CONGRATULATIONS!

Also, CONGRATULATIONS to Linda in Pennsylvania and Jerry in New Jersey . . . they both shared with me that they gave up smoking for at least one day as a result of and/or because of the Great American Smokeout that was mentioned in last week's issue.

SPECIAL OFFER (remains):

If you're a smoker and quit for ANY one day, please send me your name . . . I'll make a contribution (in recognition of your efforts) to the College's Foundation to help defray an anti-smoking program that I will be running in the near future . . . if you then report back 21 days later and tell me you've still quit, I will double my contribution!

And if you're interested in the above program, please send me an e-mail to that effect so I can put you on a mailing list to get you information just as soon as it comes out.

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

This week, it goes to Bob Giaquinto--a longtime friend and owner Giaquinto Shoe Repair, 115 South Warren Street, Trenton, NJ; phone: 609. 599-9090.

If you want fantastic service at reasonable prices, Bob's the man. He is also one of the rare guys who when he tells you something will be ready on a certain date, he makes sure it is ready on that date (if not before).

Bob has saved me a great deal of money over the years, taking shoes that I thought were "goners" and saving them with what for him is a relatively simple repair. For instance: He keeps my Rockport shoes in use by simply replacing the soles.

Bob also makes keys, sharpens knives and fixes luggage. He is ably assisted by his father Joe.

2. FYI

If you have trouble finding your keys in the morning, put a simple hook up by the garage . . . then always keep your keys in that one spot . . . it is the only place they can be . . . another suggestion: put up a few more hooks (or even a decorative piece), so that you can keep your coats there as well.

If you don't have a garage, use the inside of your house by the front door.

FYI, part 2

As usual, I received a lot of useful advice when I recently inquired about suggestions for making the process of giving blood easier . . . among the responses I received:

* Bob in Pennsylvania:

You are not so crazy. Healthcare providers are always in a life and death drama, and while they do the BIG things well, they sometimes foul (fowl in honor of bird flu) up the little things.

A tip for giving blood samples: If you come to a hospital, you are more likely to have a very, very experienced phlebotomist who is properly trained to do the job. Many folk in doctors' offices (especially, in many cases the doctor) have had zero formal training at blood draws. It is not always easy.

My tip for you: Always insist on a "butterfly" needle that is used for pediatric patients. They may say we don't do that . . . but just insist. Then, ask them to take it out of those juicy veins in the top of your hand. They are easy to see, easy to hit and not so sore if they miss on occasion. The real reason they want to use a much larger needle in the crook of your arm is because the blood flows faster there. Ask them to please take a minute and do it so that it is more comfy for the patient.

"Think of the patient" is sometimes the very last consideration in this busy, insurance-driven world of health care.

That is my two centavos = sorry you had troubles!

* Sue in Pennsylvania:

What a terrible experience. I can truly relate. I have also been treated very poorly. Sorry to hear you encountered all that.

I would kindly suggest you do a 20 minute meditation before giving blood. Find a really good meditation tape. I have many, but I am certain Cynthia can provide you with one. During your meditation, imagine it going really well. Our thoughts have much more power than we give them credit for.

Think about what you want the outcome to be. You can also ask for the Arch Angel Rapheal to help you. Rapheal is the healing angel. This may all sound pretty far out there. But it has made a huge difference in my life. Focus on what you want. When we fear something, it becomes our focus, and we get more of it. It's a simple concept, yet it takes some practice. Best of all . . . it's FREE!

* Warren in Pennsylvania:

Due to a genetic blood condition, I have blood drawn on a frequent basis. In addition to drinking beforehand, a piece of advice, which I had previously been given, is to not eat anything shortly before having blood taken. I'm told that when you have food in your stomach, blood flows there to aid in digestion, thus lessening the amount that is then available to be drawn out. It is advice that I follow, even though I have never had problems with having blood drawn.

* Kitty in New Jersey:

As far as getting blood drawn is concerned, I don't know what the science involved in it is exactly, but since I have been diagnosed with Diabetes 2, I have had to draw my blood for tests twice a day. I have found that it is much quicker and easier if you are active before drawing it. In other words, get your blood pumping, as my mother used to say. So, doing some jumping jacks before going into the lab or doctor's office should work.

* Denise in New Jersey:

If you go to a lab you won't have any problems. Most doctors and their staff can't take blood to save their life. Many don't stock that butterfly needle that labs will use for troublesome veins. Anyway . . . you'll find at the lab, it will probably be a one shot deal and they'll get your blood and all will be well.

3. Delight

When my three-year-old son opened the birthday gift from his grandmother, he discovered a water pistol. He squealed with delight and headed for the nearest sink.

I was not so pleased. I turned to mom and said, "I'm surprised at you. Don't you remember how we used to drive you crazy with water guns?"

Mom smiled and then replied, "OH YES! I do remember."

4. Reviews

A. Cynthia and I liked WALK THE LINE, the biopic about Johnny Cash, but just didn't love it . . . what was missing was that there just wasn't very much to care about Cash . . . our emotions got tugged only toward the end of the film in one terrific scene (that I won't ruin for you).

Nevertheless, I really enjoyed the music . . . and thought both Joaquin Phoenix and Reese Witherspoon were perfect together as, respectively, Cash and June Carter . . . the fact that they actually sang their own songs made their performances even

more outstanding . . . Waylon Payne also was impressive as Jerry Lee Lewis . . . rated PG-13.

B. WAR OF THE WORLDS is now out in DVD . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #461 follows:

SAVE YOURSELF MONEY DEPARTMENT: Hoping this warning isn't too late, I urge you not to rush out to see WAR OF THE WORLDS . . . in fact, don't even bother with it when it comes out on DVD or video . . . billed as a contemporary retelling of H.G. Wells' classic book of the same title, this sci-fi adventure thriller starts off with an some impressive special effects--then goes rapidly downhill . . . Steven Spielberg seems to have just recycled his creatures from E.T. . . . Tom Cruise and Dakota Fanning are OK as father and daughter fighting to stay alive, but the usually excellent Tim Robbins is terrible in his role as a crazed survivor . . . rated PG-13.

NOTE:

If you are a fan of the tale, then catch THE 1953 version (THE WAR OF THE WORLDS) . . . it starred Gene Barry and Ann Robinson, and I recall liking it much it better than the current release.

C. Organizing doesn't have to be all that difficult or time-consuming . . . in fact, Donna Smallin in her excellent THE ONE-MINUTE ORGANIZER PLAIN & SIMPLE contends that by doing it in small chunks of time, your life will be made both easier and simpler.

Smallin, a nationally-recognized speaker on uncluttering, had previously written ORGANIZING PLAIN & SIMPLE . . . although I haven't yet read that book, I will do so in the hopes that it is as helpful as her latest effort.

You can read THE ONE-MINUTE ORGANIZER straight through in less than two hours . . . that's what I did the first time . . . now, I'm going back and rereading certain parts from such various chapters as Getting Started, Clearing Clutter, Paper Stuff, and Everyday Strategies . . . I will probably continue to do so in this valuable little book that I'll keep, as well as cherish.

There are so many useful tips presented that it makes it difficult to present just a few in this review . . . however, I'll try by sharing the following that caught my attention:

Start with the most visible clutter first. Seeing clear and obvious results will give you a boost of confidence.

Sort knives, spoons and forks as you put them into the dishwasher to make it easier to put them away when they're clean.

Keep the same calendar for business and personal use. Use different-colored pencils or highlighters to distinguish between work and personal commitments.

When you write appointments in your planner, also write in a phone

number to call in case you're running late, want to confirm or need to reschedule.

And here's a final one that I REALLY need to consider implementing: Check e-mail messages and return telephone calls once or twice a day, instead of all day long.

D. Enjoyed hearing a cassette version of JUMP THE SHARK, written and read by Jon Hein . . . if you're not familiar with the concept, it is the exact moment when things go bad on a TV show . . . this was first noticed on THE HAPPY DAYS when Fonzie literally jumped a shark on water skis . . . the series was never the same afterwards.

Hein expanded the concept to encompass many other TV shows; in addition, he developed a popular website to share his ideas.

In JUMP THE SHARK, he also looks at musicians, celebrities, athletes, and politicians . . . while some of this was interesting, I enjoyed the TV part most--perhaps because I grew up on many of the TV shows that he mentions . . . also, reminiscing about TV can be fun; the same can't be said, for example, when thinking about Hitler.

Yet I did get several chuckles when thinking about how DALLAS turned around when a whole year was wiped off the books because of Bobbie's dream . . . or when BEVERLY HILLS spotted a fin the year Brenda went abroad . . . now those were incidents that merited discussion--much of it quite profound, if memory serves me correctly.

5. VCR alert

A. Cedric the Entertainer hosts the AMERICAN MUSIC AWARDS on Tuesday at 8 p.m. on ABC . . . that's just one of many music shows that look interesting this week . . . KEEY CHESNEY: SOMEWHERE IN THE SUN airs on Wednesday at 8 p.m. on ABC, followed by FAITH HILL: FIREFLIES on the same night at 9 p.m. on NBC . . . and DAVE MATHEWS BAND: WEEKEND ON THE ROCKS is on Thursday at 10 p.m. on PBS (check local listings because times and stations vary).

B. If comedy is your thing, watch LIVE WITH REGIS AND KELLY on Wednesday at 9 a.m. on ABC (also check local listings because this is a syndicated show and may be on different time or even stations in your area) . . . Jerry Seinfeld, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Michael Richards, and Jason Alexander reunite for an entire hour devoted to the latest SEINFELD DVD release . . . or perhaps catch DENIS LEARY'S MERRY F#S%N CHRISMTAS SPECIAL . . . it will help you recall just how great a comedian the RESCUE ME star is . . . Sunday at 10 p.m. on Comedy Central.

C. THE READING ROOM stars James Earl Jones as a widower who honors his wife's last request--to make their book collection available to their inner-city neighbors--in this 2005 cable film . . . Saturday at 9 p.m. on the Hallmark Channel.

6. Big trouble

A husband was in big trouble when he forgot his wedding anniversary. His wife told him, "Tomorrow there better be something in the driveway for me that goes zero to 100 in 2 seconds flat."

The next morning the wife found a rather small package in the driveway. She opened it with a bit of curiosity and found a brand new bathroom scale.

7. Websites

A. I received this website from Bernie in New York (aka my dad):

http://www.time.com/time/2005/100books/the_complete_list.html

He notes:

A great website for those of your readers who are interested in contemporary American literature.

A list of the 100 most important books as selected by literary editors of TIME. Also, the reviews that appeared in TIME. Interesting to go back through the years and peruse what is considered to have remained significant.

I wonder if your generation of readers has any interest in writers like Hammet, Orwell, Woolf, Waugh, Chandler, Salinger, Fitzgerald. How relevant are they today in the estimation of your readers?

This brings to mind a discussion I had with some members of the Reading Group I was active in when in Florida. I think I have mentioned this before. I was questioned why I so often made my selection from the list similar to the one mentioned above. I would ask the person posing the question to name me three books on THE NEW YORK TIMES best seller list from the preceding two weeks. Believe me, very few could name them correctly. And these were supposed to be literary interested and knowledgeable readers.

B. Do you like magic? Even if you don't, turn on your sound card and view the following trick:

<http://media.putfile.com/mindfreak-throughtheglass0-6500/480>

It features a street magician by the name of Criss Angel . . . he has a reality show, MINDFREAK, that I haven't seen--but will now catch it as a result of seeing the above . . . it airs on Wednesdays at 10 p.m. on A&E.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

On the left, you'll see "Radio Show" . . . go to that link if you want to see a history of my radio career . . . you can also hear one of my shows.

As you may have read in a past issue, a recent management change

at WWFM has resulted in my show being taken off the air . . . but, hopefully, I'll resurface soon again . . . on another station and/or even with my own cable show.

Please do keep me in mind if you have any media contacts for me to pursue with respect to the above possibilities.

8. Computer tip

Hopefully, you've paid heed to my warnings; i.e., to avoid phishing scams . . . see below for one that has been getting a lot of play on the Internet lately:

Subject: Important PayPal! Account Information.
Date: 11/20/2005 7:26:09 A.M. Eastern Standard Time
From: service@paypal.com
To: (INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK)

* #1 tip-off that this is fake: An e-mail address was given that I hardly use.

PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY

Congratulations! You have received this Notice because the records of PayPal, Inc. indicate you are a current or former PayPal account holder who has been deemed eligible to receive a payment from the class action settlement in accordance with PayPal Litigation, Case No. 02 1227 JF PVT, pending in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California in San Jose.

In your specific case you have been found to be eligible for a payment of \$88.99 USD.

* #2 tip-off that this is fake: If something sounds to be too good to be true, then it probably isn't.

Confirm Your Bank Account.

The aforementioned settlement funds may be transferred directly to your bank account providing you have a linked card. The funds may not be credited directly to your PayPal account as this would render Paypal to be accumulating interest and thus profiting on litigation settlement funds which contravenes Federal law. Your bank account will be credited within 7 days upon submission of account details.

* #3 tip-off that this is fake: PayPal was typed incorrectly. See the beginning of the second sentence.

To credit your bank account please (INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK).

* #4 tip-off that this is fake: The above address takes you to a website that is NOT PayPal!

Don't forget to check your bank account for the PayPal deposits and get Verified!

If you are seeking an alternate method of receiving your funds PayPal will be contacting those who do not submit their details by the 31st of March with instructions to receive a cheque in the mail. However this

will incur a 7.5% processing fee deducted from the settlement amount and therefore PayPal only recommends this option to those users who do not currently have a bank account with linked Bank Card.

* #5 tip-off that this is fake: How the 3.31 date is not presented in typical fashion, and the word "cheque" is a British variant of the spelling we use.

Please Note that under United States federal law credit cards are not a legally approved method of settlement for Class Action suits and cannot be processed for transferal of funds in this case.

This notice is a summary and does not describe all details of the settlement. For full details of the matters discussed in this notice, you may wish to review the Settlement Agreement dated January 11, 2005 and on file with the Court or visit <https://www.paypal.com/settlement/>.

* #6 tip-off that this is fake: This is a legitimate website; in fact, if you go there, you'll see a warning (at the bottom) about this very same scam e-mail.

Complete copies of the Settlement Agreement and all other pleadings and papers filed in the lawsuit are also available for inspection and copying during regular business hours, at the Office of the Clerk of the Court, United States District Court for the Northern District of California, 280 South First Street, San Jose, California 95113.

DATED: November 20, 2005

BY ORDER OF THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

This PayPal notification was sent in accordance with your PayPal notification preferences. To modify your notification preferences, go (INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK) and log in to your account. PayPal will not sell or rent any of your personally identifiable information to third parties. For more information about the security of your information, read our Privacy Policy at (INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK).

* #7 tip-off that this is fake: Again, the above addresses take you to a website that is NOT PayPal!

THERE'S STILL MORE:

The e-mail continues and contains other links to websites that are not where you want to be; i.e., taken to some non-PayPal locale that is being run by some spammer . . . ALWAYS beware of this happening to you . . . to check it out, just put pass your mouse over an address or link . . . if it doesn't appear familiar (in this case, it had an address having nothing to do with PayPal), then it is likely that you are going to be scammed.

9. A lesson

Mr. Rabbit was walking down the road when he spotted a crow at the tip top of a very tall tree. He shouted, "Good Morning, Mr. Crow."

Mr. Crow shouted back down, "Good Morning Mr. Rabbit." Mr. Rabbit shouted up, "Whatcha doin' today?" and the answer shouted back down was, "Absolutely nothin' Mr. Rabbit - Absolutely nothin' and loving it."

Well, that sounded pretty good to Mr. Rabbit, so he shouted back up, "Do you think I could do that too?" Mr. Crow shouted back down, "I don't see why not!" So, Mr. Rabbit lay down on the side of the road and began Doing Absolutely Nothing.

In 30 minutes a fox came along and ate him.

The moral of the story is: You can get away with Doing Absolutely Nothing, but only if you are really high up.

10. A quote I like

Management is about human beings. Its task is to make people capable of joint performance, to make their strengths effective and their weaknesses irrelevant.--Peter Drucker (1909-2005), author of 95 books and, according to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, "the most influential management thinker of the past century"

11. Thought for the day

Thanksgiving prayer

Even though I clutch my blanket and growl when the alarm rings, thank you, Lord, that I can hear. There are many who are deaf.

Even though I keep my eyes closed against the morning light as long as possible, thank you, Lord, that I can see. Many are blind.

Even though I huddle in my bed and put off rising, thank you Lord, that I have the strength to rise. There are many who are bedridden.

Even though the first hour of my day is hectic, when socks are lost, toast is burned and tempers are short, my children are so loud thank you, Lord, for my family. There are many who are lonely.

Even though our breakfast table never looks like the pictures in magazines and the menu is at times unbalanced, thank you, Lord, for the food we have. There are many who are hungry.

Even though the routine of my job is often monotonous, thank you, Lord, for the opportunity to work. There are many who have no job.

Even though I grumble and bemoan my fate
from day to day and wish my circumstances
were not so modest, thank you, Lord, for life.

Author Unknown

(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

12. Advance planning department

A. Lynda in Pennsylvania has asked me to tell readers about
THE ARYAN COUPLE:

Here is a film that we included in our last film series. It is opening in Philly this [past] Friday. You might want to catch it at the Ritz. Also, if you could announce it in your newsletter, that would be great. John Daly, the director, is a friend. You can look him up at:

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0198460>

He's a multi-Academy Award winner.

MY TWO CENTS:

I took Lynda's advice and checked Daly out . . . it seems he has been involved in such films as THE LAST PLATOON, HOOSIERS and THE TERMINATOR . . . this latest one is a WWII Drama about a German/Jewish industrialist who, in order to ensure his family's safe passage out of Germany, is forced to hand over his business to the Nazis.

B. I've sometimes been asked to provide ADVANCE NOTICE of shows that others might want to see . . . so here's just a partial listing of some things that Cynthia and I might try to see in the next several months:

LES MISERABLES, my all-time favorite musical, will be at the Forest Theatre in Philadelphia from March 1-19 . . . for tickets, visit:

<http://www.broadwayoffers.com>

and enter code LMF4TCX for a \$10 discount. Or call 800.872.8997 and mention the same code.

JAQUES BREL IS ALIVE AND WELL, my all-time favorite musical revue, will be at the Off-Broadstreet Dessert Theatre (609.466.2766) in Hopewell, NJ, from March 31-May 15.

LA CAGE AUX FOLLES, the musical, will be at the Kelsey Theater in West Windsor, NJ, from May 12-21 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.mccc.edu/kelseytheatre>

If you go to the above website, you'll find many other shows that you might want to see this year.

We'll probably also see a bunch of shows in Morrisville, PA, at another of our favorite theaters: the Heritage Center . . . for the season series, please click:

<http://www.actorsnetbucks.org>

Among this season's productions: THE ODD COUPLE (male and female versions will alternate on opposite nights), MY FAIR LADY, OF MICE AND MEN, and MAN OF LA MANCHA.

Lastly, ALL MY SONS will be at the Two River Theater in Red Bank, NJ, from January 19-Feb. 5 . . . this is just one of many shows that look interesting; for the complete listing, please click: <http://www.trtc.org>

C. Do you like to tango? (Or want to learn?) . . . if so, Cynthia and I are thinking about taking a course entitled, "Tango: the Dance of Relationship" . . . it will be offered from Feb. 10-12 at the Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health in Lenox, MA . . . for more information, please click: <http://www.kripalu.org/program/type2/selfspirit/TDR061>

If you decide to sign-up, let us know; we'll do the same . . . methinks it would be fun to go with other friendly folks.

PS. Here's hope that you get to enjoy Thanksgiving on Thursday with your loved ones . . . and should you want some music to go along with the festivities, please click:

<http://www.bluemountain.com/view.pd?i=128899102&m=6429&rr=y&source=bma999>

In addition, please join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane Katrina's wrath (Wilma's also), as well as for a quick return of ALL the remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is: bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#476 (with SPECIAL OFFER; see Section 12C)

11.14.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I have a "date night" on Wednesdays . . . we try to get together in the middle of the week, much like we did when we were dating, and grab a bite to eat . . . in addition, we might catch a movie or in the case this past week, attend a lecture on some topic of interest.

That was how we came to hear Patricia Diesel, professional organizer, whose column I enjoy in the COURIER NEWS . . . she was speaking on "Overcoming Chronic Disorganization" at Barnes and Noble in Bridgewater, NJ.

In slightly more than an hour, we learned many practical things--such as:

Getting organized is a learned activity.

If you can be put into action right away, it motivates you. The key is to start with basic steps.

80% of what we keep we never use.

The 15-20 minute rule says to break the pattern of procrastination, you need to devote that much time to something you are not doing; e.g., paying bills, returning calls, etc.

When deciding if you want to get rid of something, consider whether it is friend, acquaintance or stranger. Take a piece of clothing, for example. If it is a friend, you wear and enjoy it on a regular basis. If it is an acquaintance, you're not sure about it. And if it is stranger, get rid of it.

If you buy something new, then let something old go.

For more information, visit Diesel's website:

<http://www.keepitsimple.ms>

B. On Friday, we met friends for dinner at The Famished Fog (973.540.9601) in Morristown, NJ, a place that's billed as a contemporary cafe . . . the food was excellent . . . my London broil was as good as I've ever had, and Cynthia enjoyed her rib-eye steak . . . the accompanying sweet potato fries were excellent.

We also enjoyed the efficient service of our waiter, Walter Barboz, and were most impressed by the fact that he remembered our entire order without writing one part of it down . . . what's more amazing: it came out perfectly, down to how each one of us wanted our main courses prepared.

Afterwards, Cynthia and I went to the nearby Morristown Hospital . . . we had heard that Deepak Chopra was speaking there and though we didn't have tickets, we decided to give it a try and see if we could get in.

I didn't think we had a chance, but as Cynthia often likes to tell me to do, we put our intentions "out" . . . as a result, we got in . . . there was no charge . . . and we got good seats, too.

If you're not familiar with Chopra, he is a medical doctor and popular contemporary writer on spiritualism and Ayurveda (a comprehensive system of medicine based on a holistic approach) . . . much of his message moved us, including the following points:

Your spirit organizes everything that happens in your body.

Healing is biological creativity; it is the creativity of your soul.

Your body wants to heal itself.

To evoke the healing process, you create euphoria and profound peace. Positive thinking does not do it.

Massage is good for premature babies. In an experiment, premature babies who were massaged gained 49% more weight than babies who did not get massaged.

To help patients heal themselves, there's a four-step process that needs to be followed:

1. Visualize how you want to feel.
2. Get all the information you can in regards to the disease.
3. Analyze the information.
4. Incubate all the information.

Love is a healing force!

Our evening concluded with a visit to the South Street Creamery (973.267.8887), also in Morristown . . . I've mentioned this place before, but in case you missed what I wrote, it is an old-fashioned ice cream parlor that feature an ice cream flavor to die for--something called Jockey Hollow . . . think vanilla ice cream with peanut butter swirl and chocolate-covered pretzels . . . I'm getting hungry just

thinking about it!

C. On Saturday, we joined other friends for dinner at what has become our favorite diner: the Hillsborough Star Diner (908.281.9696) in Hillsborough, NJ . . . the mini-meals there are always a great bargain . . . for under \$10, you get soup or salad, vegetable, potato, a main course, and dessert, plus great cheese bread that accompanies every meal . . . I ordered the turkey, as I often do, and was not disappointed with my choice.

From there, we went to the Villagers Theatre (732.873.2710) in Somerset, NJ, for a superb production of URINETOWN . . . this was the Central Jersey premiere of the 2002 Tony Award-winning musical that's a hilarious tale of corruption, love and revolution set in a fictional city when worth is worth its weight in gold, and it becomes a privilege to . . . well, I think you can figure it out for yourself.

The show put a smile on our collective faces almost from the time we sat down . . . it was unlike anything we've ever seen before . . . it was both refreshing and delightful, and the cast was extremely energetic.

Robert M. Tilley and Anne Howe were both great as the two leading characters, and we liked the work of Adam Fitting as Officer Lockstock . . . one supporting actor, James Lopez, also managed to stand out with his enthusiastic dancing.

Lastly, we were amazed to find out that the orchestra was comprised of only five musicians; it sounded like there were many more . . . Mark Benson, a talented teaching colleague of mine, handled the trombone and euphonium parts with aplomb.

My only regret in telling you about URINETOWN lies in the fact that we saw it on the last night . . . so you unfortunately won't be able to catch it again, though if you're like us, you will want to catch other shows put on by this troupe . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.villagerstheatre.com>

D. Sunday was Family Circle Day for Cynthia's family . . . this is when a group of relatives get together a few times a year to celebrate the good times in their lives . . . it is always nice to see everybody when they are healthy (or at least relatively so) and smiling.

It was held at the home of Joyce and Marty, Cynthia's sister and brother-in-law . . . they always do a great job hosting anything . . . we look forward to having the next such event, sometime in the spring at--drum roll, please--the residence of the Greenfields of Belle Meade!

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

This week, it goes to Danny Lime (908.725.9130)--an attorney with Peter Laud & Associates in Branchburg, NJ . . . he was the lawyer who handled the closing for our Belle Meade home and though that was several months ago, I've been in touch with him since then in an attempt to get back money that was held in escrow at the time of our closing.

What happened was that the people who we bought the house from did not do much of what they said they would . . . we had \$1,500 placed in escrow for just such a contingency; however, recovering this money in New Jersey just isn't a simple process.

Danny never quit trying to get this money for us . . . he wrote letters, sent faxes and made numerous calls on our behalf, all to no avail until just the other day when he was finally able to secure a check for us.

I was impressed and, also, with the fact that Danny is one of the rare breeds in his profession who returns calls in a timely fashion.

2. FYI

Shout it out: Oops!

The first word you should teach a child is "Oops!" It is the best--and safest--thing to utter after an accident. After the glass is dropped, after the window is broken, after the car door is dented, after the spaghetti sauce has dribbled onto the white shirt.

You acknowledge the mistake, and at the same time you also put it in perspective. Yes, it was an error in judgment, calculation, reach, or balance. But it was just that, an accident, unintentional and not premeditated. It was most certainly not a violation of any of the Ten Commandments.

The only certainty about accidents is that more will happen. So do not let the old ones live on. Bellow it out--"Oops!"--and then grant absolution all around.

SOURCE:

110% (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11) by Pat Croce with Bill Lyon

FYI, part 2

THANKS to all those who gave me ideas on how to make the process of giving blood easier . . . I'll run some of the ideas next week . . . in the meantime, I'm amazed that I didn't even get back a response from the doctor I wrote about!

THANKS, also, for the many responses I received from an earlier question about an "ideal" retirement location . . . to quote just a few of them:

* Dave in Florida:

My reply would be: SARASOTA, FLORIDA. Waiting out the occasional hurricane isn't fun, but the rest of life here is WONDERFUL. It's like no other city in Florida, so it cannot be appreciated without a visit. Some of the country's best beaches, wonderful restaurants, an opera company, world class entertainment, booming real estate market, a fine airport, excellent public libraries, and a first-class art/indie film theatre are just the amenities that come immediately to mind. It's southern enough to be laid back friendly, but international enough to be extremely sophisticated. I've enjoyed every day of the 6+ years I've spent here,

even the ones with temp/humidity in the 90's.

Y'all come to see us.

* Kandi in Arizona:

Sedona, AZ is a wonderful place to relax into. I have never regretted my decision to move here and can't think of any place better to live. If you ever want to come for a visit, I would be more than happy to show you and your lovely bride around. Once you are here, it will sell itself. Many baby boomers are buying homes/condos/property for their retirement and renting their property out until they actually retire so they can purchase while things are still affordable. Which is even currently becoming questionable.

Come check it out. I think you and especially Cynthia would love the energy, natural beauty and all Sedona has to offer. Check out the website below for a sneak peak about a few things offered here and some photos of the area:

<http://www.sedonacreativelife.com/home.htm>

Also, there is a website I found but I couldn't drag the heart into this e-mail. If you type "Sedona Creative Life Center" into your browser, it will show up as "Creative Life Center Panoramic Views by Mark (something or other)." There are a few other Sedona/ Arizona sites that are featured.

* Sue in Pennsylvania:

Actually, I have researched this somewhat. Austin, TX has unbelievable weather. The town is liberal and progressive. And it is the headquarters for Whole Foods.

I think it is the perfect place to live. Austin has low humidity and is not as hot as Arizona. Plus, the cost of housing is UNBELIEVABLE!!! * Ken in New York: As far as retirement, with the exception of Las Vegas, the other states have income tax. Florida does not. Nor does Alaska for that matter.

3. Wintering in Florida

A Minneapolis couple decided to go to Florida to thaw out during a particularly icy winter. They planned to stay at the same hotel where they spent their honeymoon 20 years earlier.

Because of hectic schedules, it was difficult to coordinate their travel schedules. So, the husband left Minnesota and flew to Florida on Thursday with his wife flying down the following day.

The husband checked into the hotel. There was a computer in his room, so he decided to send an e-mail to his wife. However, he accidentally left out one letter in her e-mail address, and without realizing his error, sent the e-mail.

Meanwhile, somewhere in Houston, Texas, a widow had just returned home from her husband's funeral. He was a minister who was called home to glory following a heart attack.

The widow decided to check her e-mail, expecting messages from relatives and friends.

After reading the first message, she screamed and fainted.

The widow's son rushed into the room, found his mother on the floor, and saw the computer screen which read:

To: My Loving Wife

Subject: I've Arrived

Date: October 16, 2005

I know you're surprised to hear from me. They have computers here now, and you are allowed to send e-mails to your loved ones. I've just arrived and have been checked in.

I see that everything has been prepared for your arrival tomorrow. Looking forward to seeing you then. Hope your journey is as uneventful as mine was.

PS. Sure is freaking hot down here!

4. Reviews

A. Saw GOOD NIGHT, AND GOOD LUCK, a docudrama about the events in the mid-1950s leading up to acclaimed CBS journalist Edward R. Murrow's decision to stand up against Sen. Joseph McCarthy, who was out to rid the country of communism . . . it was a bit talky, yet nevertheless, it should be seen by anybody who knows little about that period of time in America . . . methinks that those familiar with the era will probably enjoy it even more.

David Strathairn, long one of my favorite character actors, is superb as Murrow . . . and the guy who played McCarthy was perhaps even better, though truth be told, director George Clooney (who also has a part in the film) used stock footage for his scenes . . . rated PG, but definitely not for young children; they'd be bored completely, as would any child under the age of 17.

B. MAD HOT BALLROOM is now out in DVD . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #453 follows:

Enjoyed MAD HOT BALLROOM, a heartwarming documentary about a group of New York City fifth graders learning to dance tango, foxtrot, swing, rumba, and meringue . . . they actually become--as you are watching--the description of one of their teachers: "little ladies and gentlemen" . . . I was amazed that such a program even exists, but it not only exists--it actually flourishes . . . the end result is a 10-week competition designed to find the school that has produced the best dancers in the city . . . some of the dance scenes are hilarious; others are touching . . . I was also moved by the bits of dialogue, in which you got to both meet and know many of the children . . . rated PG, but don't be misled by the rating . . . adults should see this film, with or without children.

C. Think about what happens when you automatically ask somebody, "How are you?" . . . you don't usually don't care or even listen to the answer . . . but Pat Croce, the author with Bill Lyon of 110% (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11), suggests you bellow back: "GREAT!" . . . you'll be amazed at the results and eventually start to convince yourself.

This book follows along the lines of Croce's first book, I FEEL GREAT AND YOU WILL TOO! . . . it presents, to quote the subtitle, 110 STRATEGIES FOR FEELING GREAT EVERY DAY . . . nothing is brilliantly new and much of it you may have heard before, yet that doesn't take away from the fact that there's a lot of basic, useful stuff here that can be put to use to brighten any day.

And how can you not like an author who tells you to "have sex" because if "sex didn't have enough to recommend it all on its own merits, consider this: Each act burns, on average, one hundred calories.

"Which gives a whole new dimension to the notion of 'think thin.' "

110% also has a collection of great quotes, introducing each of the suggestions . . . among those that caught my attention:

We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.--Norman MacEwan

Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body.--Richard Steele

Exchange embraces with your enemy. Then check your back for knives.--H.L. Mencken

Fortunately, if you read this book, you might well have fewer enemies because you'll get such advice as these worthwhile tidbits:

* The line at the Complaint Department is always long. The line at the Compliment Counter always has room.

* Pets understand the value of just sitting, or in lying down. They were enjoying the benefits of a Zen philosophy far before it became popular. Join them in their stillness from time to time. You'll both benefit.

* Declare a holiday

Instead of a gift wrapped and tied with a bow, give a day to a special someone. The itinerary is up to them. You are along to make sure their wishes are fulfilled.

"It's your holiday," you tell them. "Whatever you want to do, to see, to eat, to drink-that is exactly what we shall do." The only rules are that no interruptions are allowed, especially from work, and everyone had to have a good time.

An amusement park, a baseball game, a day at home watching movies and eating ice cream. Your holiday can be as ambitious or as lazy as you desire. The idea is to escape from the norm.

The nice thing about making your own holiday is that you do not have to wait for it to come around on any calendar.

It is not subject to seasons, only to your whims.

D. Heard THE PACT, written and read by Drs. Sampson Davis, George Jenkins and Rameck Hunt with Lisa Frazier Page . . . it is the moving tale of three young men who grew up as friends in Newark,

NJ, and who survived their tough neighborhood to all become doctors.

They did so by vowing to be there for one another, as well as to encourage one another every step of the way . . . the book shows that friendship and love can join together to help transform the world.

I especially liked the fact that the three doctors--upon graduation--decided to give back to their community by creating the Three Doctors Foundation, which offers a yearly scholarship to a promising Newark student entering a four-year college.

THE PACT should be read by teenagers, as well as teachers, regardless of their race . . . parents and grandparents will like it, too.

5. VCR alert

A. I WALK THE LINE: A NIGHT FOR JOHNNY CASH features such performers as U2, Foo Fighters, Kid Rock, Shooter Jennings, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Kris Kristofferson . . . Wednesday at 8 p.m. on CBS.

B. ICONOCLASTS is a new show, on which famous people pair up and talk . . . the premiere has Samuel L. Jackson going one-on-one with basketball's Bill Russell . . . another show will have Robert Redford interviewing Paul Newman . . . Thursdays at 10 p.m. on Sundance.

C. NATURE focuses on the 15,000 abandoned pets saved by rescue workers during Hurricane Katrina . . . Sunday at 8 p.m. on PBS . . . since PBS times and dates vary, check your local listings.

6. Silence in the court

The judge asked the defendant to please stand. "You are charged with murdering a teacher with a chain saw."

From out in the gallery, a man shouts, "Lying bas*ard!"

"Silence in the court!" the Judge says to the man who shouted.

He turns to be defendant and says, "You are also charged with killing a paperboy with a shovel"

"Damn tightwad" the same man in the gallery blurted out

"I said QUIET!" yelled the judge.

To the defendant, "You are also charged with killing a mailman with an electric drill."

"You jackass!" the man from the gallery yelled.

The judge thundered at the man in the galley, "If you don't tell me right now the reasons for your outbursts I'll hold you in contempt!"

The man answered back, "I've lived next door to that man for ten years now, but do you think he ever had a tool when I needed to borrow one?!"

7. Websites

A. Medicare has finally unveiled its long-promised Internet tool to let beneficiaries compare how much their medications will cost under the various drug-insurance plans that start next year. To see if for yourself, please click:

<http://www.medicare.gov>

There's a lot of good information here . . . however, people who aren't Internet-savvy likely will need help sorting through what is at this website . . . also, because it has already become so popular, you may have some delays in getting it to work.

B. If you're looking for a joke in a certain category, you'll do well by checking out:

<http://www.jokedictionary.com/>

For example, I recently was in need of a joke about cars . . . this riddle caught my attention:

What happens when a frog's car breaks down?
It gets toad away.

There was also this one:

A man was in court charged with parking his car in a restricted area. The judge asked if he had anything to say in his defense. "They shouldn't put up such misleading notices," said the man. "It said FINE FOR PARKING HERE."

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

As you hopefully know by now, you should ALWAYS feel free to mention this newsletter to your friends, relatives, etc. . . . should they want to subscribe (AT NO COST), all they have to do is go to my homepage . . . then click on "Special Offer" at the bottom . . . it's that simple!

D. Dr. Kenneth Shore, a longtime reader, has written several informative books on such topics as bullying, keeping kids safe and effective discipline . . . for more information, please click:

<http://drkennethshore.nprinc.com>

At the website, you can also find out how to contact Dr. Shore (the School Psychologist of the Year in New Jersey for 2004) as a guest speaker for your next meeting or conference . . . you won't go wrong.

8. Computer tip

When a message box appears on the screen asking you to click on an "OK" button to continue, most of the time you can press the

"ENTER" key to substitute for clicking the "OK" button.

Also, pressing the ESCAPE key usually works as a substitute for a "CANCEL" button.

Doing either or both of the above will cut back on your use of the mouse and, in doing so, make for quicker keyboarding.

9. Specialization

A new medical facility with several different specialists opened in a trendy part of the city. Wanting to be different and creative, the administration decided that each doctor's office door would, in some way, be representative of his practice.

So, when construction was complete, the eye doctor's door had a peep hole, the orthopedist's door had a broken hinge, the psychiatrist's door was painted all kinds of crazy colors, and the proctologist's door was left open--just a crack.

10. A quote I like

You should always be suspicious of anyone who has no wrinkles, because if you don't have wrinkles, it means you haven't laughed nearly enough. And that's a tragedy.--Pat Croce with Bill Lyon in 110% (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11)

11. Thought for the day

As you probably know by now, I REALLY like a book if I mention it on four separate occasions in BLAINESWORLD . . . such is the case with 110% (see also Sections 2, 4C and 10) by Pat Croce with Bill Lyon, from which I took the following section:

Gossip (only about the good stuff)

It doesn't always have to be dirt that we wallow in and then track around. Gossip tends to be petty and mean-spirited and small-minded. Guess what? It doesn't have to be that way.

You can help reverse it. Instead of spreading and embellishing the word about someone's misfortune and misdeeds, try trumpeting triumphs and successes. Substitute backslapping for backbiting. Say it to someone's face, not behind his or her back.

You'll become trusted, a person others are eager to share their secrets with, and you will become known as someone who gave gossip a good name.

12. Advance planning department

A. I'm speaking on "Time Management" to Leadership Bucks County on Tuesday, November 15 at 10:30 a.m. . . . the session will be held at LaSalle University's Bucks County campus in Newtown . . . if you'd like to attend as my guest, please send me an e-mail to that effect.

B. Why are Americans so fat? Find out in SUPER SIZE ME, a tongue-in-cheek--and burger in hand--look at the legal, financial and physical costs of America's hunger for fast food.

Showings:

Tuesday night, November 15, 6:30 p.m. in the Library Auditorium
Thursday night, November 17, 6:30 p.m. in the Library Auditorium

Both showing are presented by the Student Life Office and are FREE to those interested in seeing this funny, thought-provoking documentary.

C. The Great American Smokeout is set for Thursday. This day encourages smokers to quit for one day in the hope that they will quit for good.

If you need help, here are several online quitting sources:

<http://www.ffsonline.org>

<http://www.quitnet.org>

<http://www.smokefree.gov>

<http://www.smoking-cessation.org>

<http://www.smokefreesociety.org>

***** SPECIAL OFFER *****

If you're a smoker and quit for this one day, please send me your name . . . I'll make a contribution (in recognition of your efforts) to the College's Foundation to help defray an anti-smoking program that I will be running in the near future . . . if you then report back 21 days later and tell me you've still quit, I will double my contribution!

And if you're interested in the above program, please send me an e-mail to that effect so I can put you on a mailing list to get you information just as soon as it comes out.

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane Katrina's wrath (Wilma's also), as well as for a quick return of remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

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bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter

that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #475

11.7.2005

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12. ... **Advance planning department**

1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride and I, saw a marvelous performance of THE IT GIRL at the Off-Broadstreet Theatre (609.466.2766) in Hopewell, NJ . . . this is a musical that you may have never heard of, but don't be put off by that fact.

The story is an old-fashioned romance--set in the 1920s--about a girl from Brooklyn who has no money and an entry-level job in a department store . . . she meets the son of the store's owner and, well, you can probably guess the rest.

I've seen many shows at Off-Broadstreet; this was perhaps the best . . . Heather Diaforli-Day was fantastic in the leading role, as was Michelle Russell as the woman from the right side of the tracks . . . Tom Orr, rapidly becoming one of my favorites, handled several supporting roles with aplomb . . . he had the difficult task, along with several other talented performers, of playing at least five roles with assorted costume changes, wig shifts and various accents.

There's also a four-piece orchestra that will make you see what you're missing if you venture to Radio City Music Hall where the musicians are currently on strike, and they're using canned music instead.

THE IT GIRL runs until November 26, so hurry to get tickets if you can. You won't be disappointed. Also, get to Off-Broadstreet early so you can partake in the desserts that are offered as part of your admission.

IN CASE YOU'RE WONDERING:

The show is not about Clara Bow, a silent film actress known as the "it" girl . . . besides, my belief is that the REAL "it" girl

is not Bow, nor the aforementioned Diaforli-Day--but rather she is . . . drum roll, please . . . CYNTHIA!

She does have that something about her!

B. I don't know about you, but developing a will is not necessarily my favorite task . . . nevertheless, it is one that needs to be done and then revisited every so often; e.g., when family circumstances change.

If you have young children (under the age of 18), then this becomes a necessity . . . you want to be the one to make decisions about their upbringing, as opposed to having some court do this.

I used to think about this topic on what I called my contingency day . . . it was on a date when I was in a good mood (around the holidays and specifically, on December 27--the day after Risa's birthday), and I viewed it as positive event; i.e., that I was the one in control of what I wanted done.

As most of you know, Risa is now older and my circumstances have also changed as a result of my joyous marriage to Cynthia . . . so we both recently undertook the process of changing our wills and, at the same time, drafting a living will, health proxy, power of attorney form, and various trust documents . . . Tony Loscalzo, a very knowledgeable Yardley, PA attorney on such matters, is the person who is helping us; he can be reached at 215.968.5500.

I've also been working with my brother to help my folks develop similar documents . . . to their credit, they have been receptive to the process, and I also recommend that if you're as fortunate as I am to have both parents alive (or just one), you begin discussing such matters with them . . . Tammy Lawlor, an equally knowledgeable Mineola, NY attorney, has been assisting us; her telephone number is 516.296.1000.

C. Is it just me? Or are others getting increasingly brusque treatment from their health care providers?

Yes, I know they claim they're becoming increasingly overworked . . . underpaid, too . . . and they have far too much paperwork to complete.

That still is no excuse for the way I was treated last week . . . I went to my regular physician to have blood work done . . . the usual person who does this was sick that day, so somebody else tried and was not successful with me after two attempts . . . the doctor next came in, and he had no luck either . . . I offered to come back, but was told that the doctor wanted it done then . . . finally, a third person tried (using my hand) and still couldn't get enough blood from me.

Nobody seemed particularly concerned about the difficulties that I was encountering . . . the doctor never once came over to me to see how I was doing, nor did he apologize.

What's worse: When I went to pay my insurance copay, I inquired about when I could come back to have my blood work done--hopefully with the person who usually does it . . . instead, the receptionist threw

a sheet back at me and told me to go to a local lab.

I sent a letter to the doctor that night, expressing my displeasure with my treatment . . . he hasn't responded . . . yet . . . and wouldn't that be something if he never bothered to do so?

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

I used to be very squeamish when it came to giving blood . . . I've now gotten somewhat better as a result of drinking lots of water beforehand (I was told this makes the veins more prominent) and asking that I be allowed to lie down, since I'm going to wind up in that position anyway . . . if anybody has any other suggestions as to what I can do to make things go more smoothly, I'd be most appreciative since I don't want to make my upcoming visit for blood work quite so problematic.

**** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD ****

This week, it goes to Natalie Kaye--programming coordinator at the Women's Center at Bucks County Community College.

She has done an absolutely tremendous job in that capacity, running many fine programs that have benefited both the College and Bucks County community.

In addition, Natalie served as co-chair of the recent "A Day for All Women" . . . as such, she arranged for the keynote speaker, many of the presenters, got the sponsor, did all the media work, and ran the volunteer orientation meeting. . . Cynthia (who had the pleasure of attending with a friend) told me it was a great event.

Natalie has also set up various mentoring programs at BCCC, and I've always considered her to be THE PERSON to contact should you wish to network with virtually anybody else . . . she never ceases to amaze me with her contagious enthusiasm.

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2. FYI

Don Sodequist in THE WAL-MART WAY (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11) described how he went into a competitor's store and made a list of what was wrong with it. However, he completely missed all the good things that the store was doing. As he notes:

That's the way Sam thought--and that's the way he taught. I will appreciate that lesson for as long as I live. It changed the whole way I look at a store. I never again looked for what was wrong with a competitor's store, but for what we could learn from it and how we could get better. That's how we strive for excellence.

MY TWO CENTS:

Methinks this can apply to other situations, too; e.g., involving the people we come into contact with on a daily basis . . . wouldn't it be neat if we ALWAYS could look for the good in them, as opposed to thinking about what's wrong with them?

FYI, part 2

You--referring to all BLAINESWORLD readers--are the greatest . . . a few weeks ago, many of you responded with love and insight to the woman who has given birth to a premature baby . . . last week, I put

out a request for ideal retirement locales and have already received several responses (to be run in an upcoming issue).

From time to time, I get e-mails from people that I don't include in the newsletter--but respond to directly . . . such was the case with a nice note from Mary in Pennsylvania, who commented about a book I had reviewed: the excellent WIN THE CUSTOMER, NOT THE ARGUMENT by Don Gallegos . . . it seems that Mary had taken advice from Gallegos and written Home Depot about a rebate offer that had expired . . . she received a form-type letter back and needless to say, she was not pleased . . . nor was I when I read it.

At any rate, I shared the correspondence with Don . . . not only did he respond to me, he also took it upon himself to write Mary . . . his response follows:

* Hi Mary, Blaine forwarded your problems with Home Depot. They are totally wrong. I have never agreed with anyone who issues a expiration date on rebate forms or coupon expiration dates. I have never understood why companies do that. If they issue the rebate for and/or coupon. what difference does it make when it is redeemed?

Home Depot has a new President, and ever since he has been there, things have really changed for the worse. He doesn't get it, and I would argue that Clarissia whose title jokingly is called "Customer Care Representative" , should be changed to "How can I not help you."

In fairness, Clarissia is only doing what the President directed her to do.

NOTE:

To give credit where credit is due, I recently had a similar experience with Lowe's involving a rebate form . . . I missed the filing date by a few weeks, but decided--based, in large part, on what Dan had written--to send it in regardless . . . I was obviously quite pleased when I got a nice rebate check back from Lowe's for \$65. No questions asked!

* Andrea in Pennsylvania:

About those PayDay Pro bars: You can probably buy them by the box at Hershey's Chocolate World next time you are near Hershey Park. I know you are in New Jersey, but you seem to get around quite a bit. They have just about everything they market and even some things that are hard to find like their chocolate covered almonds (Heavenly!!!), and Special Dark Dutch process cocoa for baking.

<http://www.hersheys.com/chocolateworld/>

Or, the next time you are in New York City, you can check out the Hershey's Store in Times Square.

<http://www.hersheys.com/discover/timessquare.asp>

* Denise in New Jersey [commenting on another reader who complained that I devoted too much time to both local-type events and things I do with Cynthia]:

Let her go! I've never read a better newsletter than yours. I love the local section because I AM local, but its only one section. You hit on so many other topics which are just as appealing to me. I love the personal touch to your newsletters including what you and your beautiful bride do on the weekend!

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3. Time to pay

There's these animals in a restaurant. The waiter comes over at the end of the night to collect for the drinks.

The skunk says, "Don't look at me, I haven't got a scent."

The duck says, "Just put it on my bill."

The cow says, "You'll have to ask one of the udders."

The deer says, "I had a buck last week and I'm expecting a little doe soon."

The giraffe says, "Well, I guess the high balls are on me then."

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4. Reviews ...

A. I ordinarily don't see a movie if I've read the book . . . but I made an exception for SHOPGIRL by Steve Martin for two reasons: 1) Cynthia had not read the book, and 2) I like almost anything that the same Steve Martin, the actor, is in.

SHOPGIRL proved to be a delightful adaptation of the book by the same title . . . it is the tale of a quiet young woman who has two guys interested in her: one with few job prospects, and the other with what seems to be unlimited wealth.

Some of the scenes were funny, yet what I liked even better were the many touching moments in the film . . . Jason Schwartzman and Martin were both fine as the two leading men; however, it was the work of Claire Danes that blew me away . . . she was positively radiant, and this might finally prove to be her breakout role after such a splash back in 1994 with the TV show MY SO-CALLED LIFE.

The accompanying musical score added to my enjoyment of SHOPGIRL . . . too bad it is rated R, in that I think many mature teenagers would find it enjoyable.

B. CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY is now out in DVD . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #460 follows:

Despite the mostly favorable reviews, I was disappointed with CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY--the second version of Roald Dahl's classic tale about a child who finds a winning ticket that enables him to meet a rather eccentric chocolatier . . . I think you'll be much better served by saving your money and renting 1971's WILLIE WONKA & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY, starring Gene Wilder . . . I found his performance amusing; Johnny Depp--in the current film--is just strange . . . all I kept thinking about when watching was that there was Michael Jackson on screen (due to Depp's pale makeup, as well as his mannerisms) . . . rated PG.

C. A lot of folks love Wal-Mart, yet there are many who don't; in fact, for some reason, they seem to despise the company . . . that

certainly would seem to be the impression you'd get if you read my local newspaper or even THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

So in the interest of fairness, I wanted to learn more about the company's side . . . I thus came across THE WAL-MART WAY (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11) by Don Soderquist, retired vice chairman and chief operating officer of Wal-Mart.

His viewpoint could not exactly be called "balanced," but I was not expecting that from the book . . . what was looking for was some insight into what has made Wal-Mart so successful--and I got that. And then some!

I also was pleasantly surprised by the fact that I got so many ideas that I could turn around and use in other situations, including my teaching . . . such as this one:

Sam instituted what he called the Ten-Foot Rule. When you come within ten feet of a customer, no matter what you are doing, look up, look the customer in the eye, and speak to him. If you are asked where something is, instead of pointing to the aisle or trying to explain where it is, take him to the merchandise. This amazes many customers.

There were many other useful tidbits; among them:
Sam knew how to see the big picture--how to think big. But he also knew how to bag groceries, reload receipt paper, and greet customers--do whatever it took to take his vision as far as it could go. When was the last time you rolled up your sleeves and engaged in the frontline activities of your company?

A number of years ago, one member of our board of directors suggested that since we placed such a high priority on the value of our people, we should rename our personnel department our "people division." It didn't take very long before that became a reality. I feel that the symbols used in a business can be a factor for change if there is genuine meaning behind them. We never again referred to our human resources department; it was always the People Division. This was a small point, but relationships are made up of many small acts, and the truth is that all of us really are in the people business.

Lois's husband was a police officer in town. One night she and her husband were talking about the problem, and she came up with a great idea. Lois went to her manager the next day and shared a new thought with him: "Since we have such a great reputation for customer service, taking good care of our customers and being a friendly store, what would happen if we put someone up at the front of the store to greet customers as they came in? This would make all of our customers feel even more welcome. At the same time, this people-greeter would be a deterrent to shoplifting as they could watch everyone going out of the front door."

D. Heard WHAT DO I SAY NEXT? . . . written and read by Susan RoAne, its subtitle proves to be an apt description of what the book is all about: TALKING YOUR WAY TO BUSINESS AND SOCIAL SUCCESS.

There are many fine ideas presented here, all designed to make communication just a little bit easier . . . many of them I've heard before, yet even those I've too often forgotten.

I guarantee that by listening to or reading RoAne's work, you'll get at least one tip that you can begin applying in a work and/or home situation . . . to cite a few for your consideration:

Prepare for conversations by talking to yourself first. Make sure your conversations are positive.

Always have a 7-9 second introduction for yourself.

Put your nametag on your right side. This makes it more visible when you shake hands.

Make nametags large enough so all can read the names.

[if you forget somebody's name] Stick out your hand when you say your name. People respond in kind 90% of the time.

Never ask, "Do you remember me?"

Conversations should have a non-compete clause.

People who say they are brutally honest are usually more brutal than honest.

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5. VCR alert

A. I missed the original air date, but plan to catch GEORGE CARLIN: LIFE IS WORTH LOSING on Tuesday at 3:20 a.m. or Friday at 10 p.m.--both times on HBO Comedy East . . . another show that looks like it will have me laughing is COMEDIANS OF COMEDY . . . four up-and-coming performers riff on life, the road, their art, and each other as they tour East Coast comedy clubs . . . Fridays at 11 p.m. on Comedy Central.

B. Wednesday is another day that should bring about even more laughs . . . first, there's PIONEERS OF PRIMETIME at 8 p.m. on PBS . . . Sid Caesar, Carl Reiner, Steve Allen, Red Skelton, and Milton Berle are among those recalling the style of live TV in the 1950s . . . immediately following at 9 p.m., also on PBS, will be ON STAGE AT THE KENNEDY CENTER: THE MARK TWAIN PRIZE . . . it will be presented to Steve Martin with Reiner, Lily Tomlin, Larry David, and Martin Mull all paying homage to him . . . make sure you check your local listings; PBS times and stations do vary.

C. Wednesday also marks the cable debut of PAPER CLIPS, a moving documentary about Tennessee middle schoolers who collect paper clips--each of which represents a Jew murdered in the Holocaust . . . I recently helped bring it to Bucks County Community College for a showing; it was a big hit . . . you'll agree if you get to see it at 7:30 p.m. on HBO.

D. And if music is more your thing, make sure you catch the ALL-STAR SALUTE TO PATTI LABELLE on Tuesday at 9 p.m. . . . Big Boi, Nelly, Kelly Rowland, Gerald Levert, Ashanti, Boyz II Men, and Michael McDonald all visit the Bahamas' Paradise Island resort to pay their respects . . . LaBelle also reunites with Sara Dash and Nona Henryx for another rendition of "Lady Marmalade" . . . then

on Friday at 10 p.m., catch MCCARTNEY IN PETERSBURG on A&E . . . Sir Paul goes back to the former USSR to perform a mix of his solo hits and Beatles classics.

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6. Such problems

A woman goes to the doctor's and says, "Doctor, Doctor, you have to help me. Every time I go to the bathroom, dimes come out!"

The doctor tells her to relax, go home, rest with her feet up and come back in a week. A week later the woman returns and says, "Doctor, Doctor, it's gotten worse! Every time I go to the bathroom, quarters come out!! What's wrong with me?"

Again the doctor tells her to relax, go home, rest with her feet up and come back in a week. Another week passes and the woman returns and yells, "Doctor, Doctor, I'm still not getting better! Every time I go to the bathroom, half-dollars come out! What the heck is wrong with me?"

The doctor says, "Relax. You're just going through your change!"

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7. Websites

A. I love listening to books on tape . . . recently, I came across a website that offers you the opportunity to get cassettes or CD versions delivered right to your door:
<http://www.jiggerbug.com/trial.php>

It operate in much the fashion that Netflix does; i.e., you can get what you want to listen to, when you want to listen to it . . . and never pay a late rental fee.

B. If you are looking for a fun website . . . or are just plain bored, please click:
<http://www.flowgo.com>

There's something here for seemingly everyone: word jumble, born today, famous quotes, and of course, a joke of the day:

The other day there was a bomb scare in the city. Of course the bomb squad had to be called out to investigate, which in turn brought the news. In the local paper the next day, they had a picture of a bomb squad member, wearing a shirt that said:

I AM A BOMB TECHNICIAN.
IF YOU SEE ME RUNNING,
TRY AND KEEP UP!

In addition, there are funny featured files for downloading and sharing with others.

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click: <http://www.blainesworld.net>

To see the many books I've reviewed and generally enjoyed, go to

Blaine's Best (on the left) and then letter "O" . . . check the second paragraph there, and you'll be taken to my reviews that have been posted at amazon.com's website.

You'll see that I am now a "Top 500 Reviewer" and, hopefully, one that is moving up . . . as you can see, I've reviewed some 471 books over the years and 2,056 folks have been gracious enough to say that my reviews were helpful to them.

To add your vote, just to go any recent review by going to the amazon.com website:

<http://www.amazon.com>

Then:

1. When there, type-in a book such as: CROWNING THE CUSTOMER.
2. You'll find an excellent book I reviewed with the same title, written by Feargal Quinn.
3. Click on the link, and you'll then see my review.
4. Click YES when asked, "Was this review helpful to you?" (That is, assuming the review was helpful; if it wasn't, well . . . let's not even go there.)

D. Kevin Jameson, a former student and longtime friend, has a website you might want to check out for two reasons: <http://www.kevinjameson.com>

When you go there, you can get information on ordering his great book, WOWideas! . . . just click on link on the homepage (fifth line down from the top) . . . in addition, you can hear Kevin sing "Walkin' After Midnight," recorded live at the Ryman in Nashville, TN . . . to access that, click on link also on the homepage (at the very bottom).

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8. Computer tip

Online shopping has made my life sooooo much easier . . . for example, I recently wanted to get some business cards printed up for dispute resolution work that I do when not teaching . . . I also didn't want to pay too much for these cards . . . so I went to the following website:

<http://www.vistaprint.com>

Then, I just followed the online instructions to order 250 FREE business cards . . . I even got to see a preview of what the cards would look like before ordering them!

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9. Cars and religion

I'm confident the Bible can be interpreted in different ways. However, that said . . .

Most people assume WWJD is for "What would Jesus do?" But the initials recently have been

changed to stand for "What would Jesus drive?"

One theory is that Jesus would tool around in an old Plymouth because the Bible says, "God drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden in a Fury."

But in Psalm 83, the Almighty clearly owns a Pontiac and a Geo. The passage urges Jesus to "pursue your enemies with your Tempest and terrify them with your Storm."

Perhaps God favors Dodge pickup trucks, because Moses' followers are warned not to go up a mountain "until the Ram's horn sounds a long blast."

Some scholars insist that Jesus drove a Honda but didn't like to talk about it. As proof, they cite a verse in St. John's gospel where Christ tells the crowd, "For I did not speak of my own Accord . . ."

Meanwhile, Moses rode an old British motorcycle, as evidenced by a Bible passage declaring that "the roar of Moses' Triumph is heard in the hills."

Joshua drove a Triumph sports car with a hole in its muffler: "Joshua's Triumph was heard throughout the land."

And, following Jesus' lead, the Apostles car pooled in a Honda . . . "The Apostles were in one Accord."

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10. A quote I like

Has anyone ever told you that you are an extraordinary person? If so, do you remember how it made you feel? Better yet, have you ever told anyone else that he is an extraordinary person, or have you ever made anyone feel that she is extraordinary?--Don Soderquist in THE WAL MART WAY (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11)

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11. Thought for the day

You can tell when I REALLY like a book by the fact that I mention it more than once in an issue . . . that's the case with THE WAL-MART WAY (see also Sections 2, 4C and 10) by Don Soderquist, from which I quote the following:

Beginning with Sam, Wal-Mart leaders have always stressed an attitude that we can get the job done, no matter how great the task. When faced with a problem or challenge, the question was always, "What are we going to do about it?" If a competitor was opening a store across the street, the response was never "Woe is us," but always "How can we improve our own store? How can we satisfy our customers better?" We viewed competition as healthy and good because it always made

us better, and I believe we in turn made the competition better.

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12. Advance planning department

A. Vote Tuesday . . . the party is up to you; the key is that you take the time to go out to the polls . . . and if you're not registered, then please make it a point (on Wednesday) to get you registered so you can vote in the next election . . . we're ALL soooooo blessed to be living in a country that allows us this privilege; i.e., the right to vote!

B. I'm speaking on "Time Management" to Leadership Bucks County on Tuesday, November 15 at 10:30 a.m. . . . the session will be held at LaSalle University's Bucks County campus in Newtown . . . if you'd like to attend as my guest, please send me an e-mail to that effect.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane Katrina's wrath (Wilma's also), as well as for a quick return of remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

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To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #474

10.31.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had an unusually busy but enjoyable weekend . . . on Saturday, in the early afternoon, we went to Goodnoe's in Newtown, PA, where owner Skip Goodnoe was being honored for his family's 50 years in the business . . . it was a nice celebration, attended by many local dignitaries who also happen to be readers of BLAINESWORLD (thank you Garney, Clarke, Glenn, etc.).

As you may know from reading this newsletter, Goodnoe's has always been one of my favorite places for ice cream, pie or a sandwich . . . for more information, please click:

www.goodnoe.com/

From there, we went with friends to New Brunswick, NJ, for burgers at Tumulty's Pub (732.545.6205) . . . I hadn't been there in years; actually, since I was a graduate student at Rutgers.

The place was about as hectic as ever . . . very crowded and very noisy, though a great deal for the price . . . and the food is good, too . . . the key is to get there early; anytime after 6:30 p.m. on the weekends, and you're going to have to wait.

Afterwards, it was on to the State Theatre for a concert featuring fiddling phenom Mark O'Connor . . . he paid tribute to his great friend and mentor, the legendary French jazz master, Stephanie Grappelli.

Technically, the music was brilliant . . . we all liked that part of the performance, though would have liked some more enthusiasm on O'Connor's part . . . it seemed as if he was playing for his joy; whether anybody else got it didn't seem

important to him . . . only when Roberta Gambarini came on stage for vocals did the performance truly come alive.

B. On Sunday, I with Cynthia to participate in an interesting full-day Breema workshop . . . for those not familiar with this form of bodywork, it can be described as follows: Breema bodywork is performed on the floor with the recipient fully clothed. It consists of rhythmical and gentle leans and stretches which leads to deep relaxation, increased vitality and stimulation of the self-healing processes of the body.

Sessions can be any length of time, although 50 minutes is common. There are also self-Breema exercises. The essence of Breema is expressed in the Nine Principles of Harmony:

Body Comfortable

When we look at the body, not as something separate, but as an aspect of a unified whole, there is no place for discomfort.

No Extra

To express our true nature, nothing extra is needed.

Firmness and Gentleness

Real firmness is always gentle. Real gentleness is always firm. When we are present, we naturally manifest firmness and gentleness simultaneously.

Full Participation

The most natural way of moving and living is with full participation. Full participation is possible when body, mind, and feelings are united in a common aim.

Mutual Support

The more our Being participates, the more we are able to support life and recognize that Existence supports us. Giving and receiving support take place simultaneously.

No Judgment

The atmosphere of nonjudgment gives us a taste of acceptance of ourselves as we are in the moment. When we come to the present, we are free from judgment.

Single Moment/Single Activity

Each moment is new, fresh, totally alive. Each moment is an expression of our true nature, complete by itself.

No Hurry/No Pause

In the natural rhythm of life energy, there is no hurry and no pause.

No Force

When we let go of assumptions of separation, we let go of force.

Elaine Pendergrast was our instructor . . . she did an excellent job.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.breema.com/>

The workshop was held at Yoga People, a facility in an area known as Brooklyn Heights . . . this is a fun, happening part of New

York that's fun to visit . . . there are a lot of trendy restaurants that we'll perhaps revisit in the future . . . best of all, there's a Hagen-Dazs that serves a new flavor that we've only recently discovered: caramel cone.

I had to go the company's website to find out more about this simply marvelous concoction:

<http://www.haagen-dazs.com/segicd.do?productId=303>

If you don't want to bother going to the website, here's the description: This creamy blend of caramel ice cream with rich caramel swirls balances the sweet crunch of chocolate-covered cone pieces for a harmony of caramel, chocolate and crunch in every bite . . . as good as it sounds, it is even better to taste!

C. During the week, I was heartened to hear that Risa (my daughter) survived Hurricane Wilma--but barely . . . her apartment in West Palm Beach had several of the windows destroyed, which will result in her having to move with JP to a new apartment on a lower floor . . . in addition, her car had its windshield broken and radio damaged, but fortunately it still can get her back and forth from work.

I know if I lived in Florida or at least anywhere near the water, I'd strongly consider moving; e.g., to any of the towns mentioned in Section 9 . . . in fact, Cynthia and I are now starting to reflect on such a possibility when we retire--though more likely to such locales as Arizona, Las Vegas, San Diego or even Atlanta.

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

I'd be interested to hear from any readers who believe they are living in the "perfect" spot . . . we like where we are now--Belle Meade, NJ--but might prefer some place with milder winters and everything on one floor.

D. Lastly, I got to hear an informative guest speaker during the week: Cathy Windland, vice president of marketing for Third Federal Bank in Newtown, PA, who graciously spoke to students in my marketing class and Joan Weiss' advertising class at Bucks County Community College.

She did a fine job of showing why her bank is making an impact in the area . . . it REALLY believes in (and practices) customer service . . . and has fun doing so.

The bank also has products that make it stand out; e.g., a checking account that pays 10% interest!

For more information, please click:

<http://www.thirdfedbank.com/>

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

This week, it goes to Dana Parnell--a customer service representative with Wells Fargo Home Mortgage.

Too often, mortgage companies can be a real pain . . . it is difficult to reach a real person to speak with and when you do, you never seem to get a call back . . . also, problems take far toooooo long to resolve.

In my instance, after I moved, there was a problem with my taxes being paid in a timely fashion . . . the mortgage company was supposed to do this, but just didn't for some reason . . . and I wound up being assessed a late fee from my township.

When I called Wells Fargo, I was fortunate to get hold of Dana . . . in a very short time, she straightened out all my difficulties and since then, everything has gone smoothly.

Dana was great on returning calls, as well as getting faxes out in a timely fashion . . . I was most impressed with her follow-up, too.

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2. FYI

I've long been a fan of Zone Perfect Bars . . . they're high in protein and provide a quick snack/meal replacement.

Cynthia and I have recently come across another product that does the same thing: PayDay Pro, a high protein energy bar. It has 15g of protein, 240 calories and tastes just like the PayDay candy bar (with what seems to us to be the same peanut and caramel blend of flavors).

Presently, we can only buy them in most CVS locations for \$1.49/bar . . . but we're looking to get them both elsewhere and cheaper, so if you have any suggestions, please let us know.

For more information about PayDay Pro, please click:

<http://www.hersheys.com/payday/products/paydaypro.asp>

FYI, part 2

* Lisa in Pennsylvania [writing about her premature baby]: Thanks again for your thoughtfulness, Blaine. I saw the thank you to your readers for their responses in the last newsletter and appreciate it.

I realized I never answered your question about what hospital. He's at Temple University Hospital. My OB Gyn is associated with Jeanes, so when I went to see him due to the contractions, he sent me to Jeanes. They said if the baby came before 32 weeks, they did not have the level of care to assist him, and that Temple has a great NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit). We were able to get steroids into me to help his lungs develop and hold off labor with drugs and hospital bed rest for five days; those additional days helped.

To give you an update, Stephen is having less apnea episodes and over the last 10 days "graduated" from CPAP to help with oxygen to Nasal Cannula to NOTHING! He is now breathing on his own. Still having apnea episodes, but thank God, hardly any. His feeding is getting better. In the beginning, they would try to feed him 3 ccs of my milk through a tube over an hour period every four hours, and he had a lot of residual. Now he is up to 27 ccs every three hours; with limited residual. My hubby and I have been doing Kangaroo Care, which is skin to skin contact; the baby is placed on his parent's bare chest in just his diaper. Not only is it emotionally therapeutic for us, but allegedly helps babies to sleep, eat and breathe

better.

Thanks again and take care.

(By the way, I can't believe you and Cynthia were the murderers at Tyler Mansion! Sounded like fun.)

* Laura in New Jersey:

I would just like to suggest a new section: Coming Attractions.

You and Cynthia seem to get to a lot of great movies, but especially local theater and shows. I would like to know about some of them before you go. I would also like to read your reviews afterwards, but sometimes I don't know about a great event until it is too late to go myself.

* Rebecca in Michigan:

This newsletter [a previous one] was nice, in the fact it wasn't so flowery with stuff just about you and Cynthia. For the readers who don't know you or have never met you or Cynthia, it was refreshing to actually read a newsletter with other information not being overpowered with all about "you."

MY TWO CENTS:

Shortly thereafter, Rebecca chose to stop getting this missive . . . imagine that!

She complained that it also contained too much local information, but I beg to differ . . . Section 1 often does, yet even there, I'll often include things that hopefully are of interest to readers anywhere in the country . . . or even the world, for that matter. (BLAINESWORLD actually has several subscribers in Australia, at least one in Israel and others in parts unknown.)

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3. Faces

Finding one of her students making faces at others on the playground, Ms. Roberts stopped to gently reprove the child.

Smiling sweetly the teacher said, "Barry, when I was a child, I was told if I made ugly faces I would stay like that."

Little Barry looked up and replied, "Well, you can't say you weren't warned."

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4. Reviews ...

A. NORTH COUNTRY, inspired by a true story, is about a woman who goes to work in the mines at a time when that just wasn't done . . . she faces much resentment and eventually files the nation's first-ever lawsuit against sexual harassment.

The acting is excellent, particularly the main character played

by Charlize Theron and the part her father (a character actor by the name of Richard Jenkins who is always excellent) . . . yet after a great beginning, the film began to drag on and by its conclusion, Cynthia and I were just glad to get out of the theater . . . we also found that there were too many subplots that seemed to get in the way of the main plotline . . . rated R; however, my opinion is that it would appropriate for most any teenager.

B. BEWITCHED is now out in DVD . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #459 follows:

Liked the premise of BEWITCHED . . . an actor, Will Ferrell, sets his sights on a remake of the beloved 1960s situation comedy with the same name as the current movie . . . he accidentally meets a real-life witch, Nicole Kidman, and asks her to be his costar . . . the beginning was quite funny, and I found myself laughing at much of it . . . however, at about the halfway mark, the film lost impetus for me . . . and by the time the ending rolled around, I was thinking that it was something that I could have easily missed . . . so don't rush out to see it, either in the theater or when it's available via rental--despite winning performances by both Ferrell and Kidman and Michael Caine as the latter's father . . . rated PG-13.

C. Many business books talk about how to get new customers to come into our front door . . . there's nothing wrong with that, of course . . . yet Feargal Quinn in his excellent CROWNING THE CUSTOMER says what's really important is his Boomerang Principle: the name of the game is getting the customer back.

Quinn, founder of the Superquinn supermarket chain in Ireland, developed this principle when as a youngster, he watched his father operate a successful holiday camp . . . guests, at the end of their week's stay, were encouraged to return the next summer . . . when and if they did, it was easy to determine that any particular week--or even summer--was successful.

CROWING THE CUSTOMER presents many similar ideas that may sound equally simple, but amazingly, just aren't put into practice as often as should be the case.

For example, in Chapter 7, Quinn talks about how to make customer panels work . . . this one chapter alone is worth whatever you might pay for the book . . . you'll learn why it is imperative that you do the following:

1. In selecting your panel, touch all the bases but don't worry too much about being fully representative.
2. Don't pay your panel members
3. Let your customers set the agenda.
4. Keep your side as small as possible.
5. Be aware of the flattery obstacle. (In other words, don't just let your customers compliment you.)
6. Don't answer back.

7. Circulate a report on each customer panel widely within your organization.

8. Take action on the comments, suggestions and criticisms.

What I really liked about CROWNING THE CUSTOMER were the numerous examples on found on virtually any page . . . in reading it, you'll come across useful tidbits that can be applied to business and non-profit organizations . . . among them, to name just a few:

* In our business, we have a rule which requires our top management to do their own household shopping once a month. This gives them first-hand experience of what shopping is like, seen from the customer's perspective.

* After using names, the most important step towards seeing your customers as people is to actually look at them.

* The next time you are tempted to say, "Which will we go for, this market or that one?" try asking yourself: "Can we not go for both?"

CROWING THE CUSTOMER can be obtained at most online book retailers . . . or please click:

http://raphel.com/b_t_crownCust.html

D. Heard THE FAMILY: THE REAL STORY OF THE BUSH DYNASTY, written and read by Kitty Kelley, and I can see why the author did not get much cooperation from her subjects . . . much in the tradition of her previous unflattering biographies of Frank Sinatra and Jackie Onasis, Kelley takes no enemies in this one either as she delves into the Bush family from the rise to power of Senator Prescott Bush and his son, the first President Bush, to George W's ascent to and tenure in the White House.

The book is certainly gossipy, and a lot of innuendo gets presented as fact . . . however, that said, the author does seem to have done a pretty thorough job of research . . . and cites many creditable sources along the way.

Regardless of your political affiliation, if you keep an open mind in reading THE FAMILY, you'll have a good time . . . plus, you will come away with many provocative questions, such as:

* Why did Prescott Bush, a founder of Planned Parenthood, change his stripes for political gain?

* How come we heard little of George H.W. Bush's long-standing affair with aide Jennifer Fitzgerald?

* And how did George W. Bush get into the Texas Air National Guard so quickly when other had to wait over a year?

Furthermore, even if you've viewed Barbara or Laura Bush in a positive manner in the past, you'll at least rethink this viewpoint as a result of THE FAMILY.

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5. VCR alert

A. DREAM DECODERS looks like it will be an interesting new program . . . classic dream symbols are analyzed . . . also, the show attempts to explain how some bad dreams can be good and how some are even premonitions . . . Tuesday at 8 p.m. on Discovery Health.

B. REAL TIME WITH BILL MAHER concludes its third season on Friday at 11 p.m. on HBO . . . he's likely to discuss President Bush's Supreme Court nominations, among other topics . . . methinks he'll also talk more about FEMA's response to Hurricane Katrina, much like he did on September 9 . . . to quote him:

Michael Brown, the head of FEMA, has been relieved of his command. He has been asked to return to Washington immediately. He is expected to arrive in about a week.

C. Worth watching will be MAD TV, if just to see Fred Willard return to his sketch-comedy roots (he's a Second City vet) to play an obnoxious salesperson . . . in addition, there are send-ups of John Madden and Ellen DeGeneres . . . Saturday at 11 p.m. on Fox.

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6. Immortality

I recently picked a new primary care physician. After two visits and exhaustive lab tests, he said I was doing "fairly well" for my age. A little concerned about that comment, I couldn't resist asking him, "Do you think I'll live to be 80?"

He asked, "Well, do you smoke tobacco or drink beer?"

"Oh no," I replied. "I've never done either."

Then he asked, "Do you eat rib-eye steaks and barbecued ribs?"

I said "No, I've heard that all red meat is very unhealthy!"

"Do you spend a lot of time in the sun, like playing golf, sailing, ballooning, or rock climbing?"

"No, I don't," I said.

He said, "Do you gamble, drive fast cars, or sexually fool around?"

"No," I said. "I've never done any of those things."

He looked at me and said, "Then why do you give a sh*t if you live to be 80?"

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7. Websites

A. KING KONG, the Peter Jackson version, opens on December 14 . . . in the meantime, you can check out the website:

<http://www.kongisking.net>

You can get data about the cast and other typical features, but what makes this website so unusual is that you can also see more than 80 video entries in production and post-production diaries . . . these are well-shot and well-edited films, each a couple of minutes long . . . they explain how the cast and crew worked together to create this upcoming epic.

B. Last week, I mentioned a neat Halloween game you could play . . . the company that produced the website has several other games that are worth checking out; to see for yourself, please click:

<http://dedge.com/online-game-development.html>

They include bowling, Chuck E. Cheese's skateboard challenge, reindeer roundup, rocket racer, Garfield's scavenger hunt, whitewater rafting, , Chuck E. Cheese's pizza panic, Garfield's dream racer, Garfield's sheep shot, jigsaw puzzle, and penguin shi.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

On the left, you'll see "Radio Show" . . . go to that link if you want to see a history of my radio career . . . you can also hear one of my shows.

As you may have read in a past issue, a recent management change at WWFM has resulted in my show being taken off the air . . . but, hopefully, I'll resurface soon again . . . on another station and/or even with my own cable show.

D. Jen in New York, a longtime friend and reader, has just opened a dog walking/pet sitting/puppy training business in Queens . . . to check it out, please click:

<http://www.jwalkonline.com>

In addition, Jen has indicated an interest in getting feedback on her website . . . what you like about it, what you dislike about it, suggestions for improvement . . . please feel free to communicate your thoughts directly via the following e-mail address:
jbor28@aol.com

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8. Computer tip

To save ink and paper, as well as time, you can print just part of a web page . . . just hold the left button of your mouse down and drag it over the portion you want printed . . . this selects the portion of the page that will be printed.

Then click File > Print; that's it!

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9. Where to go on vacation, part 2 of 2 (concluded from last week)

Lumber Jacks: Thousand Oaks, California

Manicurists: Finger Lakes, New York

Optometrists: Plainview, New York

Pastors: Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Pianists: Florida Keys

Podiatrists: Arches National Park, Utah

Politicians: Dodge City, Kansas

Prostitutes: Pleasure Ridge, Kentucky

Real Estate Salesmen: Loveland, Colorado

Refrigerator Repairmen: Chillum, Maryland

Retired Army Officers: East Point, Georgia

Sailors: Marina, California

Sheriffs: Marshalltown, Iowa

Tree Trimmers: Long Branch, New Jersey

TV Evangelists: Paradise, California

Want to guess who goes to Intercourse, Pennsylvania?

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10. A quote I like

Happiness is never stopping to think if you are.--Palmer SONDREAL

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

Anybody know who Palmer SONDREAL is and/or anything about him?

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11. Thought for the day

Position: mother

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Long term team players needed for challenging permanent work in an often chaotic environment. Candidates must possess excellent communication and organizational skills and be willing to work variable hours, which will include evenings and weekends and frequent 24 hour shifts on call. Some overnight travel required, including trips to primitive

camping sites on rainy weekends and endless sports tournaments in faraway cities. Travel expenses not reimbursed. Extensive courier duties also required.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

For the rest of your life. Must be willing to be hated at least temporarily, until someone needs \$5 to go skating. Must be willing to bite tongue repeatedly. Also, must possess the physical stamina of a pack mule and be able to go from zero to 60 mph in three seconds flat in case, this time, the screams from the backyard are not someone just crying wolf. Must be willing to face stimulating technical challenges, such as small gadget repair, mysteriously sluggish toilets and stuck zippers.

Must screen phone calls, maintain calendars and co-ordinate production of multiple homework projects. Must have ability to plan and organize social gatherings for clients of all ages and mental outlooks. Must be willing to be indispensable one minute, an embarrassment the next. Must handle assembly and product safety testing of a half million cheap, plastic toys and battery operated devices.

Must always hope for the best but be prepared for the worst. Must assume final, complete accountability for the quality of the end product.

Responsibilities also include floor maintenance and janitorial work throughout the facility.

POSSIBILITY FOR ADVANCEMENT AND PROMOTION:

Virtually none. Your job is to remain in the same position for years, without complaining, constantly retraining and updating your skills, so that those in your charge can ultimately surpass you.

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:

None required, unfortunately. On-the-job training offered on a continually exhausting basis.

WAGES AND COMPENSATION:

You pay them, offering frequent raises and bonuses. A balloon payment is due when they turn 18 because of the assumption that college will help them become financially independent.

When you die, you give them whatever is left. The oddest thing about this reverse-salary scheme is that you actually enjoy it and wish you could only do more.

BENEFITS:

While no health or dental insurance, no pension, no tuition reimbursement, no paid holidays and no stock

options are offered, job supplies limitless opportunities
for personal growth and free hugs for life if you play
your cards right.

Author Unknown
(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

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PS. Please join me in praying for a quick return of our remaining
soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

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to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send
me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the
weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter
that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites;
reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me
e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention
this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #473

10.24.2005

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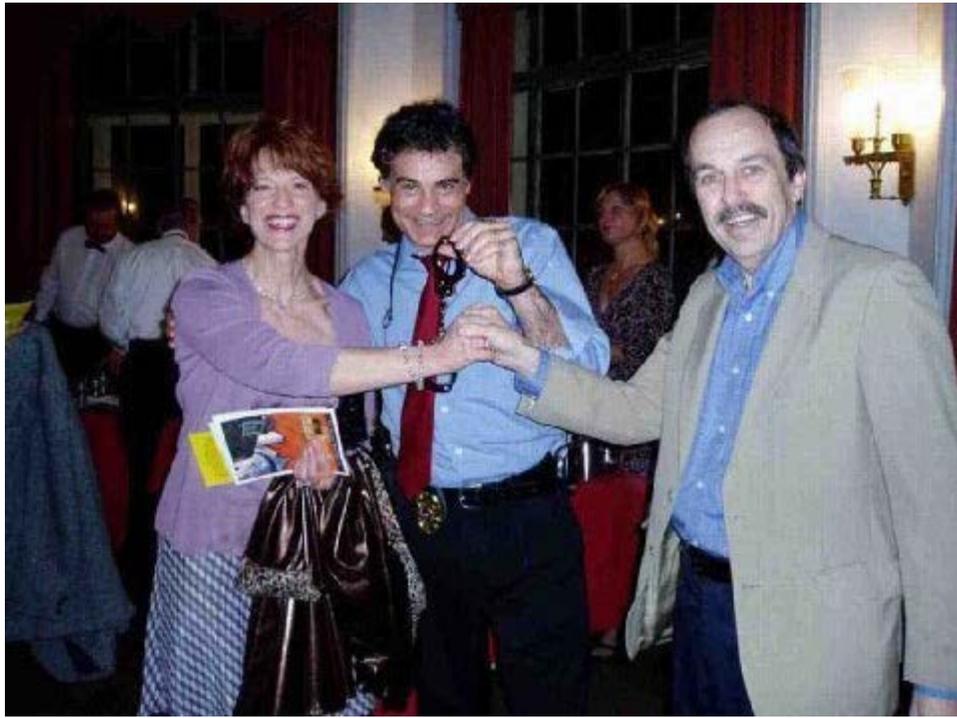
1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had a simply marvelous time at the Alumni Association's Tyler Hall Murder Mystery at Bucks County Community College on Saturday . . . we were among the suspects, too . . . to quote from the program:

Blaine & Cynthia Greenfield

Blaine is the head of the teacher's union and teaches business here at the College. Cynthia is his beautiful bride. Rumor has it that Farnsworth was blackmailing these lovely newlyweds. What it was about or which one was involved is unknown. But what is known is either one of them would do anything to protect the other!

How true . . . and as events unfolded, it turns out that we were the actual murderers . . . see below for actual proof; that's Special Agent Provolone about to handcuff us:



Nearly 20 guests (out of 150 in attendance) managed to figure that out as a result of going around the mansion--Tyler Hall, actually--and getting clues.

Some were easy to obtain; to get others, you had to interview various characters that were located throughout the building . . . our favorite was Mugsy Malone, described as a "loan shark and unsavory criminal figure" . . . he was also a card shark, and to get his clue, you had to beat him in blackjack . . . since we lost the game, we could only get the clue by doing something silly . . . he made me go around several rooms, citing the words to "Mary Had a Little Lamb" . . . Cynthia and another person had to follow, pretending they were sheep and crying out, "Ba, Ba" . . . it was a lot of fun.

Mugsy also did various card tricks throughout the evening . . . one, in particular, mystified many guests . . . it involved his picking out a card we had chosen, supposedly at random . . . even if you were not there, you can see an Internet version of the same trick by clicking:
<http://www.ecardtricks.com/tr00.htm>

KUDOS to the Alumni Association for bringing this event off and, especially, to Linda Soltis, Eileen Zolotorofe, Brian Cohen, Tobi Bruhn, and Nancy Steigerwalt for their roles in making the event the success that it was.

B. Another successful event during the past week was the showing of PAPER CLIPS on campus . . . some 300 folks were in attendance . . . they got to view a moving documentary about how students in Whitwel, TN responded to lessons about the Holocaust with a promise to honor every lost soul by collecting one paper clip for each individual exterminated by the Nazis.

It was a REAL PLEASURE to be able to get so many folks in the

Bucks community to work together to bring this important program to the campus.

I'm most appreciative to the following groups for sponsoring this program: Cultural Affairs Committee, Woman's Center, Student Life Office, and Union Program Board.

In addition, it couldn't have come off without the support of the following individuals who gave both their time and support: Walter Weisenhutter, Joan Weiss, Natalie Kaye, Matt Cipriano, Patty Diienzo, Brooke Leibowitz, Jonathan Lee, Fran Orlando, and Aaron Bond.

Everything seemed to go without a hitch, from the parking to the refreshments to the actual film itself and then to the discussion--led by Lynda S. Goldman, co-chair of the Philadelphia Holocaust Films Series.

If you missed the above showing, make sure you look for it when it becomes available on DVD.

C. Last year, Risa (my daughter) surprised me by giving me a Barbie doll . . . but not just any Barbie doll; this was a Blaine doll!

For those out of the loop, Barbie dumped Ken and chose Blaine as her main squeeze . . . and he was one cool surfer dude, if I do say so myself--sort of like me?

I got a special kick out of Risa's note . . . she urged me "not to take it out of the box, in that it could be worth something" . . . she went on to tell me to put it in my office, so that is where it is now being proudly displayed.

There was only one problem with this gift: It became expensive, in that Cynthia felt out of the loop in not having her own Blaine doll . . . so I had to go out and buy her one that she could unwrap and play with, though I now wonder if she will be interested in doing so any longer as a result of the following news item that was reported by the Associated Press:

Ken may get makeover, try to win back Barbie

NEW YORK (Oct. 20) - Apparently Ken still isn't over Barbie and she's poised to dump her Aussie boyfriend to re-unite with the love of her life.

Almost two years after the closely watched celebrity couple split after a 43-year romance, Ken is considering a makeover in an effort to win his doll baby back.

Mattel made the announcement today. Russell Arons, vice president of marketing at Mattel, would say only that fans might see big changes this northern spring.

"A makeover may be just what Ken needs to step back into the spotlight," Arons said.

A makeover makes sense as a business strategy, said Chris Byrne, a New York-based independent toy consultant.

"Barbie and Ken are such an integral part of our culture and so aligned

with each other, people want to see them together," he said.

In early 2004, Mattel tried to update Barbie's image by having her split with Ken and head to a California beach, where she caught the eye of Blaine, an Australian boogie boarder.

It was just a brief flirtation, though.

"Barbie and Blaine was a great PR stunt, but at the end of the day people want to see Barbie and Ken get back together," Byrne said.

Byrne noted that global sales of Barbie were down in the third quarter.

A Hollywood makeover won't hurt sales of the princess-like Barbies that 4-to 6-year-olds play with and it might help court the 8- to 11-year-olds who have turned to the more fashion-forward Bratz dolls from MGA Entertainment, he said.

This wouldn't be the first time Ken reinvented himself.

In the 1970s and '80s, he took up inline skating and boogied to disco tunes; in the '90s he focused on his careers as a businessman, baseball player, explorer and rock star.

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

This week, it goes to Dr. Al Sternberg . . . he was my professor at Rider University in . . . well, let's just say a long time ago . . . and the guy who most influenced me to enter the field of marketing education.

I've stayed in touch with him ever since my graduation and still appreciate his constant guidance and help in my life . . . what's amazing is that he does this for seemingly all his former students, many of whom are still in touch with him.

Al has also helped many of my present students . . . whenever I need an expert in the field of education or small business, I suggest they contact him . . . and he never fails to help them out, too.

What a joy it was for me to catch up with him on Wednesday when we got together for lunch . . . it seems as if he has not lost one iota of his zest for life!

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2. FYI

To find people, I employ what I like to call the "likeability test." I was open-minded about everybody who came to work at Kinko's. As long as someone could ring a register, he or she could work with us. But I did have to like the person. One of my first criteria for a potential partnership is pretty straightforward: Do I want to hang out with you? do you pass the likeability test? Lots of people don't know how to present themselves to others, how to have a pleasant conversation. This isn't a peripheral issue. I always figured that, once we started working together, we were family. We're going to be spending a lot of time with one another, so we ought to like each other.

SOURCE:

COPY THIS! (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11) by Paul Orfalea and Ann Marsh

FYI, part 2

* Joan in Pennsylvania with an update on her son Saul (who, as was reported in last week's issue, was injured in Iraq):

Alanna called this morning with an update. Saul went into surgery about 11 a.m. this morning. He was in good spirits approaching the surgery. They removed his little finger in this surgery.

I was able to talk to him by around 4 p.m. He was a bit groggy but sounded good. He said that no skin graft was needed and the doctors were optimistic about the healing process. He might be out of the hospital by next weekend.

Darrian is coming to visit his Daddy on Sunday, and Saul is definitely looking forward to that!

Thanks again to all of you.

* And THANKS, too, to the several readers who responded to Lisa in Pennsylvania . . . three different folks were kind enough to share information with her on the births of their premature babies.

* OOPS (my part) . . . last week, I mentioned the fine production at Mercer County Community College of THEY'RE PLAYING OUR SONG . . . what was not so fine was the fact that I gave the wrong name of the lyricist . . . it was Carole Bayer Sager--NOT Singer!

* Murray in New Jersey wrote to add still another variation of this quote from BLAINESWORLD #472:
Shoot for the moon. If you miss, at least you will land among the stars.

Here's the exact quote from Leo Burnett. He has it on all his stationery and on a sign in his Chicago offices.

"When you reach, reach for the stars.
You may not get one
But you won't wind up
With a handful of mud."

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3. Fascination

Little Brian watched, fascinated, as his mother gently rubbed cold cream on her face.

"Why are you rubbing cold cream on your face, Mommy?" he asked.

"To make myself beautiful," said his mother.

A few minutes later, she began removing the cream with a tissue.

"What's the matter?" asked Little Brian. "Giving up?"

4. Reviews ...

A. Cynthia and I most often agree on movies . . . such was the case with DREAMER, a family movie that adults will enjoy as much as kids . . . based on a true story, it is about a horse whose promising future on the racetrack was cut short by a broken leg . . . but because of the faith of a young girl, he makes a comeback that had everybody in the audience cheering at the end.

Kurt Russell and the Dakota Fanning (who continues to amaze because of her youth) were both touching as the horseman and his daughter . . . we also liked the work of just about everybody else in the course, including David Morse, Elisabeth Shue (and why hasn't she been in more films?), Freddy Rodriguez, and Luis Guzman.

Stay until the credits, in that you'll get to see pictures of all the above actors and actresses--something you don't see nearly enough . . . rated PG.

B. MELINDA AND MELINDA is now out in DVD . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #444 follows:

MELINDA AND MELINDA, written and directed by Woody Allen, is a delightful look at two versions of the same story--one tragic, the other comic . . . it is an intelligent film that caused me to smile often and laugh outright whenever Will Ferrell appeared on screen . . . Radha Mitchell was also excellent, taking on the main role in both stories . . . MELINDA AND MELINDA isn't necessarily vintage Allen; however, it certainly is an improvement over many of his latest efforts . . . rated PG-13.

C. Can you imagine flunking second grade? That's what happened to Paul Orfalea, who grew up and struggled to read, write and sit still at a business meeting . . . but rather than give up in failure, he worked with the obstacles life dealt him--he calls his dyslexia and ADHD "learning opportunities"--and managed to grow a 100-square-foot copy shop named Kinko's into a \$1.5 billion-a-year company that FORTUNE named one of the best places in America to work.

He details his story in COPY THIS! (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11), an inspiring tale he wrote with Ann Marsh . . . I was hooked by page 2 when I read how he learned that "somebody, often anybody . . . could do something better than I could," and so the lesson he learned was that you can't do it all yourself, despite the fact that the this is "a difficult, if not impossible, concept for straight-A types to grasp."

The book goes on to provide many other lessons of a similar nature . . . among the ones that I particularly appreciated:

* Getting out to the stores, and to the wide variety of coworkers who peopled them, fueled my imagination. I got out of the office so I could begin looking with my eyes. One time I got a Chinese fortune cookie that said, "Your eyes believe what they see. Your ears believe others." I've never heard a truer statement. This has become a mantra for me ever since. Most

people believe things others tell them, or things they read, as opposed to what they see-or experience-for themselves. I've always trusted my own sight. As a nonreader, this comes naturally to me. To mix a metaphor, I taught myself to smell opportunity with my eyes.

* I have a couple informal rules of thumb I follow when selecting the people I work with, especially our partners. First off, they had to have the ability to save money. Most partners made an initial investment of as little as \$2,000. It wasn't a lot, but it was something. As with a good poker game, everybody had to buy his or her way in. In this way, I could tell at the start whether they were a saver or a spender. I never want to do business with people who can't save. Spenders won't be cautious with their stores' profits. Those are my profits too! I made sure to choose partners who were on time. I can't stand it if people are late. By policy, I don't keep people waiting and I expect the same in return. I make a real effort to return phone calls promptly and to arrive on time everywhere I go. I always asked a potential partner-or anybody I worked with-to do some small thing at the end of our first meeting: to make a call or send a letter. I want to see their follow-through is like. I've found these are reliable screeners of potential business partners, coworkers, and vendors.

* As for myself, I'm still letting my soul catch up with my body. How long will it take? I can't answer that question, but it's a good one to ask. Do you know why children finally outgrow their tendency to ask millions of questions? Not because they've got all the answers. They figure out that it irritates the grown-ups. If you've stopped asking questions, start asking them again. Learn to be immature, at least some of the time. It's taken me my whole life to figure out that I don't have the answers. All I've ever had was a bunch of questions. When you think about it, Kinko's started with a question: How come there's a copy center here at USC and not up at UCSB? Why is that? The most important thing is to keep dreaming, keep playing, and keep asking.

Lastly, I enjoyed Orfalea's Aphorisms in the Appendix--including these:

Happy wife, happy life.

Trust people. If you don't, you have to do everything yourself.

I never wanted to work with people whom I made money on;
I wanted to work with people whom I made money with.

I've always valued thinking hard over working hard.

In your twenties, try everything. In your thirties, figure out what you're good at. In your forties, make money off what you're good at. And in your fifties, do what you want to do.

What is the most successful book in history? It's not the Bible. It's the Yellow Pages. It's filled with success stories.

Success in life is when your kids want to spend time with you when they're adults.

D. Heard *THE ICE QUEEN* by Alice Hoffman, a novel about a lonely librarian whose life changes when she is struck by lightning . . . she enters into an obsessive love affair with another lightning survivor, but what made the story so moving for me was the description of the relationship between the librarian (whose name is never given) and her brother.

Two parts really caught my attention . . . though I can't quote them exactly because I don't have the book to refer to, I was moved by how the librarian learned the best way to appreciate death: to live . . . and how she decided to give a dying person--who, nice guy that I am, I won't mention because I don't want to give away the ending--the one thing that would make a difference to that person, despite failing health and very little money.

The narration by Nancy Travis added to my enjoyment of the book.

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5. VCR alert

A. Cycling machine Lance Armstrong hosts SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE on Saturday at 11:30 p.m. on NBC . . . his betrothed, Sheryl Crow, will handle musical duties.

B. Harrison Ford makes one of his first screen appearances as a killer in a February, 1973 episode of GUNSMOKE on Sunday at 6 p.m. on TV LAND.

C. Michael Fox is on ACTOR'S STUDIO on Sunday at 8 p.m. on BRAVO, talking about his landmark roles in both FAMILY TIES and the BACK TO THE FUTURE FILMS . . . I'll watch, though, because of my appreciation of his work in battling Parkinson's Disease.

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6. Online poll results

In a recent Harris online poll 38,562 men across the US were asked to identify a woman's ultimate fantasy. 97.8% of the respondents said that a woman's ultimate fantasy is to have two men at once.

While this fact has been verified to be true (after all, it was reported on the Internet), it appears that most men do not realize that in the fantasy, one man is cooking and the other is cleaning.

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7. Websites

A. For quite some time, you've been able to comparison shop various online businesses . . . now you can shop the physical world as well, using either or both of the following websites:

The first offers a variety of items from stores in your local area, including multiple grocery stores:

<http://www.cairo.com>

The second also offers details on sales in your area, but because of its ties to newspapers, it focuses its comparisons on stores that advertise in the papers:

<http://www.shoplocal.com>

According to "The Mossberg Solution" in THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (7.27.05, p. D4), Cairo is a "clear winner . . . its search results were better and more accurate . . . and it offered personalization and special features that ShopLocal couldn't match."

Also, "Cairo lets you compare physical store prices to those at stores online. It checks Amazon.com, Shopping.com, Fraggie, and Nextag."

B. Here's a great Halloween website that you'll enjoy, as will your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, etc.

<http://dedge.com/flash/hangman/>

Make sure you have your sound turned on when you go to it.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

As you hopefully know by now, you should ALWAYS feel free to mention this newsletter to your friends, relatives, etc. . . . should they want to subscribe (AT NO COST), all they have to do is go to my homepage . . . then click on "Special Offer" at the bottom . . . it's that simple!

D. Mike Savio, a former student and longtime reader, is an agent with Nationwide Insurance . . . you can check out his services by clicking:

http://nwagent.nationwide.com/agentwebpages/OfficePage.asp?agent=michael_savio.html&Language=en

Methinks you won't go wrong if you do!

NOTE:

If other readers would like me to highlight their websites, please feel free to send them to me . . . kindly include a brief blurb with information on what can be found there.

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8. Computer tip

1. Go to Google:

<http://www.google.com>

2. Type-in the following word: "Failure."

3. Instead of clicking "Google Search," click "I'm Feeling Lucky."

4. Giggle.

5. Spread the word before the people at Google "fix" it.

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9. Where to go on vacation, part 1 of 2

Artists: Painted Desert, Arizona

Athletes: Olympia Heights, Florida

Candy Makers: Carmel, Indiana

College Professors: University City, Missouri

Ecologists: Green Bay, Wisconsin

Firefighters: Smokey Mountains

Fortune tellers: Palm Springs, California

Geologists: Stone Mountain, Georgia

Gossip Columnists: Grapevine, Texas

Helicopter Pilots: Hoover, Alabama

Home Builders: New Castle, Pennsylvania

Jewelers: Pearl City, Hawaii

Landscapers: Garden City, Michigan

Lawyers: Accident, Maryland

Loan Officers: Fairbanks, Alaska

(to be concluded next week)

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10. A quote I like

My wife gave me the best definition of management I've ever heard. She said, "The goal of management is to remove obstacles."--Paul Orfalea in COPY THIS! (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11), a book he co-authored with Ann Marsh

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11. Thought for the day

As readers probably know by now, if I mention a book in four separate sections of any newsletter, that means I REALLY LIKE it . . . such is the case with COPY THIS! (see also Sections 2, 4C and 10) by Paul Orfalea and Ann Marsh, from which I took the following passage:

The issue of franchising played a role in the story of how Kinko's

Japan got its start. In 1988, Hiro Izutsu was a young MBA candidate at the University of Michigan. His employer, Sumitomo Metal Mining Co., Ltd., had sent him to the United States and was footing the bill for his education. For one of his classes, Hiro wrote a paper proposing that Sumitomo and Kinko's form a joint venture to bring Kinko's to Japan. His professor gave him a B+ on the paper. Hiro's story shows yet again that there's little guarantee that straight A's lead to success in life. (In fact, legend has it that when Fred Smith, the founder of FedEx, wrote a paper on an overnight delivery service of his professors at Yale, they gave him a C!) Hiro sent it to me and to his bosses in a very Japanese act of appreciation . He was grateful to Sumitomo for giving him the opportunity to complete the MBA in the United States and he was grateful to Kinko's coworkers for so attentively helping him to prepare the paper for his class. (He was also particularly impressed that the stores stayed open for 24 hours.) . . .

We hired Hiro to work with us for three months in Ventura and then he went back to work with Sumitomo in Japan. Mark, who was in his early thirties, became the president of Kinko's in Japan while he continued to manage my stores.

MY TWO CENTS:

As you can see, the simple act of writing a letter got this person a job . . . this is something sooooo basic, yet very few students even think about it . . . if you're a professor or student (or know of one), please consider doing what I now require my students to do in every paper that they submit to me: 1) Interview somebody in your present or desired field; 2) Send that person a thank you immediately after the interview; and 3) After you get your paper back, send that person a copy of your paper . . . THIS WORKS with respect to making contacts, networking, etc.

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12. Advance planning department

A. Activist Joe Berry to Speak at CCP for Campus Equity Week

For this year's Campus Equity Week, the Faculty & Staff Federation of Community College of Philadelphia is sponsoring a talk by labor activist Joe Berry, author of RECLAIMING THE IVORTY TOWER: ORGANIZING ADJUNCTS TO CHANGE HIGHER EDUCATION. The event will be in the Teaching Center on Friday, October 28, 12:00 noon-1:30 p.m.

Berry, one of the country's foremost advocates for adjunct and contingent (non-tenure track) faculty, is Chair of the Chicago Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor (COCAL), and a member of the national Coordinating Committee for Campus Equity Week. He has been a staff organizer for both the California Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the Illinois Education Association (NEA).

Joe is also a former CCP part-time history instructor, having taught at the college in 1999 while co-authoring a Keystone Research Center study of contingent faculty in Pennsylvania's community colleges.

As those who know Joe can attest, he is an animated and passionate

individual whose talk is sure to challenge and inspire.

The event is cosponsored by Bucks County Community College Federation of Teachers, Graduate Employees Together-UPENN (GET-UP), Montgomery County Community College Faculty Federation, Temple Adjuncts Organizing Committee, and Temple Association of University Professionals (TAUP).

Light refreshments will be served; feel free to bring your lunch. For more information, contact Barry George at 215.977.7785 or bgeorge@ccp.edu

B. 'Day for All Women' Features Workshops to Enlighten, Empower

Leslie Stiles, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Commission for Women, will deliver the keynote address at the 23rd annual Day for All Women conference Saturday, November 5, at Bucks County Community College in Newtown, PA.

The day runs from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. It is designed to empower women to reach their full potential.

The fee, including three workshops, continental breakfast, and lunch: \$25 before October 21, \$30 at door.

For more information, please click:
<http://www.bucks.edu/dfaw>

Or call to register: 215.968.8188.

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PS. Don't forget to enjoy Halloween on Sunday and while you're at it, think of me when you have some candy (hey, you're entitled!) . . . also, please join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane Katrina's wrath, as well as for a quick return of our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #472

10.17.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I loved THEY'RE PLAYING OUR SONG, which we saw at The Kelsey Theater (609.586.4800, ext. 3566) at Mercer County Community College this past Friday . . . in fact, we urge you to see it anytime this coming weekend because in our opinion, it was the BEST PRODUCTION we've ever seen at Kelsey--and we've seen several very fine ones.

The show, based on a book by Neil Simon, has great music by Marvin Hamlisch and equally great lyrics by Carole Bayer Singer . . . it is about two unlucky-in-love songwriters who find each other, first as partners in song, then as partners in love.

Jonathan Knapp and Sonia Walsk played the two leading roles . . . I haven't seen them in other local productions before, but I'll make sure to see them in anything in the future . . . they both had superb voices, and their acting was both funny and touching.

Six other actors and actresses, all billed as "alter egos," added to the evening's enjoyment . . . but one, in particular, stood out: Diane Wargo . . . you could just tell you were in for something special by her enthusiastic greeting before the play even began . . . she also served as the show's choreographer.

B. Each issue, I typically run a message (in the PS at the end of Section 12) about joining me in some sort of prayer; e.g., for victims of Hurricane Katrina, to get our soldiers back from Iraq, etc.

This issue, I'm going to get more specific because of updates I have heard from two readers/friends . . . I'm also going to ask you to keep both of the following individuals in your prayers, regardless of your religious beliefs:

* The first involves news about the son (Saul) of Joan and Fred Weiss . . . in case you have not heard it yet:

As you may now know, Saul was wounded in Iraq on Tuesday. We know some info and the areas wounded are his right eye and socket and his right hand. Luckily he was wearing full body armor and goggles when a suicide bomber attacked his truck. Alanna decided that we should be here to greet him and talk to doctors before he goes under surgery--so we hopped an 8:15 p.m. flight last night from Philadelphia to Frankfurt.

We have arrived at the hospital and are being put up at the Fisher House I - room 1R. Our CIV/Civilian Access Line (direct to our room, with an answering machine) is #06371-61833-21, Military DSN # 486-6641.

We also have good Internet access. The flight was long but uneventful. The USO helped us get a shuttle to the base, and we had a very long tour of all of the bases in this area. The only problem is that Saul got bumped from his flight and is not here yet. We are told that is sort of a good thing, it means he is stable.

There is a website that we will access as soon as Saul gets here. It is called the Caring Bridge and is sort of like a blog that we can access to update everyone on Saul's condition. I will set it up access at:

<http://www.caringbridge.com/visit/saulweiss>

I don't have my address book with me, so please pass along this info.

Thanks.

Love,Joan

* The second involves the birth of Stephen, son of Lisa Zaglin . . . he was born on October 1, although Lisa's due date wasn't until Christmas . . . he weighed 2 lbs, 13.6 oz. at 16" long.

Lisa has indicated to me that she'd welcome hearing about success stories involving other preemies, in that she finds them reassuring.

C. Many readers report that they skip around each issue, and I welcome that . . . in case you haven't figured it out, jokes are most often found in Sections 3, 6 and 9 . . . reviews of books and movies are in Section 4 . . . websites are in Section 7, and there's a computer tip in Section 8 . . . I try to choose a thought for the day (in Section 11) that you might find inspiring, as well as include a quote in Section 10 that you hopefully haven't seen before--or at least not too often . . . Section 2 is devoted to FYI-type material, and in case you haven't figured it out, Section 1 contains news about Cynthia and me, along with some other observations and tidbits that I like to share.

Section 12, the final one, mentions upcoming events . . . I realize that many of you may miss it, so here's a SPECIAL INVITE to something this Thursday that you will enjoy if you can make it:

PAPER CLIPS, a moving documentary, is the story of how

students in Whitwel, TN responded to lessons about the Holocaust with a promise to honor every lost soul by collecting one paper clip for each individual exterminated by the Nazis.

It will be shown at the Bucks County Community College campus . . .

On: Thursday, October 20

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Library Auditorium

Afterwards, there will be a discussion led by Lynda S. Goldman, co-chair of the Philadelphia Holocaust Films Series.

Students, faculty and friends from the non-Bucks community are welcome to attend.

There is NO CHARGE for this outstanding event, which is being sponsored by the Cultural Affairs Committee, Union Program Board, Student Life Office, and The Woman's Center.

**** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD ****

This week, it goes to Kitty Getlik--the talented artistic director of the aforementioned Kelsey Theatre at Mercer County Community College in West Windsor, NJ.

She has consistently put on a wide range of shows at Mercer, including the aforementioned THEY'RE PLAYING OUR SONG (see Section 1A) . . . in addition, she has been involved in many of the summer programs at Washington Crossing State Park . . . and somehow she has even managed to find the time to act in several local productions and teach Introduction to Theater.

For more information about how you can have a fine evening of entertainment at a most reasonable price, please find out more about Mercer's Kelsey Theatre by clicking:

<http://www.kelseyatmccc.org>

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2. FYI

This is how the Scripting Process works: Pretend that you are a writer and that whatever you write will be performed exactly as you write it. Your only job is to describe, in detail, everything, exactly as you want it to be.

As you are having fun playing this game, and are not taking it too seriously, any of your hindering beliefs are less likely to be activated. In other words, by pretending that your typewriter, word processor, computer, or notebook is magical, and that whatever you write can be realized, you accomplish the two things that are necessary in the achievement of anything: You focus the lens of your desire, and you offer no resistance.

This process will help you be more specific about your desires, and, with that greater clarity about exactly what you do desire, you will

feel the power of this specific focus. The longer you concentrate on a subject, and the more detail you give to it, the faster the Energy moves. And, with practice, you can actually feel the momentum of your desire; you can feel the Universal Forces converging. Often, you will be able to know when you are upon the brink of a breakthrough of a manifestation just by virtue of the way you feel.

Because of the whimsical approach of this game, you are less likely to bring to your point of focus thoughts of doubt or disbelief. As you stay light and playful, you will be able to maintain a specific focus in the absence of resistance, and again, you will have achieved the perfect balance for the creation of anything.

If you play the game often, and enjoy it when you play it, you will begin to see amazing evidence of the power of the game. Things that you have written will begin to occur in your experience as if you are directing a play upon a stage. And when someone you are interacting with says words to you that you have scripted, you will be delighted as you recognize the power of your own intent.

SOURCE:

ASK AND IT IS GIVEN (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11)
by Esther and Jerry Hicks

FYI, part 2

* Anonymous in New York kindly sent along this legitimate (I guarantee it!) offer that you can use and, also, feel free to share with others:

Lord & Taylor
Friends & Family Savings Pass

Days are getting shorter and colder--and it's time to let your friends and family share in all the fabulous merchandise Lord & Taylor has to offer.

WE'VE GOT THE HOTTEST TRENDS,
THE BEST NAMES
AND TERRIFIC SAVINGS
FOR HER, FOR HIM AND FOR THE KIDS

We're offering a 20% SAVINGS PASS on regular and sale merchandise*, all over the store, all day for 4 days:
Thursday, October 20th through Sunday, October 23rd
(And the savings are even more special . . . 10% off cosmetics and fragrances!)

Just forward this e-mail to the friends and family in your address book, and everyone will save 20%.

Simply CLICK THE LINK BELOW to print your EXTRA 20% SAVINGS PASS now:
<http://www.lordandtaylor.com/friendsandfamily>

* Jean in Pennsylvania:
It pays to read BLAINESWORLD.

For example, your excerpt from Don Gallegos had an immediate impact. I was reading your newsletter when my husband Ken called from the road.

He was about to call on a client who was extremely irate yesterday. Of course, it was a misunderstanding and the client was in the wrong, and Ken knew it. I read him part of the excerpt. He called me back a half-hour later telling me those tips helped him calm the customer and regain the sale! (Guess what I ordered for Ken's birthday? The book itself.)

Thanks again!

* Warren in New Jersey:

I actually maintain a file of inspirational messages to pull out and use judiciously as needed when I need to motivate my team (at work). The shoot for the moon quote (Shoot for the moon. If you miss, at least you will land among the stars.) is one I have on my list, and have it attributed to inspirational author Jill McElmore.

* I'm most appreciative of Janet in New York, my resident grammarian . . . she correctly pointed out that I made the following mistake--in boldface, if you can see it; otherwise, on line 5--in a recent newsletter:

Dale Larson, the community-minded publisher of the aforementioned paper, recently announced that the COURIER TIMES has launched a joint effort (with the Salvation Army) to help rebuild the community devastated by Hurricane Katrina . . . **should you want to join Cynthia and I** in supporting this effort, make your checks payable to: Bucks Katrina Relief Project/Salvation Army . . . and mail them to: Katrina Relief Project, Bucks County Courier Times, 8400 Rt. 13, Levittown, PA 19057.

Please note the phrase above that I bolded; it should be "**should you want to join Cynthia and me**" . . . to test this out, omit "Cynthia and."

Another test you can use is by substituting other pronouns. You would not write should you want to join **WE** (the subjective case); you would write should you want to join **US** (the objective case).

You would write "**should you want to join me**" (the objective case). That's how you decide that the correct phrasing should be "**should you want to join Cynthia and me.**"

Enjoy reading your newsletter.

MY TWO CENTS:

And I enjoy the feedback from Janet and others, especially in the rare instances (I wish, I wish) when it points out a mistake that I made . . . also, it gave me the chance to repeat the information about the COURIER TIMES fund.

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3. Two guys

Two guys seated on an airplane noticed a Catholic nun sitting in front of them. One of the men says to the other with a wink, "I was going to go to Ireland until I found out that half the country is Catholic so I don't want to go there".

The other man says, "We'll how about Poland, then?"

The first man says, "No way, Poland is loaded with those Catholics too."

The other man suggests a trip to the U.S., but his companion says, "The Catholics have spread out over the whole country. Every time I turn around there I bump into one."

The men are watching and can see that the nun is fidgeting and getting kind of agitated about their conversation.

The fellow who started the teasing decides to really get her mad and says, "I really wanted to go to Italy, but that place is crawling with Catholics, what with the Pope there and all."

At this the nun has had it and finally turns around in her seat and sweetly says to the men, "Why don't you both go to hell? I hear that there aren't any Catholics there."

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4. Reviews ...

A. THE PRIZE WINNER OF DEFIANCE, OHIO is not a film likely to win any prizes . . . it is the real-life drama about a woman who raised 10 children by entering and winning numerous contests . . . she had to, though, because she received virtually no help from her alcoholic husband.

There was a very real "feel" for the 1950s, and Julianne Moore and Woody Harrelson were both fine as the leading characters . . . Laura Dern was wasted in a part that seems to have been just about cut out of the final print . . . however, except for the ending, PRIZE WINNER didn't particularly move me--despite the fact that I kept wanting it to do so . . . rated PG-13.

B. MONSTER-IN-LAW is now out in DVD . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #451 follows:

Enjoyed MONSTER-IN-LAW, the comedy about a woman (Jennifer Lopez) looking for Mr. Right . . . the only problem is that when she finds him, she must also deal with his mother (Jane Fonda; see also Section 4C) . . . its certainly nothing profound; in fact, parts are downright stupid . . . yet I liked seeing Fonda's return to screen after a 15-year absence, and both Lopez and Wanda Sykes were on target with their performances . . . the ending was particularly sweet . . . rated PG-13.

C. Some books tend to grow on you the more you think about them . . . that was certainly the case with ASK AND IT IS GIVEN (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11) by Esther and Jerry Hicks.

A friend told me about it, and I remember that I refrained from getting a copy because it seemed a bit "out there" for me . . . after all, it talks about a nonphysical entity named Abraham . . . yet

when I reread the subtitle, LEARNING TO MANIFEST YOUR DESIRES, I decided that maybe there was something in it for me--and I'm glad that I did.

Though the first half dragged a bit (and was perhaps a bit too theoretical for me), the second half came alive with 22 powerful processes designed to help anybody achieve his or her goals . . . in doing so, the authors contend that it is "your birthright to live a life filled with everything that is good," and they show you how to attain that goal.

One approach that I particularly enjoyed says you should write out a list of Things I will Do Today. Then, on the right side of a piece of paper, put down Things I Would like Universe to do. Next select only those things that you absolutely intend to do today and do them.

There were several other memorable passages; among a few of them:

There is no desire that anyone holds for any other reason than that they believe they will feel better in the achievement of it. Whether it is a material object, a physical state of being, a relationship, a condition, or a circumstance--at the heart of every desire is the desire to feel good. And so, the standard of success in life is not the things or the money--the standard of success is absolutely the amount of joy you feel.

With only a few seconds of focusing your attention on a subject, you activate the vibration of that subject within you, and immediately the Law of Attraction begins to respond to that activation. The longer you keep your attention focused on something, the easier it becomes for you to continue upon it because you are attracting, through the Law of Attraction, other thoughts or vibrations that are the essence of the thought you began with.

Every time you appreciate something, every time you praise something, every time you feel good about something, you are telling the Universe: "More of this, please." You need never make another verbal statement of this intent, and if you are mostly in a state of appreciation, all good things will flow to you.

D. Heard MY LIFE SO FAR, written and read by Jane Fonda (see also Section 4B) . . . it is an extremely entertaining autobiography of the activist/feminist/actress/exercise guru that seems to take an objective look at her life--something that is so rare in books of this type.

I gained a much better appreciation of the person from listening, particularly with respect to her controversial participation in protesting the Vietnam War . . . it gave me a much better appreciation of what actually happened and, also, made me see even more similarities to what is now happening in Iraq.

Fonda certainly doesn't shy away from naming names . . . some, such as James Franciscus, come across favorably . . . others, Ted Turner perhaps most prominently, are people you'd certainly not want in your life.

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5. VCR alert

A. THE COLBERT SHOW features Stephen Colbert, THE DAILY SHOW'S correspondent, telling his guests why their opinions are just plain wrong . . . weeknights at 11:30 p.m. on Comedy Central.

B. WOMEN ROCK! OUR JOURNEY WITH MELISSA ETHERIDGE has the singer taking the stage to recall her experiences (in battling breast cancer) through stories and song . . . Tuesday at 11 p.m. on Lifetime.

C. DESTINATION AMERICA, a four-hour PBS series on immigration, begins this Wednesday at 9 p.m. and concludes the following Wednesday at the same time. . THE WALL STREET JOURNAL calls this program "a winner" . . . check local listings since PBS dates and times tend to vary.

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6. First date

On their first date, Joe took Rose to the carnival. When he asked her what she wanted to do first, Rose replied, "Get weighed."

So Joe took her to the man with the scale who guesses your weight. He looked at Rose and said, "One hundred and twenty pounds." Since Rose weighed in at one seventeen, she collected a prize.

Next they went on the roller coaster. When the ride was finished, Joe asked Rose what she wanted to do next. "Get weighed," she said. So they went back to the man with the scale, who of course guessed Rose's weight correctly. Leaving without a prize, they went for a ride on the merry-go-round. After they got off, Joe asked Rose what she wanted to do next. "I want to get weighed!" she said again.

Now Joe began to think this girl was quite strange and decided to end the evening quickly. He left her at the door with a quick handshake.

Rose's roommate was waiting up for her return and asked how the evening went.

"Wousy!" Rose replied.

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7. Websites

A. Walt in New Jersey wrote to tell me that he: Just joined Angies List. The way you spread the word, this website would be a natural for you. To see for yourself, please click: <http://www.angieslist.com>

It allows you to comment on the services you receive and to review and pick your own contractors.

B. This display of positive images and messages may help lift you up today:http://www.inlibertyandfreedom.com/Flash/Think_It_Over.swf

My favorite line from the website above is: "Search for knowledge, read more, sit on your front porch and admire the view without paying attention to the needs."

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click:<http://www.blaineworld.net>

THANKS to Dan Becker, my webmaster, who has done a great job putting past issues back on the website . . . just click above, then Newsletter, Past issues, and you'll be taken to an area where you can see the past month's issues . . . more will be added.

Best of all, if you go to any past issue, you'll be able to "jump" from one section to the next--much like I plan I'd like to do with future issues of BLAINESWORLD.

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8. Computer tip

You ever complete a form online and find out that you can't get to all the boxes? You then try to maximize the screen and that doesn't work . . . nor does using your up and down arrows.

This recently happened to me when I attempted to order something . . . try as I might, I couldn't complete the whole form . . . by accident, I stumbled across the Tab key . . . using it enabled me to easily get to all parts of the form.

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9. Van Gogh's family tree

His dizzy aunt . . . Verti Gogh
The brother who ate prunes . . . Gotta Gogh
The brother who worked at a convenience store . . . Stop 'n Gogh
The grandfather from Yugoslavia . . . U Gogh
The cousin from Illinois . . . Chica Gogh
His magician uncle . . . Where-diddy Gogh
His Mexican cousin . . . Ameer Gogh
The Mexican cousin's American half-brother . . . Gring Gogh
The nephew who drove a stage coach . . . Wells-far Gogh
The constipated uncle . . . Cant Gogh
The ballroom dancing aunt . . . Tang Gogh
The bird lover uncle . . . Flamin Gogh
His nephew psychoanalyst . . . E Gogh
The fruit loving cousin . . . Man Gogh
An aunt who taught positive thinking . . . Way-to Gogh
The little bouncy nephew . . . Poe Gogh
A sister who loved disco . . . Go Gogh
His niece who travels in a van . . . Winnie Bay Gogh

And there ya Gogh!

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10. A quote I like

Choosing a different thought will always produce a different emotional response. So you could say, "I will deliberately choose my thoughts so that I can feel better." That would be a good decision for you to make. An even better decision, and really, an easier one to make is: "I want to feel good, so I will try to feel good by choosing a thought that does feel good."--Esther and Jerry Hicks in ASK AND IT IS FORGIVEN (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11)

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11. Thought for the day

When I mention a book four separate times in a newsletter, you can tell I REALLY like it . . . that's certainly true of ASK AND IT IS FORGIVEN (see also Sections 2, 4C and 10) by Esther and Jerry Hicks . . . they describe something called the Rampage of Appreciation Process, which methinks is something we could all apply:

Begin by looking around your immediate environment and gently noticing something that pleases you. Try to hold your attention on this pleasing object as you consider how wonderful, beautiful, or useful it is. And as you focus upon it longer, your positive feelings about it will increase.

Now, notice your improved feeling, and be appreciative of the way you feel. Then, once your good feeling is noticeably stronger than when you began, look around your environment and choose another pleasing object for your positive attention.

Make it your objective to choose objects of attention that easily evoke your appreciation, for this is not a process of finding something troubling and fixing it; this is a process of practicing the higher vibrations. The longer your focus upon things that feel good to you, the easier it is for you to maintain those vibrational frequencies, the more the Law of Attraction will deliver to you other thoughts, experiences, people, and things that match your practiced vibration.

Since it is your primary intention, as you move through your day, to find things to appreciate, you are practicing a vibration of less resistance, and you are making your connection to your own Source Energy stronger. . . .

For example, while standing in line at the post office, you may think:
This is a very nice building.
It's great that they keep it so clean.
I like how friendly that postal worker is.
I appreciate the way that the mother is interacting with her child.
That's a good-looking jacket.
My day is really going well.

While driving to work, you may think:
I love my car.
This new freeway is wonderful.
Even though it's raining, I'm making very good time.
I love how reliable my vehicle is.
I'm grateful for my job.

You could focus more specifically on any of your objects of appreciation and find even more reasons to feel appreciation. For example:

This is a very nice building.
There's so much more parking here than at the old post office.
There are more counters here, and the line moves much faster than before.
The big windows make this room feel much airier.
This new freeway is wonderful.
There are no traffic lights to slow me down.
I can travel so much faster than before.
This drive offers such a beautiful view.

Once you become oriented toward looking for things to appreciate, you will find that your day will be filled with such things. Your thoughts and feelings of appreciation will flow from you naturally. And often, while in the midst of a genuine feeling of appreciation for someone or something, you will feel ripples of goose bumps-those sensations are confirming your alignment with your Source.

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12. Advance planning department

LAST CHANCE:

If you want to participate in a fun event sponsored by the Alumni Association, in conjunction with the College's Foundation, plan to attend the Tyler Hall Murder Mystery . . . Saturday, October 22, at Bucks from 7 to 10 p.m. . . . enjoy an evening of murder and suspense in the Tyler mansion use your detective skills to untangle to web of deception and expose the culprit . . . hors d'oeuvres, dinner and dessert will be served.

\$60 person/\$100 per couple. Tickets are selling fast and space is limited.

Reservations:
215.968.8224 or via e-mail: alumni@bucks.edu

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PS. Make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me

e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention
this missive to your friends.

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Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #471

10.10.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I joined friends for dinner at Cafe Antonio (215.428.1733) in Morrisville, PA . . . as always, we had a great meal, and because of the enormous portions, we'll have enough for a second meal . . . the place has live music on weekends . . . we liked the duo; however, the restaurant is already quite noisy . . . the musicians make it even harder to hear the conversation even at your own table.

From there, we went around the corner to The Heritage Center (215.295.3694)--also in Morrisville . . . Cole Porter's HIGH SOCIETY was the production . . . it featured an enthusiastic cast and many fine singers, though the story itself left us flat . . . we just didn't "feel" for any of the characters . . . another problem was that many of the songs--some from other Porter productions--felt like they were just thrown into this show.

Nevertheless, Jackie Laurence was excellent as Tracy Samantha Lord . . . and Joe Doyle as Uncle Willie stole virtually every scene he was in.

B. On Friday night, I joined several of my fellow union officers at Bucks County Community College to attend the AFT-Pennsylvania Fall Higher Education Dinner at Fisher's Tudor House (215.244.9777) in Bensalem, PA . . . the food and camaraderie were both fine . . . and perhaps best of all was the chair message I received before dinner.

Also, I got to find out what was happening at other area colleges . . . my conclusion: we're doing just fine, especially compared to what's happening elsewhere.

There were two interesting speakers:

1) Rep. Larry Curry (D-Montgomery) of the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania who gave a legislative update; and

2) Ed Muri, director of the AFT Research and Information Services Department, who gave a national perspective on the Academic Bill of Rights.

C. Earlier in the week, on Monday, I presented two workshops to the ERAPPA (Eastern Region Association of Higher Education Facilities) Conference in Atlantic City, NJ . . . the first was on "Positioning: Differentiating Yourself from the Norm," and the second was on "Conflict Resolution" . . . they both went well, at least in my humble opinion, and readers are urged to keep me in mind when and if they need a speaker for their next conference and/or meeting.

In addition, I got to attend a mesmerizing presentation by Billy Riggs (see also Section 11). . . he bills himself as the "world's first dis-illusionist," and he wowed all those in attendance with several amazing tricks and a powerful, inspirational message.

Should you want to learn more about Riggs, please click:

<http://www.billyriggs.com>

Perhaps the high spot of my day was the lunch I had with Murray Raphael, my longtime friend and marketing guru . . . he met me at the conference and from there, we went for delicious cheese steaks at the White House ((609.345.8599)--also in Atlantic City . . . this is a landmark institution that Al Gore visited after he lost the presidency . . . the next day his picture appeared in the papers with the headline, "Gore makes it to the White House!"

We then went briefly to the Atlantic City Aquarium (609.348.2880), a facility that Murray had a big hand in developing . . . next time you're in that area and with children or grandchildren, do stop by for a fun and educational look into more than 100 varieties of fish and marine animals . . . there's a 750-gallon touch tank that allows visitors to handle green, horseshoes, hermit and spider crabs, sea urchins, seastars, common periwinkle, channel and knobbed whelk, horse and blue mussels, and common shore shrimp.

The Aquarium is located in Atlantic City's historic Gardner's Basin, where you can also take advantage of daily sightseeing cruises, fishing, free parking and dockage (based on availability), and three restaurants . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.oceanlifecenter.com/>

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

This week, it goes to Doug Burak--director of IT Security at Bucks.

He is one of those rare guys who gets back to you with an answer to a question, seemingly before you even finish getting it to him.

Whenever I've had a computer problem that appeared to defy solution, Doug has been there to help me solve it. I've always admired his competence, as well as his willingness to go out of the way for me when it was required.

2. FYI

I have always told our people that the best way to handle an irate customer or any irate person is to do the following: When people are mad, and I mean really mad . . . the first thing you do is AGREE with them. It drives them nuts! By agreeing with them, you will often immediately calm them down and together you can work out any problems.

SOURCE:

WIN THE CUSTOMER, NOT THE ARGUMENT (see also Section 4C) by Don Gallegos

FYI, part 2

THANKS the many readers who responded to my inquiry about calling Cynthia "my beautiful bride" . . . here are just some of the e-mails I received on the topic:

* Terri in Indiana:

I think calling Cynthia your beautiful bride is positively delightful! She will be your beautiful bride even after 50 years of marriage, which I hope you reach. Lots of people live to be over 100 these days!

* Yvonna in Pennsylvania:

Merriam-Webster defines it:

A woman just married or about to be married.

Cynthia fits the just married category. So how long is just married?

* Kandi in Arizona:

Sure, groom is to bride, as husband is to wife. I think it's charming you think of her as your "beautiful bride." If Cynthia likes it along with you, that's really all that matters, even 30 years from now. If there is one thing in life you can personalize, it's your own marriage. Be forewarned, though, when you start calling her your wife. Be prepared to answer: what changed? We women don't miss a beat, 'ya know.

* Anonymous in Pennsylvania:

Don't listen to "Wenda in Wyoming." I think it's romantic when my husband calls me his "beautiful bride." We'll be celebrating our 12th wedding anniversary Sunday and dated for 10 years prior to that. Being called a bride makes a woman feel beautiful and young and recalls the happiest day of her life.

* Carol in Pennsylvania:

I think that is LOVELY that you call Cynthia your "beautiful bride." In doing so, I believe, that you will continue to be in the newlywed stage of your relationship. Why end such a wonderful time?

* Denise in New Jersey:

My Father in law referred to my mother in law as his "bride" for 55 years. And he told that to anyone and everyone!!! Nothing wrong with that, and it's a reflection of your respect and devotion to her.

* Dana in Pennsylvania:

I think it's a lovely thought and gesture to call Cynthia "my beautiful bride." However, it IS true that she is now your beautiful wife

and should be elevated to the appropriate title. A woman is a bride on her wedding day and after that event, she is your wife.

* Sue in Pennsylvania:

I think you should call her whatever makes you and her happy, although wife probably makes more sense than bride. I don't think I would refer to my husband as my handsome groom . . . handsome husband, yes!!!!

* Maryann in Pennsylvania:

I think the use of your beautiful bride is so wonderful. I am so happy for both of you. It sounds like you really love her.

MY TWO CENTS:

I do, I do!

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3. The considerate son

There was a man who traveled all around the world. Every city he stopped in he would buy something for his mother and send it to her.

On one such stop, he found a parrot that spoke 30 different languages. He immediately bought it and sent it home to his mother.

A few days later he calls his mother. "Did you like the parrot?" he asked her.

"Oh yes," she replied. "It was delicious."

"WHAT!" the man cried. "You ate it! That parrot wasn't for you to eat! It spoke 30 languages!"

The mother paused for a moment and then said, "So why didn't he say something?"

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4. Reviews ...

A. I very much liked Jennifer Weiner's second novel, IN HER SHOES . . . it has now been made into a movie (with the same title) that Cynthia and I found most entertaining . . . though it might be described as a "chick flick," methinks that guys will like it too . . . Cameron Diaz and Toni Collette play two sisters with little in common except for their size 8 1/2 feet . . . they are both excellent, as is a surprisingly subdued Shirley MacLaine as their grandmother . . . IN HER SHOES will have you laughing, in spots and shedding some tears at others . . . rated PG-13.

B. THE SISTERHOOD OF THE TRAVELING PANTS is now out in DVD . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #456 follows:

Cynthia and I really enjoyed THE SISTERHOOD OF THE TRAVELING PANTS, the movie based on the best-selling young adult book by

Anne Brashares . . . it is the touching tale of four best friends who spend their first summer apart from one another and to keep in touch, they share a magical pair of jeans that fits each of them . . . though it might well be labeled a "chick flick," methinks that guys will like it too--particularly if they have daughters or granddaughters . . . rated PG.

C. Customers can often be a real pain . . . Don Gallegos does not dispute this fact, but the supermarket executive (with over 30 years of experience in the field) tells you that you MUST always remember the fact that "the customer is not always right . . . but she is always your customer."

Furthermore, in his excellent WIN THE CUSTOMER, NOT THE ARGUMENT (see also Section 2), Gallegos urges readers to remember that even "wrong customers spend money" . . . so the key is to provide folks with the best possible service to keep them coming back to your store.

Gallegos presents numerous examples that apply to virtually any business . . . I particularly liked his point about it being important to not show the customer that you are right and she is wrong, but rather to make sure that employees help a customer even if they are sure the customer is wrong . . . that way, it is likely that both the customer and the employee will end up satisfied.

There were many interesting tidbits in the book; among them:
* Customers would write compliments on these cards as well as complaints. Our system was such that EVERY card, regardless if it was a compliment or complaint, earned a phone call from one of the management teams within the store.

* Capital Grill is a restaurant in Denver. When you make a reservation they ask if you are celebrating a special occasion and if there is anything extra you would like while you are at the restaurant. When we go there for dinner, they treat us like guests, not customers. Recently, a guest pulled up in front of their free valet parking and told the parking attendant not to take the car too far because it was low on gas. Guess what--the attendant put gas in the car for the customer.

* One day, a woman wanted Albertson's private label mayonnaise (one of our competitors), so our manager went to Albertson's supermarket and purchased a case of their mayonnaise. Then he called the woman, telling her that, from now on, when she wanted a jar of Albertson's private label mayonnaise she would be able to obtain it at his office.

He told her that all she had to do was to visit our store and ask the clerk to get the Albertson's mayonnaise for her.

"And," he added, "It's cheaper here."

You can order WIN THE CUSTOMER, NOT THE ARGUMENT
by clicking:

http://www.raphel.com/books_tapes.html

You won't be disappointed!

D. I heard YOU CAN HEAL YOUR LIFE AFFIRMATION KIT, a marvelous CD written and read by Louise L. Hay . . . as she suggests

on the cover, "listen to this CD as often as possible, and let the ideas permeate your consciousness until they become a part of you."

And I've been doing just that since a friend lent it to me . . . though it is only a little more than an hour in length, it has more useful suggestions than many other programs that are far longer.

For example:

Say affirmations in the present tense, not in the future. Such as, "I have" and "I am."

Life doesn't suck. It is your thinking that sucks.

The more you talk about problems, the more you anchor them into place.

When you start something, keep your affirmations to yourself.

If you say, "I have no creativity," it will live with you the rest of your life."

Ask those you love, "How can I love you more?"

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5. VCR alert

A. I haven't watched COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF yet, but just might on Tuesday at 9 p.m. on ABC because that's when the VP choice of Geena Davis, the always interesting Peter Coyote, emerges.

B. I also haven't seen ER for quite some time, but several new staffers might make we want to revisit County General this season . . . Kristen Johnson started as a nurse manager on October 6, John Leguizamo plays a competitive, sharpshooting M.D. beginning on October 20 and John Stamos plays a flirty med student/paramedic debuting on November 10 . . . Thursdays at 9 p.m. on NBC.

C. The episode of GHOST WHISPERER about a ghost who's reluctant to leave his grieving fiancée promises to be a real tearjerker . . . Friday at 8 p.m. on CBS.

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6. No luck

A man walked into a therapist's office looking very depressed. "Doc, you've got to help me. I can't go on like this."

"What's the problem?" the doctor inquired.

"Well, I'm 35 years old, and I still have no luck with the ladies. No matter how hard I try, I just seem to scare them away."

"My friend, this is not a serious problem. You just need to work on your self-esteem. Each morning, I want you to get up

and run to the bathroom mirror. Tell yourself that you are a good person, a fun person, and an attractive person. But say it with real conviction. Within a week. you'll have women buzzing all around you."

The man seemed content with this advice and walked out of the office a bit excited. Three weeks later he returned with the same downtrodden expression on his face. "Did my advice not work?" asked the doctor.

"It worked all right. For the past several weeks I've enjoyed some of the best moments in my life with the most fabulous looking women."

"So, what's your problem?"

"I don't have a problem," the man replied. "My wife does."

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7. Websites

A. The following website is called the Megapenny Project. It teaches you about how a million and a billion really equate. These numbers are thrown around so often that they have lost their true value. To see for yourself, please click:

<http://www.kokogiak.com/megapenny/>

You'll learn that ten million cents laid all out flat, side-by-side, like a huge carpet of pennies, would nearly cover one acre of ground. Or that one billion pennies could stack up against the size of five school buses. And by the way, only in North America and the general scientific community is this number (1,000,000,000) called a "billion." Most European countries call this number either "one thousand million" or in some cases, a "milliard."

B. In the need for a laugh? Then click-on this website for a series of animations that present variations of print jokes:

<http://themaids.net/>

If you like them, they are FREE to distribute and save as long as they are not altered in any way.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

To see the many books I've reviewed and generally enjoyed, go to Blaine's Best (on the left) and then letter "O" . . . check the second paragraph there, and you'll be taken to my reviews that have been posted at amazon.com's website.

If you like any of my reviews and/or find them helpful, please indicate that is the case by clicking the "Yes" option . . . doing so will enable me to move higher up into amazon's list of "Top 500" reviewers . . . currently, I'm #461 based on 1,980 favorable comments on my 464 reviews.

All you need to do is find a book I recently enjoyed; e.g., go to the amazon.com website:

<http://www.amazon.com>

Then type-in: THE GAMES DO COUNT . . . when you get to my review (around the third from top), read it . . . then rate it accordingly . . . it's that simple!

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8. Computer tip

If you give your computer away or discard it, you should completely delete all your files from the hard drive . . . on an Apple Macintosh, just move the files to the trash can and then select "Secure Empty Trash" instead of the usual "Empty Trash" command.

On Windows, you need add-on software . . . one such program is Window Washer, available for \$30 from:

<http://www.webroot.com>

You can find other programs by doing a search for "file wipe" or doing a similar search at:

<http://www.downlaod.com>

SOURCE:

Adapted from "Mossberg's Mailbox" by Walter S. Mossberg, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, 9.22.05, p. B8

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9. Creative excuses

Philadelphia's Highway Patrol officers hear all kinds of creative excuses that drivers give for speeding. Here are some of the officers' favorites. By the way, none of them worked.

A man told the officer he was rushing to the hospital because had been stung by a bee, and was allergic. "There's the bee right there," he said, pointing to his dashboard. The officer looked. The bee was not only dead, but in a advanced state of decomposition.

A man was doing 70 mph on the shoulder of I-95, avoiding the bumper-to-bumper traffic. After a third of a mile, he was stopped by an officer. He jumped out of the car, brushing off his pants, and told the cop he had dropped a cigarette on his lap. "I was looking for a place to park," he explained.

A speeder said that he and his wife were trying to have a baby. "My wife is ovulating," he told the officer. "I have to get home right now."

An officer stopped a man doing 80 mph. When he asked the driver whether he had seen the speed-limit signs, the man responded, "I went by them so fast I probably missed them."

A man going south on I-95 was stopped near Washington Avenue doing 79 mph. "My engine misses, and I'm trying

to clean out the carburetor," he told the officer. For good measure, he added, "If I don't go this fast, my car won't go at all."

"I'm due in traffic court," one speeder said. "If I'm late they're going to enforce the bench warrant."

When an officer told a speeder that the speed limit on the Schuylkill Expressway was 50 mph, the driver responded, "Officer, where have you been? It's 65 now."

One speeder said simply, "I'm trying to beat my wife home. Don't ask."

An elderly person was stopped after doing 73 mph. When told he was getting a ticket, he asked the officer, "Is there a senior citizen's discount?"

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10. A quote I like

There is a wonderful mythical law of nature that the three things we crave most in life--happiness, freedom and peace of mind--are always attained by giving them to someone else.--Peyton Conway March (1864-1955), U.S. Army Chief of Staff during the final year of the First World War

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11. Thought for the day

"I Feel Petty"
(sung to the tune, "I Feel Pretty" from WEST SIDE STORY)

Original Lyrics by Billy Riggs, @ 2004; see also Section 1C.
Music by Leonard Bernstein, @ 1957, Used by permission.

I feel petty, oh so petty, in a bloodletting, bed-wetting mood!
A machete, cuts no deeper than my attitude.

I feel snitty, downright snitty. I feel snitty and snotty and snide.
And I pity, any person I work beside!

Who's the petty girl in the mirror there? Who could that albatross be?
Such a petty scowl, such a petty mind, such a petty heart, such a petty me!

I'm a bummer, getting glummer.
Big nose thumber whose welcome's outstayed!
I make lemons, when life gives me lemonade!

I've gone septic, apoplectic, I've infected my whole company!
I'm pathetic, but I've got seniority!

I'm contagious, irritable. My dead weight just pulls everyone down.
It's outrageous, how I spread my bodacious frown!

Who's the crabby guy in the meeting there? Who could that parasite be?
Such a crabby frown, such a crabby look, such a crabby sneer, such a crabby me!

My complaining is so draining,
Always raining on every parade!
I make lemons, when life gives me lemonade!

Party pooper, and naysayer, big pooh-pooh-er, doomsday-er and mope.
I'd tour sewers, if I had a glass-bottomed boat!

I'm an anchor, big chain yanker, an oil tanker of rancor and bile!
Open canker, and I'm eating away your smile.

Who's the sourpuss in the mirror there! Who could that pessimist be?
Such a sour sneer, such a sour scowl, such a sour frown, such a sour me!

I feel grumpy. Life is crummy.
If they dumped me then they'd have it made!
I make lemons, when life gives me lemonade!

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12. Advance planning department

A. PAPER CLIPS, a moving documentary, is the story of how students in Whitwel, TN responded to lessons about the Holocaust with a promise to honor every lost soul by collecting one paper clip for each individual exterminated by the Nazis.

It will be shown at the Bucks County Community College campus . . .

On: Thursday, October 20

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Library Auditorium

Afterwards, there will be a discussion led by
Lynda S. Goldman, co-chair of the Philadelphia Holocaust Films Series.

Students, faculty and friends from the non-Bucks community are welcome to attend.

There is NO CHARGE for this outstanding event, which is being sponsored by the Cultural Affairs Committee, Union Program Board, Student Life Office, and The Woman's Center.

B. If you want to participate in a fun event sponsored by the Alumni Association, in conjunction with the College's Foundation, plan to attend the Tyler Hall Murder Mystery . . . Saturday, October 22, at Bucks from 7 to 10 p.m. . . . enjoy an evening of murder and suspense in the Tyler mansion use your detective skills to untangle to web of deception and expose the culprit . . . hors d'oeuvres, dinner and dessert will be served.

\$60 person/\$100 per couple. Tickets are selling fast and space is limited.

Reservations:
215.968.8224 or via e-mail: alumni@bucks.edu

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PS. If you're Jewish and observing Yom Kippur this Wednesday night and Thursday, fast well . . . and please join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane Katrina's wrath, as well as for a quick return of our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . also, make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

Blaine Greenfield
19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
Phone : 828.633.1049

Contact Us at bginbc@aol.com

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #470

10.3.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I celebrated her birthday on Saturday with a bunch of friends . . . we dined at perhaps our favorite Chinese restaurant, Ya Ya Noodles (609.921.8551) in Skillman, New Jersey, where the food is always excellent . . . our talented friend, Edina, added to the evening's enjoyment with delicious muffins and a cake that she baked herself.

From there, we all went to hear another talented friend, Gail, on the violin . . . she was playing in a folk concert with David Brahinsky & Friends at the Princeton Center for Yoga & Health (609.924.7294), also in Skillman.

I mention the Center for two reasons:

1. It is a beautiful facility that you should check out, particularly if interested in yoga and/or other similar courses . . . for more information, please click:
<http://www.princetonyoga.com/>

2. Do make it a point to see Gail--David, too--when they return to the Center . . . or anywhere else in the area . . . you won't be disappointed!

B. On Sunday, Cynthia and I went to Carlyle on the Green (516.501.9700) at the Bethpage Country Club in Bethpage, NY, for my cousin Brian's wedding to Lisa . . . the facility was magnificent, as was the event.

The actual wedding ceremony was outdoors on fortunately what had to be one of the nicest days of the year . . . from there, everybody proceeded indoors to a room adorned with flowers that were almost breathtaking (and I'm not typically a flowers-type guy).

We knew we were in for a great day when they served pigs in

a blanket as one of the appetizers . . . the rest of the food wasn't bad either, there was a lively orchestra that made it possible for us to dance some, and we always enjoy getting together with family.

C. During the week, I attended an informative session run by the Foundation at Bucks County Community College . . . it featured Bob Harris (609.977.1716), a consultant who helps many non-profits with their marketing and strategic planning.

I came away with several good ideas, but these two in particular struck home:

- * People don't give money to causes, they give it to people; and
- * Your thank you has to be as good as your ask.

A few days earlier, I participated in one of my final sessions as a community member of the editorial board of the BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES . . . we discussed the various candidates running for elected office in the County and then helped determine who the paper will be endorsing . . . I was impressed with the way in which this was done, along with the thoughtfulness of the board members . . . it's been a real honor having been asked to serve as a community member (along with Pat Frain, an articulate guy I've grown to respect), and I find myself not looking forward to the time in the near future when my term will be up.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT:

Dale Larson, the community-minded publisher of the aforementioned paper, recently announced that the COURIER TIMES has launched a joint effort (with the Salvation Army) to help rebuild the community devastated by Hurricane Katrina . . . should you want to join Cynthia and I in supporting this effort, make your checks payable to: Bucks Katrina Relief Project/Salvation Army . . . and mail them to: Katrina Relief Project, Bucks County Courier Times, 8400 Rt. 13, Levittown, PA 19057.

Our contribution, by the way, was made "in appreciation of readers of BLAINESWORLD."

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

This week, it goes to Sue Clarke--director of human resources at Bucks.

Though she has been there for less than a year, she has already made quite a difference in the lives of the people at the College . . . she's a great listener who always tries to do the right thing.

Though we aren't always in agreement (when it comes to union matters), I have grown to respect both her dedication and follow-up . . . and the fact that she continually seeks to get correct information, even when it isn't readily available.

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For some reason, I fought the idea of switching to cordless phones for use in the house . . . the old ones seemed to work fine, and my thinking was that there was no reason to switch . . . what a mistake!

We recently purchased several Uniden PowerMax 5.8 GHz phones for use in virtually every room of our house.

The reception is exceptional; i.e., there is no interference with other phones, computers, etc.

Best of all: We love the intercom capability . . . you don't need a separate device for this purpose, and it makes it soooooo easy for me to reach Cynthia if I'm on the top floor and she is in the basement.

We also like the idea of no longer having to deal with cords that are impossible to untangle.

For more information, please click:
<http://www.uniden.com/>

Though we purchased our phones at Staples, you can use the above website to purchase like-new phones directly from the company and possibly even save some money when you do so . . . make sure you compare prices and if you do, don't forget to include any shipping costs.

FYI, part 2

* Michael Gelb, a longtime reader and one of my favorite authors, has this good news to share:

Would you please advise your readers that DAVINCI DECODED: DISCOVERING THE SPIRITUAL SECREATS OF LEONARDO'S SEVEN PRIINCIPLES has just been released in paperback. (Only \$10!)

Tony Buzan calls it " A masterpiece of spiritual intelligence."

* Art in Pennsylvania:

As you know, Shofar is my passion. Torah Aura published two books, and I have created two websites. I invite you and your readers to visit these websites:

<http://www.geocities.com/afinkle221/>

<http://www.geocities.com/shofar221/>

* Terri in Pennsylvania:

So glad to hear married life is going so well!

I'm working on the Thanksgiving Day Parade at Channel 6 again this year. We are in need of a Production Assistant. This person can be a current and former student as long as he/she is available to work any hours needed between 11/7-11/25/05. He/she must be available on Thanksgiving Day (at least until mid afternoon) as well as the weekend before Thanksgiving (11/19 and 11/20.)

It is a PAID position and looks great on the resume.

He or she will need to report to work at Channel 6 on City Avenue in Philadelphia, but work is not limited to being just at the station.

If you know anyone, please have them call me at 215.581.4502.

PS. "Beautiful Bride" is wonderful!

NOTE:

Terri's last comment refers to a question that I wrote about last week:

For some reason, I like both thinking about and calling Cynthia "my beautiful bride" . . . and hadn't really thought that was something that you ever had to stop doing.

I'll run some more of the responses next week, but if you'd still like to voice your opinion, I'd naturally welcome it--as always.

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3. 911 to the rescue

Here's hoping it was the stress of the moment that prompted the following exchanges:

#1.

Caller: "He's not breathing."

911: "Can you get the phone closer to him?"

Caller: "Why? You want to hear he's not breathing too?"

#2.

911: "We'll need a description of him."

Caller: "He's a lawyer."

#3.

911: "Does she have any weapons?"

Caller: "Well, she has real long fingernails."

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4. Reviews ...

A. JUST LIKE HEAVEN is a romantic comedy that will remind you of GHOST, but what's so bad about that? It is the story of an ambitious medical intern who works 20 hour days until she dies in an accident en route to a blind date . . . Reese Witherspoon and Mark Ruffalo are both fine as the leading characters, and if you can suspend your disbelief, you'll find yourself caring about both of them by the film's ending . . . rated PG-13.

B. MY SUMMER OF LOVE is now out in DVD . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #458 follows:

Don't believe the reviews for MY SUMMER OF LOVE . . . it is a coming-of-age tale of two young women that was loved by the critics and hated by me (Cynthia, too) . . . in thinking about it, I can't believe that we didn't walk out in the

middle . . . somehow, it received a 93% favorable rating at rottentomatoes.com . . . trust me on this one and miss it . . . rated R.

C. Does playing sports make a difference in the lives of a high school student or college student? According to more than 70 celebrities, politicians and top business people, the answer is a resounding YES.

I found that out by reading THE GAMES DO COUNT by Brian Kilmeade, cohost of Fox News Channel's FOX & FRIENDS . . . in his very entertaining book, Kilmeade collected a series of vignettes from a wide range of people including Henry Kissinger and Tony Danza, as well as Condoleezza Rice, Robin Williams and a whole host of other folks who have not often shared their memories publicly.

Many of these I even found quite inspirational, such as this one from Roger Ailes (the television producer and political consultant):

I once talked to a guy who was one of Richard Nixon's coaches. I asked him, "Was Nixon any good?"

He said, "No, he was the worst player I ever had."

I said, "Well what's the story?"

He said, "He showed up first for practice every day. Guys would run over his position and stomp him into the ground, and he always got back up. I finally put him in a game, so he'd win a letter, because the guy never quit." You could see that in the man. You could also see it in Reagan by the way he walked and handled himself. It's true . . . people who win never quit.

In addition, the book helped me to see what drives others who are successful . . . for example, there was this passage from Pat Williams (sports executive and motivational speaker who I've always most admired because he has raised 19 children):

Through sports, I've discovered in life that if you've got drive and desire and ambition, one goal simply leads to the next. There's never that point when you've arrived, because in sports there's always another game, another series, another season. You really can't rest on your laurels or look back in sorrow or in triumph, over anything that happens, because things are changing so rapidly. At this point in my life--I'm sixty-three years old--I want to live fully till the end. I don't think at any point you can simply say, "Well, I've done enough. My life is over, and now I'm just going to watch the sunset." I don't think that's the way we're meant to live, and sports, I think, offers us that lesson.

Lastly, I loved this final bit of advice from the author himself: TV Brian changed this line of thinking. I had a thick New York accent, so I saved my money and took speech classes. I wanted to get better at memorizing, so I bought taped courses. I wanted to refine my comedic skills and test this new memory, so I took a class and spent five years doing stand-up wherever and whenever I could. I also found a way to get to know and at least talk to everyone who was

doing a job I aspired to have--Matt Lauer, Jim Caldwell, David Letterman, and Regis Philbin, to name a few. It all helped, and now it all makes sense.

And oh, yes, I always wanted to write a book, and I've just done that, and I'm honored that you read it.

You'll be likewise honored if you choose to read THE GAMES DO COUNT . . . you'll also get a kick from seeing the photos of each personality, many of them taken from when they were in school.

And methinks the book would make an ideal gift to give this upcoming holiday season.

D. Heard FOR LOVE OF THE GAME by Michael Sahara, a posthumously published baseball novel by the Pulitzer Prize winning author of THE KILLING ANGELS . . . you might have to dig some to find it, but your search will be worth the effort.

This is a short, surprisingly moving tale of an aging baseball superstar who is pitching the last game of the season . . . through a series of flashbacks, you learn about his career and the one woman he loves (but who is leaving him).

The writing is compelling, and it makes you feel that you really get to know the guy . . . plus, it has you rooting for his every pitch and caring about what happens to him.

There's a great ending, too.

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5. VCR alert

A. MAKING SCHOOLS WORK is a rarity: a program about successes in our educational system . . . Wednesday at 9 p.m. on PBS Channel 13 (NYC) . . . PBS dates and times vary, so check your local listings.

B. FOUR MINUTES is a made for cable movie about Roger Bannister, a British medical student who in 1954 was the first person to run the mile in under four minutes . . . according to TV GUIDE, "It's a movie as poor and simple--and quietly thrilling--as the goal it celebrates." . . . Thursday at 7 p.m. on ESPN2; repeated at 9 p.m. and 11 p.m.; Friday at 3 a.m.; and Saturday at 4 p.m.

C. THE SHOWBIX SHOW WITH DAVID SPADE has the comedian taking on the hypocrisy and self-importance of Hollywood . . . Thursdays at 10:30 p.m. on Comedy Central.

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6. Tea and cookies

Granny was in her eighties and much admired for her sweetness and kindness to all. The pastor came to call on her one afternoon

early in the Spring and she welcomed him into her parlor.

He took a seat while she prepared some tea. As he sat facing her old pump organ, the minister noticed a cut glass bowl sitting on top of it, filled with water. In the water floated, of all things, a condom. Imagine his shock and surprise! And curiosity! Surely, Miss Granny had flipped!! But he felt he couldn't mention the strange sight in her parlor.

When she returned with the tea and cookies, they began to chat. The pastor tried to stifle his curiosity about the bowl of water and the floating item, but soon it got the better of him and he could resist no longer.

"Miss Granny," he said while pointing to the bowl, "I wonder if you could tell me about this?"

"Oh, yes", she replied, "Isn't is wonderful! I was walking downtown last fall, and I found this little package. The directions said to put it on the organ, keep it wet and it would prevent disease. And you know---I haven't had a cold all winter."

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7. Websites

A. I've recently come across information that drinking diet soda can actually lead to weight gain . . . for more information, please click:
<http://www.sixwise.com/newsletters/05/09/28/fructose.htm>

You'll find all about how high fructose corn syrup may be worse for you than sugar. In addition, you'll also see a link for the FREE newsletter produced by this company that is designed "to help you and your loved ones be safe, live longer and prosper in all aspects of life by providing you the key insights, top recommendations and most practical solutions from the world's leading experts and specialists."

B. Liquid Sculpture is the process of creating shapes by dropping and splashing water or other liquids. To see this process for yourself, please click:
<http://www.liquidsculpture.com/>

To quote the sculptor:
These sculptures are then photographed, since they last only a few thousandths of a second. Creating and capturing these engaging forms requires careful manipulation of the materials and precise control of the lighting and timing. I mostly use plain, clear water, sometimes with a little soap in it.

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click:
<http://www.blaineworld.net>

On the left, you'll see "Radio Show" . . . go to that link if you want to see a history of my radio career . . . you can also hear one of my shows.

As you may have read in a past issue, a recent management change at WWFM has resulted in my show being taken off the air . . . but,

hopefully, I'll resurface soon again . . . on another station and/or even with my own cable show.

Please do keep me in mind if you have any media contacts for me to pursue with respect to the above possibilities.

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8. Computer tip

More on phishing

Last week, I presented some tips on how you can prevent being scammed from e-mail that claims to be from a financial institution, online-commerce site or some organization that you know . . . this insidious practice is known as phishing.

But rather than present any more don'ts, here are some things that you should do:

If you think a communication requiring you to take action might be legitimate, type in the organization's Web address yourself in a new browser. Again, don't copy the Web address from the e-mail or trust a phone number supplied by it.

Send e-mails you think might be phishing to:
reportphishing@antiphishing.org

and to the organization mentioned in the phishing e-mail. Most organizations also offer an email address, such as spoofer@ebay.com, that you can write to.

Make sure your Internet connection is protected by a firewall, your PC is protected by antivirus software and run antispyware software periodically to check for malicious programs on your machine.

For more information and tips, see the following websites:
The Federal Trade Commission's consumer alert on phishing, which include information about what to do if you are scammed:
<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/alerts/phishingalrt.htm>

The Anti-Phishing Working Group's tips for spotting phishes, which also has tips for what to do next:
http://www.antiphishing.org/consumer_recs.html

Mircosoft's tips on preventing phishing:
<http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/email/phishingemail.mspx>

Tips from the Washington Post:
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A59383-2004Nov18.html>

Adapted from "Avoiding the phishing hook" in THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, September 1, 2005, p. B3

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9. You know you're from New Jersey when . . .

You know that it's called Great Adventure, not Six Flags.

You've known the way to Seaside Heights since you were seven.

You know what a "jug handle" is.

You know the town Jon Bon Jovi is from.

You know that the state isn't all farmland.

You know that there are no "beaches" in New Jersey there's the shore and you don't go to the shore, you go "down the Shore." And when you are there, you're not "at the shore"; you are "down the Shore."

You know how to properly negotiate a Circle.

You knew that the last sentence had to do with driving.

You don't think "What exit?" is very funny.

You know your from New Jersey when you drink "Wuder" not "water."

You refer to all highways and interstates by their numbers.

You know the location of every clip shown in the Sopranos opening credits.

You weren't raised in New Jersey, you were raised in either North Jersey, Central Jersey or South Jersey.

You think that every place is about 20 minutes away.

You also remember Palisades Amusement Park.

You've had a Boardwalk cheese steak and vinegar fries.

You start planning for Memorial Day weekend in February.

And finally . . . you've NEVER, NEVER pumped your own gas.

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10. A quote I like

Shoot for the moon. If you miss, at least you will land among the stars.--Les Brown, motivational speaker, has been quoted as saying this . . . though I wonder: Is he the originator? Please let me know if you've ever come across somebody else who may have beaten Brown to the punch.

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11. Thought for the day

Mousetrap

A mouse looked through the crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package. "What food might this contain?"

He was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap.

Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed the warning. "There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!"

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, "Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it."

The mouse turned to the pig and told him, "There is a mousetrap in the house." The pig sympathized, but said, "I am so very sorry, Mr. Mouse, but there is nothing I can do about it but pray. Be assured you are in my prayers."

The mouse turned to the cow. She said "Wow, Mr. Mouse. I'm sorry for you, but it's no skin off my nose." So, the mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer's mousetrap alone.

That very night a sound was heard throughout the house--like the sound of a mousetrap catching its prey.

The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see it was a venomous snake whose tail the trap had caught. The snake bit the farmer's wife. The farmer rushed her to the hospital, and she returned home with a fever.

Everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup, so the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup's main ingredient. But his wife's sickness continued, so friends and neighbors came to sit with her around the clock.

To feed them, the farmer butchered the pig. The farmer's wife did not get well; she died.

So many people came for her funeral, the farmer had the cow slaughtered to provide enough meat for all of them.

So, the next time you hear someone is facing a problem and think it doesn't concern you, remember . . . when one of us is threatened, we are all at risk.

We are all involved in this journey called life. We must keep an eye out for one another and make an extra effort to encourage one another.

Each of us is a vital thread in another person's tapestry; our lives are worn together for a reason.

Author Unknown

(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

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12. Advance planning department

A. Please feel free to register for either of Cynthia's "Move Your Body" courses that she will be teaching over the next few months . . . they are designed for men and women of all ages who wish to have a (to quote from the brochure):

Fun, easy way to get aerobic exercise by following simple dance moves to music from around the world. Start with stretches to warm up and end feeling wonderfully relaxed. The result will leave you feeling renewed and invigorated.

It will be offered by Hillsborough Adult Community Education at Hillsborough High School in Hillsborough, NJ, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. on October 6, 20, 27, November 3, 17, and December 1 . . . call 908.722.0233 to register.

It will be also offered by Franklin Township Adult Community Education at Sampson G. Smith School in Somerset, NJ, from 4:45-5:45 p.m. on October 11, 18, 25, November 8, 15, 22, 29, and December 6 . . . call 732.873.1227 to register.

B. HOLD THIS DATE: Thursday, October 20, at 6:30 p.m. . . . PAPER CLIPS, an outstanding documentary, will be shown on the Bucks in the Library . . . afterwards, it will be discussed by Lynda Goldman, co-chair of the Philadelphia Holocaust Films Series.

C. If you want to participate in a fun event sponsored by the Alumni Association, in conjunction with the College's Foundation, plan to attend the Tyler Hall Murder Mystery . . . Saturday, October 22, at Bucks from 7 to 10 p.m. . . . enjoy an evening of murder and suspense in the Tyler mansion use your detective skills to untangle to web of deception and expose the culprit . . . hors d'oeuvres, dinner and dessert will be served.

\$60 person/\$100 per couple. Tickets are selling fast and space is limited.

Reservations:

215.968.8224 or via e-mail: alumni@bucks.edu

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PS. Monday night marks the beginning of Rosh Hashanah for my many Jewish readers and friends . . . happy New Year to them and their families.

It also is the time for anybody who is not Jewish to make some money . . . all you have to do is what a former friend (now unfortunately deceased) used to do; i.e., approach anybody Jewish and bet him or her a nickel to name the actual Jewish New Year . . . most anybody can't.

The answer: 5766.

In addition, you might want to e-mail them the following link that should give you and everybody else a smile--regardless of religion:
<http://www.danmeth.com/shofaridol.htm>

And please join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane Katrina's wrath, as well as for a quick return of our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . also, make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

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Issue #469

9.26.2005

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1. Reflections

A. KUDOS to Tobi Bruhn, Nancy Steigerwalt and Jean Holmes of the Bucks County Community College for their role in making last Monday's Golf Outing the success that it was . . . a record amount of money was raised, and everybody had a great time at the Commonwealth National Golf Club on what was an absolutely beautiful day.

Also aiding in the above effort were Joe Fluehr and Larry Hager, co-chairs of the event . . . they were ably assisted by the entire 2005 Golf Outing Committee: Chuck Barrett, Brett Diakon, Kevin Dougherty, Otto Grupp, Dick Jones, John Long, Jim Loughery, Barbara Miller, Garney Morris, Joe Pizzo, Phil Wursta, and Dr. Bill Mikvy.

And lest I forget, Scott Bradshaw--coach of the College's golf team--graciously got several of his players there to help out.

LEST YOU FORGET:

If you want to participate in another fun event sponsored by the Alumni Association, in conjunction with the Foundation, plan to attend the Tyler Hall Murder Mystery . . . October 22 at Bucks from 7 to 10 p.m. . . . enjoy an evening of murder and suspense in the Tyler mansion . . . use your detective skills to untangle to web of deception and expose the culprit . . . hors d'oeuvres, dinner and dessert will be served.

\$60 person/\$100 per couple. Tickets are selling fast and space is limited.

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B. Cynthia, my beautiful bride and I, had the pleasure of joining friends

on Friday to see UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG at the magnificent Two River Theater (732.345.1400) in Red Bank, NJ.

Just seeing this new facility, which opened last year, was an experience unto itself . . . it only seats 350 people,. . . centered around a thrust stage, the furthest seats are no more than 36 feet from the performers.

Our seats were actually in that last row, and I'd suggest that if you go to a future production there (something I'd strongly recommend), you might even want to request similar seating . . . it turns out the last row is located in what might be called a mini-mezzanine . . . it afforded us more room, in addition to a better sight line to the stage.

The production itself was superb . . . UMBRELLAS has long been my all-time favorite film . . . it was a 1964 bittersweet French romance about two star-crossed young lovers who are torn apart by war . . . starring Catherine Deneuve, it featured a jazz score by Michael Legrand that was memorable for the hit song ("If It Takes Forever) I Will Wait for You."

The version we saw was the English-language stage adaptation by Sheldon Harnick in association with Charles Burr . . . it was the first stage production in the country in this decade; my hope is that it won't be the last.

I'd especially like to see this talented Two River Theater Co. company stay together to bring UMBRELLAS to other venues throughout the country . . .Max von Essen and Heather Spore, as the leading characters, had lovely voices . . . you really felt for them . . . and equally fine were Maureen Silliman as Mme. Emery and Roland Cassard, respectively.

UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG has been extended to run until October 16 . . . do catch it if you can.

For more information, please click:
<http://trtc.org/>

NOTE:

Tickets are extremely difficult to obtain for this show, so order soon and consider trying for a midweek performance or one on the final weekend that has just been added.

We were fortunate to have been helped by both Nicole McKennan, administrative assist, and Lisa Ann Fardella, director of audience services, in getting tickets . . . they couldn't have been nicer . . . also, we appreciated their recommendations for places to go for dinner and dessert. (See below.)

C. Before the show, we went to Danny's Steakhouse & Seafood Grill (732.741.6900) in Red Bank, NJ . . . we only had a short time to eat, so we had to settle for pizza . . . fortunately, it wasn't a bad choice; i.e., if you like a thin crust--and we do . . . but that said, next time we go there, we'll get steaks . . . they looked sooooo good . . . in addition, the place has a sushi bar if that's your thing.

After the show, we stayed in Red Bank and went to The Melting Pot (732.219.0090) . . . this is a chain operation that features fondue dishes . . . we split a delicious chocolate fondue with milk chocolate complemented with a swirl of crunchy peanut butter . . . dipping items included fresh strawberries, bananas, pineapple, cheesecake, marshmallow, pound cake, and brownies . . . the only bad thing about this latter experience: while there, we found out that there's a Melting Pot near us in Somerville, NJ . . . so we may now just have to go there, too, and forego our desire for svelte figures when we do.

One other fun place we went to over the weekend was the South Street Creamery Cafe (973.267.8887) in Morristown, NJ . . . it reminded us of an old-fashioned ice cream parlor that had an ice cream flavor to die for, something called Jockey Hollow . . . think vanilla ice cream with peanut butter swirl and chocolate-covered pretzels . . . if you're like me, you are getting hungry just thinking of it . . . the establishment also features a full range of homemade soup, salads, sandwiches, and pizza.

**** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD ****

This week, it goes to Danny Murphy--owner of the aforementioned Danny's Steakhouse & Seafood Grill.

He didn't know us when we entered his restaurant, but did he ever make us feel welcome! . . . his greeting was about as enthusiastic as we've ever seen . . . we then enjoyed his joy as he described all the great items that we could order.

As we were dining, he again came over to us . . . many places do this, but often in a superficial manner . . . with Danny, that was not the case . . . he genuinely seemed to like visiting with us, and we felt the same toward him.

And we got a kick out of listening to him give directions to folks walking by, wishing them a pleasant theater experience, etc.

For more information about Danny or his fine restaurant, please click: <http://www.dannyssteakhouse.com/>

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2. FYI

One of my favorite ways of getting people to see some of their own distortions, and to also help them get a handle on their stress, is to give them unconventional ways to focus on and articulate the things that bug them. One of the most entertaining ways to do that is to have them sing a blues song about whatever's bothering them.

In the workshops I do at the mind-body medical institutes and elsewhere, I get people to stand onstage with me, think of the things in their lives that are inspiring the most horrible stress and anxiety, and really sing out their troubles at the top of their lungs in the form of a blues song.

Some really serious stuff comes out, but by the end of it, nobody's laughing harder than the singer.

This exercise takes away the emotional edge, lessens the anxiety,

and just might help change your outlook. When you change your perception of a situation, you're better able to solve it.

It's easy, and I ask that you try it for yourself. A blues song is very structured, very simple. It often starts "Woke up this morning..," and then goes off into a litany of all the pain and suffering that the singer has to deal with. It's often about loss and destruction. Sometimes using this simple structure as a device to frame our own thinking about trivial issues can defuse the power that they hold over us.

Here are a few examples of blues songs that were created and sung in a recent seminar of mine:

I woke up this morning
They were at it again
Those damn strawberry hulls are in the sink again
I've got the my husband doesn't throw his crap away blues.

I hate myself this morning
Can't fit in my clothes
My a*s grew two sizes this week
Even fat down in my toes
I've got the bad body-image blues
Can't stop moaning
About my weight
Even when my husband says I look great.
Got those bad body-image blues
Won't somebody hand me a piece of cake?

I woke up lonely this morning
Went to bed the same way
My fear of commitment is keeping me that way
I got the lonesome blues
The lowdown lonesome blues
Can't find me a baby, no, I just keep running away.

Woke up this morning
Didn't sleep a wink
My baby's crying
And the trash can really stinks
I change his diaper every hour
And feed him pureed pears
And I don't have five minutes even to comb my hair
I've got the new mama martyr blues.

And here's one by the woman I talked about earlier,
who had a thing about her pillows:

I woke up this morning
Didn't want to wake up at all
I knew my pillows would be messed up
And dripping with cat hairballs
I've got the pillow perfection blues
It haunts me day and night
I know my pillows aren't aligned
And nothing in life is right.

SOURCE:
LIFE IS SHORT, WEAR YOUR PARTY PANTS (see also

Section 4C) by Loretta LaRoche

FYI, part 2

* Marty in Texas [on the Skinny Cow ice cream sandwiches mentioned last week]:

WOW!!! What a concept! They also have these in SUGER FREE! Same as below FAT content, Same taste, but for diabetics.

* Sue in Pennsylvania [on the same product]:

The product may not contain cholesterol, but any kind of carbohydrate can increase a person's cholesterol level. High cholesterol is a result of having too much sugar in the blood. And carbohydrates are a form of sugar

Enjoy your treat!!!! But please do not be fooled by the nutrition labels that can be deceiving.

* Linda in New Jersey:

I have to add my 2 cents to the nursing home situation . . . please watch out for bed sores. I sat with my mom and fed her every day and had no idea that they weren't doing a good job of cleaning her. Sitting or laying on one spot will break down the skin .The nursing home will not tell you because they are responsible. Be careful . . . bed sores quickly appear and do not heal fast.

* Norean in New York:

I am sorry to hear of your father's return to the hospital. My thoughts and prayers are with you on his speedy recovery. After just going through a 4 month battle with my dad and then his death, I strongly agree with you that there should be another person present when going through any kind of medical procedure and hospital stay. Thank you for including that in your newsletter so that others may realize that parents and other family members need someone there to lend an ear.

* Wenda in Wyoming:

Your beautiful bride is now your beautiful wife. She was the bride the day she married you. She is now your wife.

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

For some reason, I like both thinking about and calling Cynthia "my beautiful bride" . . . and hadn't really thought that was something you had to ever end . . . be interested in other reaction(s).

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3. Togetherness

A man and a little boy entered a barbershop together.

After the man received the full treatment--shave, shampoo, manicure, haircut, etc.--he placed the boy in the chair.
"I'm going to buy a green tie to wear for the parade," he said. "I'll be back in a few minutes."

When the boy's haircut was completed and the man still hadn't returned. So the barber said, "Looks like your daddy's forgotten all about you."

"That wasn't my daddy," said the boy. "He just walked up, took me by the hand and said, 'Come on, son, we're gonna get a free haircut!' "

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4. Reviews ...

A. Enjoyed AN UNFNISHED LIFE, though found it a bit difficult to get into . . . it seemed to drag until about halfway through the film, then the subplot involving a bear in capture caught my attention and brought the film alive . . . it is definitely corny; in fact, it even reminded me of FREE WILLY . . . yet I liked how it played out, and it helped smooth the transition for an ending that resolved the problems faced by many of the characters . . . I liked the work of Robert Redford and Becca Gardner, a newcomer who played his granddaughter . . . Jennifer Lopez was good, as well, though I have seen Morgan Freeman as the grumpy sidekick too many times . . . rated PG-13.

B. The fifth season of CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM has finally begun on Sundays at 10 p.m. on HBO . . . this hilarious series about the tales of Larry David, the SEINFELD creator, can now be seen in its entirety if you rent or purchase the first four seasons--now available on DVD . . . you won't be disappointed!

C. I've liked seeing Loretta LaRoche on various PBS specials, but until now, had never read anything by her . . . what a shame!

LIFE IS SHORT, WEAR YOUR PARTY PANTS (see also Section 2) made me laugh, but it also got me to think about the fact that things such as party pants shouldn't be saved for later--they should be enjoyed now.

LaRoche, a stress management consultant, presents such ideas in a humorous, easy-to-apply fashion . . . such as this one: keep a joy journal . . . she notes that, "Keeping a joy journal will help you maintain a feeling of elation, the sense that you're searing with the eagles instead of scratching in the dirt with the turkey."

As to what to put down in such a journal, she suggests that you try some of these ideas to move you in the right direction:

1. Think of people who have really made a positive difference in your life.
2. List three of four things that you do well.
3. Write down at least five things that you like about yourself.
4. Think of a time in which you had so much love in your heart that you thought it would burst.
5. Think of some of the favorite physical activities you enjoyed as a child (swimming, jumping rope, roller skating?). List them, and think about ways you might do them again.
6. Think of five qualities you adore in your partner or spouse.

Write them down, and tell him or her about them.

7. Think back to a time when you felt supported while going through a challenge. How did this feel, in detail?

8. Remember three times when you felt inner peace and serenity. Can you capture that feeling? Where were you? Why were you feeling so good?

9. Think of someone you might forgive, and how doing so might change your life.

10. Whom do you laugh with the most? Remember a time when you laughed so hard you thought you'd fall over.

And laugh is what you'll do when you think of this one other technique advocated by LaRoche . . . she says, "Don't indulge yourself, but don't deny yourself either. It's unhealthy to eat mounds of lasagna every day, but it's just as unhealthy to want it and never allow yourself the pleasure of having some. One of my favorite lines is 'Just have lasagna and shut up!' "

Thanks, Loretta . . . methinks I'll do that now; i.e., stop writing this review now and start eating some ice cream instead . . . I'll even be quiet when I do so.

D. Heard *IN THE SHADOW OF THE LAW*, a convoluted legal thriller by Kermit Roosevelt that didn't really hold my interest . . . it is about the lives of men and women at a prestigious law firm who tackle cases involving the death penalty and a class action involving a prominent biochemical firm . . . there didn't seem to be anything that I hadn't read before, though Roosevelt's writing did give me a feel that I was learning at least a little something about the legal profession . . . I did like the narration by Craig Wasson, an underrated actor who you don't see nearly enough on screen.

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5. VCR alert

A. Charlize Theron begins a five-episode arc on *ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT* . . . Mondays at 8 p.m. on Fox.

B. *AMERICAN MASTERS* features Martin Scorsese's "No Direction Home: Bob Dylan," which profiles the singer's career from 1961 to 1966 . . . Monday and Tuesday at 9 p.m. on PBS Channel 13 . . . PBS times and dates vary, so check local listings.

C. *COMMANDER IN CHIEF* has Geena Davis as America's first female president . . . Tuesdays at 9 p.m. on ABC.

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6. Furniture shopping

An elderly woman entered a large furniture store and was greeted by a much younger salesman. "Is there something in particular

I can show you?" he asked.

"Yes, I want to buy a sexual sofa."

"You mean a sectional sofa," he suggested.

"Sectional, schmectional." she bitterly retorted. "All I want is an occasional piece in the living room!"

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7. Websites

A. Think you're pretty savvy when it comes to Internet scams?

Test yourself by taking the following quiz:

<http://survey.mailfrontier.com/survey/quiztest.cgi?themailfrontierphishingiqtest>

How many did you get correct? . . . if you failed to get all 10 correct, then please make sure you read this week's "Computer tip" in Section 8!

B. Whatever happened to actor Max von Sydow? Did he retire or is he dead? Dead or Alive helps settle those nagging questions with information on thousands of well-known people--or former people.

The following website tracks whether famous people are still alive or whether they have passed on:

<http://www.DeadOrAliveInfo.com>

By the way, von Sydow is alive . . . Erich von Stroheim is NOT.

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click:<http://www.blaineworld.net>

As you hopefully know by now, you should ALWAYS feel free to mention this newsletter to your friends, relatives, etc. . . . should they want to subscribe (AT NO COST), all they have to do is go to my homepage . . . then click on "Special Offer" at the bottom . . . it's that simple!

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8. Computer tip

Phishing alert

Phishing involves crafting an e-mail that claims to be from a financial institution, online-commerce site or some organization that you know. It appears to be legitimate. To avoid being scammed, here are some basic tips:

Don't respond to e-mails asking for personal or financial information--passwords, account numbers, Social Security numbers, and the like.

Don't click on links in e-mails from financial institutions and other organizations that have your personal information, and don't paste those links into your browser. Weaknesses in the technical

underpinnings of the Internet can let phishers redirect you to fake sites, and just visiting suspect sites could subject you to attempts to put malicious programs--called "crimeware"--on your PC.

Don't taunt phishers by following their links and giving them false information--a visit to a fake site can trigger a "drive-by download" of crimeware.

Don't download or open files attached to e-mails purporting to be from financial institutions, eBay, PayPal, and the like.

Don't trust phone numbers in e-mails. These can be faked, too.

Basically, if e-mail from a financial institution or organization that has your personal information does anything other than inform, don't trust it. We hate to say that, because such e-mail communications are supposed to make life easier. But until basic flaws with e-mail and the Web are fixed, it's not worth the risk.

SOURCE:

Adapted from "Avoiding the phishing hook" in THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, September 1, 2005, p. B3

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9. Breads, part 2 of 2

(continued from last week)

The Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah, begins on October 4 . . . there's a ceremony called Tashlich where Jews go to the water and throw breadcrumbs into the water . . . symbolically, the fish devour their sins . . . what follows are more suggestions for breads which may be appropriate for specific sins and misbehaviors:

For war-mongering
Kaiser Rolls

For dressing immodestly
Tarts

For causing injury to others
Torts

For lechery and promiscuity
Hot Buns

For promiscuity with gentiles
Hot Cross Buns

For racist attitudes
Crackers

For sophisticated racism
Ritz Crackers

For being holier than thou
Bagels

For abrasiveness
Grits

For dropping in without notice
Popovers

For over-eating
Stuffing

For impetuosity
Quick Bread

For indecent photography
Cheesecake

For raising your voice too often
Challah

For pride and egotism
Puff Pastry

For sycophancy, a*s-kissing
Brownies

For being overly smothering
Angel Food Cake

For laziness
Any long loaf

For trashing the environment
Dumplings

And for those who require a wide selection of crumbs, we suggest a Tashlich Mix available in three grades (Taslich Lite, Medium and Industrial Strength) at your favorite Jewish grocery store.

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10. A quote I like

Of course, I still can't believe Johnny's gone. It's just not fair. But as he once said, "If life was fair, Elvis would still be alive and all the impersonators would be dead."--Ed McMahon, talking about Johnny Carson

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11. Thought for the day

Marsha in New Jersey, our good friend, recently sent Cynthia and I a beautiful note that we wanted to share with everybody (with her gracious permission) . . . we think it captures our relationship . . . our hope it that others have and/or find something even remotely similar as described in the following:

It was wonderful to be present at your wedding reception. The closeness you have created seemed to take flight and hover way above any of us, much like the couple in Chagall's painting.

Who could see the gems you adorned when your sparkle together

left us blinded to that which you wore?

And who could listen to the music when the sound you made together was the song of songs?

And who could follow the humor as your laughter together left us wondering about the punch line?

And who could eat all the awesome food when your dance, your touch, your smile, and your pleasure in each other left us bellyful?

I will remember this special night forever.

BLAINE'S TWO CENTS:

So will Cynthia and I!

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12. Advance planning department

A. Please feel free to register for either of Cynthia's "Move Your Body" courses that she will be teaching over the next few months . . . they are designed for men and women of all ages who wish to have a (to quote from the brochure):

Fun, easy way to get aerobic exercise by following simple dance moves to music from around the world. Start with stretches to warm up and end feeling wonderfully relaxed. The result will leave you feeling renewed and invigorated.

It will be offered by Hillsborough Adult Community Education at Hillsborough High School in Hillsborough, NJ, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. on October 6, 20, 27, November 3, 17, and December 1 . . . call 908.722.0233 to register.

It will be also offered by Franklin Township Adult Community Education at Sampson G. Smith School in Somerset, NJ, from 4:45-5:45 p.m. on October 11, 18, 25, November 8, 15, 22, 29, and December 6 . . . call 732.873.1227 to register.

B. HOLD THIS DATE: Thursday, October 20, at 6:30 p.m. . . . PAPER CLIPS, an outstanding documentary, will be shown on the Bucks campus . . . afterwards, it will be discussed by Lynda Goldman, a journalist/documentary filmmaker . . . more details to follow in future issues.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane Katrina's wrath, as well as for a quick return of our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . also, make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #468

9.19.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride and I, spent much of this past weekend visiting our respective families.

Her mom, Elsie, seems to be adjusting nicely into her nursing home: Daughters of Israel in West Orange, NJ.

My father, Bernie, is back in Long Island Jewish Hospital in New Hyde Park, NY--though hopefully for not too long . . . it seems he has had some clotting problems, and they are doing tests on him as I type . . . if all is well, he should be back home soon.

I mention the above for a reason: When and if you or somebody you love needs medical treatment or care, please make sure you accompany them . . . there are at least two reasons why this is crucial:

1. When you have appointments with doctors, it is helpful if not imperative to have two sets of ears (especially as you get older) . . . often, you'll miss something that's said . . . or forget to ask an important question . . . having somebody accompany you will also make the experience more tolerable.

2. Even more importantly, ALL folks in hospitals and/or nursing homes need an advocate of some sort--other than themselves . . . Cynthia and her sister Joyce have been doing a marvelous job in working to make sure their mother gets the best care . . . by the same token, my brother Ken has been helping me do likewise with my folks . . . and I saw my mother the other day sep in to make sure that my father got the room he needed; i.e., one he would share with another patient (as opposed to moving him in with three other patients, as the hospital tried to do).

B. My Marketing class projects have gotten off to a great start at Bucks County Community College this semester.

My Tuesday night class is working with Heather Martin, executive director of the Bucks County Bar Association of Pennsylvania . . . she recently spoke to one of my classes, along with Dermot Kennedy (president of the Bar's Charitable Foundation), about the fine work being done by that Foundation.

My students will now be working over the next several weeks on a project that is designed to give the Foundation even more exposure.

Should you want more information about the Bar Association or its Foundation, please click:

<http://www.bucksbar.org>

C. My Thursday night class is working with Lisa Swenson, a former student and now director of marketing for dotphoto . . .the students will be developing a marketing strategy for that company.

Lisa recently came in and made a fine presentation to another of my classes, at which time she was ably assisted by her boss: David Alecock, vice president of marketing for dotphoto.

SPECIAL OFFER:

I've recently started using dotphoto for my photo processing needs and have been pleased with the service I've received . . . if you want to see for yourself, please click:

<http://www.dotphoto.com>

If you register, you will get 100 FREE 4x6 prints just by typing "blainesworld" (with no quotation marks) when prompted for a code.

This offer is only valid until 12.31.2005.

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

This week, it goes to Vicki Wilken (1.866.738.8600), chief of staff for State Sen. Joe Conti in Harrisburg, PA . . . she does a great job not only of assisting him, but also in helping his constituents . . . every time I call for information, she seemingly gets it back to me even before I finish my request.

It is a real pleasure to find competence in government officials . . . Sen. Conti has always demonstrated that trait to me . . . he is fortunate to have such individuals as Vicki backing up his efforts!

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2. FYI

Cynthia and I have discovered a great new dessert/before bedtime treat: Skinny Cow low fat ice cream sandwiches.

They're just 140 calories per serving, and they're 97% fat free . . . in addition, they contain no cholesterol . . . they're also surprisingly filling.

They look like the old flying saucers you may have had as a kid.

And they come in several great flavors: vanilla, coffee, strawberry shortcake, caramel, etc.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.skinnycow.com>

FYI, part 2

* Darcy in Pennsylvania:

[commenting on an item in last week's issue about Israeli dancing]

I'm an avid Israeli dancer and also a part-time instructor. I teach regularly at two Sunday schools in New Jersey and also give private lessons. (On occasion, I sub for Don Schillinger, of Rak-Dan, for weddings, bar/bat mitzvahs and special events.) I'll second that Don is a great teacher. Here's my humble website: <http://home.comcast.net/~reallyrikud/>

* Kitty in New Jersey:

The season starts this weekend at Kelsey Theatre [West Windsor, NJ] with BYE BYE BIRDIE and we've got a new live show every two weeks all season long. Next up is CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN, THEY'RE PLAYING OUR SONG and HARVEY.

If you did not get your copy of our color brochure, let me know. We're good, we're close, and you can't beat the price! (\$16 is our top price.)

For more information, please click:

<http://www.mccc.edu/kelseytheatre>

* Deb in Colorado:

It is hard for me to believe that it has been a year since the 11th NJ Race for the Cure. . . .

As I sit here in my beautiful home in Colorado, I am getting excited to go home to NJ for the Race for the Cure. I can hardly believe we have been at it for 12 years and getting great results. Late stage diagnosis is down across the country. The diagnostics are getting better and through education, women and men are doing more self-exams and aren't afraid to go to the doctor if there is a problem! It's happening, and you are a part of it.

So please give what you can. There is so much happening in the country right now and our dollars are finite, I know. We're doing great work here at Komen and every dollar helps! To visit my personal web page and help me in my efforts to support the Susan G. Komen New Jersey Race For The Cure, please:

[Follow This Link](#)

or if that doesn't work, click here:

<https://www.kintera.org/faf/donorReg/donorPledge.asp?ievent=119840&lis=1&kntae119840=FFCCE23A2DCE4142ABFB7497FBD4960A&supId=98600499>

* Linda in New Jersey:

It sounds like your life is busy and full; that's terrific. While I oftentimes don't have time to read BLAINESWORLD in its entirety, I just did. It was very informative and enjoyable.

Glad to hear about your recent marriage. I have been married to the same man for 32 years. Fortunately, for both of us, each day we are together is better than the day before. That speaks volumes of the

wonderful future ahead. I hope you have found the same lifetime partner.

MY TWO CENTS:
I have!

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3. Why we trail so many countries in math

I was sitting in a cafeteria recently, next to a woman who was engrossed in her newspaper. One of the headlines blared: "12 Brazilian Soldiers Killed."

She shook her head at the sad news. Then, turning to me, asked, "How many is a Brazilian?"

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4. Reviews ...

A. If you want to stop feeling sorry for yourself (forever), catch the documentary MURDERBALL while it may still be in the area . . . this is an inspiring film about a group of quadriplegic men who participate in the dangerous sport of "quad rugby" . . . rather than give up on life, these guys prove that they can still be active--and make it with women, too . . . it starts out as very violent, then settles down into a film makes you really care about the individuals on screen . . . rated R, though methinks it is both appropriate and worthy for any teenager to see.

B. THE LONGEST YARD, the remake of the 1974 film, is now out on DVD . . . do yourself a favor and catch the original version . . . this latest one is terrible . . . even if you're a football junkie, you won't like THE LONGEST YARD despite its subject matter: a bunch of convicts get together to play a game against their guards . . . Adam Sandler wasn't good, nor was he believable, as the main character/star character . . . Chris Rock is also wasted . . . the best thing that can be said about his character was that death (before the ending) took him away from any more suffering . . . rated PG-13.

C. I loved Joseph Finder's PARANOIA . . . his latest thriller, COMPANY MAN, is perhaps even better.

It is a page turner about a corporate executive who finds himself charged with murder . . . not only must he battle to stay out of jail, he must also fight to keep his company afloat.

Finder does everything right in this book . . . he gives you characters that you really care about . . . also, he uses dialogue that at least sounds realistic; for example:

"A throw-down. A piece I picked up at a scene in GR. Some crack dealer, who the hell knows where he got it. Point is, there's no record anywhere. No paperwork, no purchase permit, nothing. Clean."

And though there are many twists and turns, they are realistic; i.e., they don't come out of you from left field . . . they also lead you right up to a very satisfying conclusion to the story.

Lastly, here were several passages of memorable writing; among them:

* Her choice of sleeping partner was a pretty reliable indicator of her mental state: Elmo when she was feeling sprightly; Curious George when she was feeling mischievous; her little Beanie Baby koala, Eucalyptus, when she wanted to nurture someone needier than herself. But Pooh always meant she was feeling especially fragile and in need of the ultimate comfort of her longest-serving pal. For several months after her mommy's death, she slept with Pooh every night. Recently, she'd trade in Pooh for some of the other guys, which was a sign that she was starting to feel a little stronger.

* I guess. We first had an inkling of that when he was three and he started composing haiku using the letters from his alphabet soup.

* Nick felt a little acid come up his gullet as he stared at the silver-mesh fabric panels in front of him. There were certain things that money and position protected you from. There were certain things that it didn't. When his driver's license needed renewing a couple of years ago, he didn't stand in line at the DMV, the way he once had to. The CEO of a major corporation didn't wait in line at the DMV. Some young staffer from the corporate counsel's office did, and it got taken care of. Nick couldn't remember the last time he'd waited in line for a taxi at an airport. Senior execs had cars; you looked for the guy holding a sign that said Conover. And senior execs of major corporations didn't haul their own baggage. That got taken care of, too, even when Nick was flying commercial. But when the weather was bad, it was bad for you too. When your car was stuck in traffic, it didn't matter what your company's valuation was; traffic was traffic. Those things were the Levelers. The things that reminded you that you lived in the same world and were going to end up in the same place as everybody else. You thought you were a master of the universe, but you were just lording it over a little box of dirt, the tyrant of a terrarium. Having a kid who hated you, that had to be a leveler too. And so was sickness.

D. Just finished listening to LUCKIEST MAN: THE LIFE AND DEATH OF LOU GEHRIG by Jonathan Eig . . . it was one of the best sports biographies I have ever come across.

Gehrig was perhaps best known for his consecutive-games streak that held up for more than half a century . . . the author obviously covers this in some detail, especially the last few games (in almost heartbreaking detail) . . . you can almost feel the health difficulties that the player is enduring just to be able to make it to the ballpark.

But LUCKIEST MAN has much more to recommend it, even if you're not a baseball fan . . . you'll enjoy hearing about his interpersonal struggles with Babe Ruth, as well as about how he had to keep his mother and wife apart for much of his life.

You'll also get to hear about his courageous battle with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, the disease that now bears his name . . . it will leave you feeling grateful that you are alive.

Perhaps the biggest thrill I had in listening to this book as opposed to reading it was that it contained an excerpt from his actual farewell speech . . . I also enjoyed Edward Hermann's superb job of narration.

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5. VCR alert

A. MY NAME IS EARL debuts on Tuesday at 9 p.m. on NBC . . . according to TV GUIDE, "Jason Lee brings an endearing life to the title role of Earl, who wins \$100,000 on a lottery card and loses it when he's hit by a car. In the hospital, Earl then experiences an epiphany . . . and resolves to right his wrongs."

B. My two favorite TV shows return this week . . . NIP/TUCK kicks off its third season on Tuesday at 10 p.m. on FX . . . CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM starts on Sunday at 10 p.m. on HBO.

C. EVERYBODY HATES CHRIS features Chris Rock narrating tales of his Brooklyn childhood . . . just about every reviewer is calling this one "the show" to watch . . . Thursdays at 9 p.m. on UPN.

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6. Power

Two political candidates were having a hot debate.

Finally, one of them jumped up and yelled at the other, "What about the powerful interest that controls you?"

And the other guy screamed back, "You leave my wife out of this!"

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7. Websites

A. The following website offers an incredible amount of information via free searches. You can look up addresses, zip codes, information about public schools, weather, phone numbers, demographics, etc. For more information, please click: <http://www.melissadata.com/lookups/>

This website also has a great section for anyone searching to find a home. Just click on the link "Zip Home Sales" and you will find the number of home sales and average selling price listed by zip code.

B. If you'd like to see the worst opening sentence of an imaginary novel, please click: <http://www2.sjsu.edu/depts/english/2004.htm>

These submissions are from this year's Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest, held annually by the English department at San Jose State University . . . the school runs an annual contest to

memorialize the Victorian novelist Edward Bulwer-Lytton, who began his 1930 novel PAUL CLIFFORD with the line, "It was dark and stormy night."

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

To see the many books I've reviewed and generally enjoyed, go to Blaine's Best (on the left) and then letter "O" . . . check the second paragraph there, and you'll be taken to my reviews that have been posted at amazon.com's website.

If you like any of my reviews and/or find them helpful, let amazon.com know by doing the following:

1. Go to the amazon.com website:

<http://www.amazon.com>

2. Type-in a recent book I reviewed; e.g., COACH: LESSONS IN THE GAME OF LIFE by Michael Lewis.

3. Find my copy of the review of that book. (Probably toward the top of all reviews.)

4. When asked if the review was helpful, click "Yes."

Doing so will enable me to move higher amazon's list of "Top 500" reviewers . . . currently, I'm #477 based on 1,925 favorable comments on my 461 reviews.

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8. Computer tip

Sometimes, if e-mail doesn't go through to you or if you sent something, and it doesn't go through, check with your ISP (Internet Service Provider) . . . any one of a number of things could have gone wrong.

That was happening with e-mail I was sending to three friends . . . for some reason, whatever I sent just didn't get through . . . so when I called AOL, here it what I was told:

Please ask the recipient of e-mail to ask their system administrator or Internet Service Provider to call the AOL Postmaster Hotline at 1.888.212.5537. The Postmaster Team, which is available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, can work with the ISP to quickly resolve the issue.

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9. Breads, part 1 of 2

On the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah (this coming October 4), there is a ceremony called Tashlich. Jews traditionally go to the ocean or a stream or river to pray and throw bread crumbs into the water. Symbolically, the fish devour their sins.

Occasionally, people ask what kind of breadcrumbs should be

thrown. Here are suggestions for breads which may be most appropriate for specific sins and misbehaviors:

For ordinary sins
White Bread

For erotic sins
French Bread

For particularly dark sins
Pumpernickel

For complex sins
Multi-Grain

For twisted sins
Pretzels

For tasteless sins
Rice Cakes

For sins of indecision
Waffles

For sins committed in haste
Matzo

For sins of chutzpah
Fresh Bread

For substance abuse
Stoned Wheat

For use of heavy drugs
Poppy Seed

For petty larceny
Stollen

For committing auto theft
Caraway

For timidity/cowardice
Milk Toast

For ill-temperedness
Sourdough

For silliness, eccentricity
Nut Bread

For not giving full value
Shortbread

For jingoism, chauvinism
Yankee Doodles

For excessive irony
Rye Bread

For unnecessary chances
Hero Bread

For telling bad jokes/puns
Corn Bread

(concluded next week)

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10. A quote I like

Bill Murray, the comedian, doesn't mind his reputation for being difficult--especially if it keeps obnoxious people away. He observes:

"It makes me think of that line: 'You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar.' People say this to you with a straight face, and I always say, 'Who. Wants. Flies!'"

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11. Thought for the day

SHMILY

My grandparents were married for over half a century and played their own special game from the time they had met each other. The goal of their game was to write the word SHMILY in a surprise place for the other to find.

They took turns leaving SHMILY around the house and as soon as one of them discovered it, it was their turn to hide it once more.

They dragged SHMILY with their fingers through the sugar and flour containers to await whoever was preparing the next meal. They smeared it in the dew on the windows overlooking the patio (where my grandma always fed us warm, homemade pudding with blue food coloring).

SHMILY was written in the steam left on the mirror after a hot shower, where it would reappear bath after bath. At one point, my grandmother even unrolled an entire roll of toilet paper, to leave SHMILY on the very last sheet.

There was no end to the places SHMILY would pop up. Little notes with SHMILY scribbled hurriedly were found on dashboards and car seats or taped to steering wheels.

The notes were stuffed inside shoes and left under pillows. SHMILY was written in the dust upon the mantel and traced in the ashes of the fireplace. This mysterious word was as much a part of my grandparents' house as the furniture.

It took me a long time before I was able to fully appreciate my grandparents' game. Skepticism has kept me from believing in true love--one that is pure and enduring.

However, I never doubted my grandparents' relationship. They had love down pat. It was more than their flirtatious little games; it was a way of life. Their relationship was based on a devotion and passionate affection, which not everyone is lucky to experience.

Grandma and Grandpa held hands every chance they could. They stole kisses, as they bumped into each other in their tiny kitchen. They finished each other's sentences and shared the daily crossword puzzle and word jumble.

My grandma whispered to me about how cute my grandpa was, how handsome and old he had grown to be. She claimed that she really knew "how to pick 'em."

Before every meal they bowed their heads and gave thanks, marveling at their blessings: a wonderful family, good fortune and each other.

But there was a dark cloud in my grandparents' lives--my grandmother had breast cancer. The disease had first appeared ten years earlier.

As always, Grandpa was with her every step of the way. He comforted her in their yellow room, painted that way so she could always be surrounded by sunshine, even when she was too sick to go outside.

Now the cancer was again attacking her body. With the help of a cane and my grandfather's steady hand, they went to church every morning.

My grandmother grew steadily weaker until, finally, she could not leave the house anymore. For a while, Grandpa would go to church alone, praying to God to watch over his wife.

Then one day, what we all dreaded finally happened. Grandma was gone.

SHMILY.

It was scrawled in yellow on the pink ribbons of my grandmother's funeral bouquet. As the crowd thinned and the last mourners turned to leave, my aunts, uncles, cousins and other family members came forward and gathered around Grandma one last time.

Grandpa stepped up to my grandmother's casket and (taking a shaky breath) he began to sing to her. Through his tears and grief, the song came--a deep and throaty lullaby.

Shaking with my own sorrow, I will never forget that moment. For I knew that, although I couldn't begin to fathom the depth of their love, I had been privileged to witness its unmatched beauty.

SHMILY:
See How Much I Love You!

Author Unknown
(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

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12. Advance planning department

A. I'm speaking on "Positioning: How to Differentiate Yourself from the Competition" at Bucks on Thursday at 6:30 p.m. . . . location is Penn Hall, Room 410 . . . just show up if you'd like to attend the session as my guest.

B. Please feel free to register for either of Cynthia's "Move Your Body" courses that she will be teaching over the next few months . . . they are designed for men and women of all ages who wish to have a (to quote from the brochure):

Fun, easy way to get aerobic exercise by following simple dance moves to music from around the world. Start with stretches to warm up and end feeling wonderfully relaxed. The result will leave you feeling renewed and invigorated.

It will be offered by Hillsborough Adult Community Education at Hillsborough High School in Hillsborough, NJ, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. on October 6, 20, 27, November 3, 17, and December 1 . . . call 908.722.0233 to register.

It will be also offered by Franklin Township Adult Community Education at Sampson G. Smith School in Somerset, NJ, from 4:45-5:45 p.m. on October 11, 18, 25, November 8, 15, 22, 29, and December 6 . . . call 732.873.1227 to register.

C. HOLD THIS DATE: Thursday, October 20, at 7 p.m. . . . PAPER CLIPS, an outstanding documentary, will be shown on the Bucks campus . . . afterwards, the film's producer will discuss it . . . more details to follow in future issues.

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PS. Here's hope you get to enjoy the remaining day of summer, on Wednesday, and that your fall gets off to a great start on Thursday . . . also, that you make it a great rest of the week.

And don't forget to join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane Katrina's wrath, as well as for a quick return of our remaining soldiers back from Iraq.

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me

e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention
this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #467

9.12.2005

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1. Reflections

A. CONGRATULATIONS to Edward Croftcheck, a former student and current reader of BLAINESWORLD . . . he was recently named to return as an "Ambassador" at Bucks County Community College, which means he'll continue to give tours to new prospective students, assist with the College's telecounseling events, and participate in county and community recruiting efforts.

B. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had another great weekend . . . on Friday night, we saw GYPSY--presented by the Somerset Valley Players (908.369.7469) in Hillsborough, NJ.

The show was performed with enthusiasm by a lively cast . . . Sheila Wolf, as Mama Rose, was magnificent . . . we also liked the accompanying orchestration.

Do catch this production if you can; it runs until September 25.

On Saturday afternoon, we were inspired by a motivational speaker (Jessica Melore) at the Bridgewater Library . . . she's a 23-year old dynamo who has survived a massive heart attack at the age of 16, a heart transplant, an amputation and cancer . . . yet rather than get down by any of this, she has devoted her life to helping others.

We loved her favorite saying: "Dream as if you'll live forever, but live as if you only have today."

And we plan to follow her advice; i.e., to register as organ donors . . . to join us, please click:

http://www.transweb.org/reference/maps/opo_image_map/njotsnnj.htm

Or call:

1.800.SHARE.NJ (1.800.742.7365).

Should you want to contact Jessica directly to have her as a motivational speaker, please click:

<http://www.jessicamelore.com>

C. On Saturday night, we joined a bunch of friends for a belated celebration of our July 10 wedding at Jean Pierre's Cooking School (215.968.7580) in Newtown, PA . . . he and his wife Joan prepared a delicious meal for us from scratch, right in front of everybody . . . we feasted on the following: a combination potato leek/mushroom soup, salmon in a puffed pastry with lobster sauce, duck, steak, and dessert sampler . . . one dish was seemingly better than the next.

Cynthia and I even contributed . . . we did some taste-testing of the soup, as you can see for yourself:



Liz Du Four (215.357.5068), a talented pianist and vocalist, added to our enjoyment of the festivities . . . we got a particular kick out of hearing our friends Kevin, Barry and Jody, and Gail join Liz for several songs . . . Cynthia also participated, repeating her rendition of "You Send Me" that she sang to me at our wedding.

**** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD ****

This week, it goes to Josh Rubinsky (215.925.1470)--the lawyer we use for Union business at Bucks.

Josh is a partner in the law firm of Brodie & Rubinsky in Philadelphia . . . when we first began using him several years ago, he faced a difficult task; i.e., he had to replace his partner and our previous attorney, Michael Brodie.

Michael had given us many years of excellent service . . . I'm pleased to report that Josh is continuing the tradition.

He really knows his stuff, as well as our contract . . . and he is one of the rare lawyers I know who returns ALL calls and e-mails in a timely fashion.

2. FYI

Terry Kay, author, in 100 WAYS TO BEAT THE BLUES (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11) by Tanya Tucker:

Here is something else I have learned, a little trick. If you want to rid yourself of the blues, find someone who needs you and spend some time with them. When you're giving, the blues can't stay clogged up inside you. It's a fact. I could write a book about it.

FYI, part 2

* Jack in Pennsylvania:

Please help me as I walk to make a difference in the lives of all people affected by diabetes. Join my America's Walk for Diabetes Team!

America's Walk for Diabetes is the premier walking event held to benefit the American Diabetes Association. Participants across the country get involved in a healthy activity while also doing their part to fight diabetes.

There are many reasons to participate. Walk because you have diabetes. Walk because you know a friend, child, or other family member who is affected by diabetes. Walk to make a difference. Your first step is to sign up using the link below!

The funds we raise will support the American Diabetes Association's important research, information and advocacy efforts and its mission: to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.

Join me, and together we can take steps towards fighting diabetes! Click here to view the team page for my Team Andrew website:

http://main.diabetes.org/site/TR?team_id=88848&fl=en_US&s_tafld=23659&pg=team&fr_id=2775

NOTE:

The above website contains information on Jack's walk, as well as on others throughout Pennsylvania and the rest of the country.

* Morgan in Pennsylvania:

Couple of good resources [for finding addresses of contractors]: <http://www.zabasearch.com>;

Bucks County e-government (anyone with a house can be located and he can also see who else has sued him);

or his township--if he pulled a permit, they should have gotten him registered. He can get his address from them.

Let me know what I can do to help.

* Joann in Pennsylvania:

Bucks County Community College Cape Cod Whale Watch Trip
Provincetown, MA
September 22 – 25, 2005

For the past 24 years, thousands of nature enthusiasts have participated in our trips to observe the great whales in their offshore environment.

Prices start at \$119.00 per person for 4 to a room. (BCCC employees and students \$99.00 per person).

Call 215.968.8409 for more information.

* Robin in Pennsylvania:

Thursday, weekly--June thru Sept. . . . Israeli Dancing . . . Outdoors!
Philadelphia Museum of Art at the top of the museum steps in Philadelphia.
Instruction begins at 7:30 p.m., dancing until 11 p.m. When there is bad weather or a scheduling conflict, dancing will be indoors at Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El.

Families with children are welcome early in the evening! For additional information, call 215.760.6800.

And here's a great website for Israeli dancing:

http://www.rakdan.com/content/weekly_dance/

I've not yet gone, but my brother-in-law and niece are regular dancers. They live in Connecticut and traipse all over the NE to dance; my niece also goes to dance camps. They both say Don is THE BEST.

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3. High prices everywhere

A friend and I were visiting Israel, when we decided to take a cruise on the Sea of Galilee. The boat owner operator quoted us an astronomical price. "You've got to be kidding," yelled my friend.

"But these are the waters on which Christ himself walked," the man protested.

"And no wonder, if that's how much it is to take the boat," my friend shot back.

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4. Reviews ...

A. Lately, I've been seeing a bunch of movies that have been reviewed favorably but have been a terrible disappointment when I've seen them . . . add THE CONSTANT GARDENER to that list . . . it is the convoluted story of a low-level British diplomat who sets out to find out why his wife was killed . . . the premise could have been interesting, and both the music and photography were excellent . . . but I did not particularly care for either of the main characters in the film (Ralph Fiennes and Rachel Weisz, a Kate Winslet look-alike or is the other way around?), and I found myself wishing that it had ended much sooner than its very long 130 minutes . . . rated R.

B. FEVER PITCH is now out in DVD . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #446 follows:

Saw MILLIONS with Cynthia and her mother, and despite the great reviews, we all just couldn't get into it . . . the English accents were very hard to follow, plus the plotline just didn't do

it for us . . . so we were decided to leave after about 45 minutes and were able to find another film just starting: FEVER PITCH . . . this is a cute romantic comedy, starring Jimmy Fallon and Drew Barrymore . . . it is about a successful woman who thinks she has finally met the perfect guy; i.e., until baseball season begins--and she has to compete with his first true love, the Boston Red Sox . . . there's not that much chemistry between Fallon and Barrymore, yet overall, I'd recommend FEVER PITCH if you're not looking for something too deep . . . however, if you're a Red Sox fan, methinks this will be one of the best flicks you've ever seen . . . rated PG-13.

C. Who hasn't had the blues?

Yet the real question should be: What do you do about them?

Country singer Tanya Tucker in 100 WAYS TO BEAT THE BLUES (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11) helps you answer that second one with a collection of tips from such celebrities as Garth Brooks, Brenda Lee, Sir Arthur C. Clarke, and NASCAR's Geoff Bodine . . . in addition, she got ideas from 30 other "just plain" folks, including a farmer, private detective, doctor, and retired gospel radio-show host.

You might not find anything brilliantly original in this book, yet that said, it made me smile at times--such as when I read that former President George H. W. Bush yells at his television . . . I also found myself shaking my head in agreement with such advice as the following given by actress Morgan Fairchild: When it comes to the blues, it's always better to give than to receive.

100 WAYS TO BEAT THE BLUES, by the way, would be an excellent gift if you're looking for an ideal way just to tell somebody that you're thinking of him or her . . . any recipient would benefit from such other useful tidbits as the following:

[Brenda Lee] The year 2000 marked by fiftieth year in show business. I don't often get down, but when I do, I reflect on how blessed I've been in my life. Then I think of something I can do for someone else. Offering a helping hand to another will lift you up faster than anything.

[Paul Gahlinger]: So, if feeling blue is a matter of chemistry, and we can change brain chemistry by sheer thought alone, then it seems logical to stop feeling blue just by deciding to do so. But if that fails, I personally reach for the ultimate weapon: a pint of Ben & Jerry's New York Super Fudge Chunk.

[Robert Westbrook]: Here's what I've learned: Money can be nice. It can even be necessary for a lot of things. But you can't buy away the blues. And money didn't buy my parents long and fruitful lives. Instead, concentrate on the things that you already own, and that no one can take from you, whether you've got money or not: Music. Sunsets. Loyal friends. Joy. Inner peace. That's the expensive stuff.

D. David McCullough has helped make me become a history buff . . . I've read his biographies of both Truman and John Adams, and though they were both long, they kept me interested in the subjects until the very end.

I just finished listening to 1776, his latest book--read and written by him . . . and though it is a bit shorter than his previous efforts, it is every bit as exciting . . . it truly makes history come alive, which is amazing since I thought I had known a great deal about the subject (America's fight for independence).

What McCullough does is make you care about the men fighting the battle . . . you get to learn more about Washington and what a great leader . . . but you also get to appreciate the generals he was up against and what motivated them.

I particularly enjoyed learning more out the crossing of the Delaware, in that until recently, I lived in Washington Crossing . . . so now, when I cross the river (via what seems to be the world's narrowest bridge), I'll have a greater appreciation of it!

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5. VCR alert

A. HEAD CASES debuts on Wednesday at 9 p.m. on Fox . . . it is a quirky legal drama, starring Chris O'Donnell and an actor who has always caught my attention: Adam Goldberg.

B. THE BIGGEST LOSER returns for a second season on Thursday at 9 p.m. on NBC . . . this is a reality show about 14 dieters competing for a \$250,000 prize . . . it is surprisingly compelling.

C. Movies based on real-life stories are sometimes interesting . . . this should definitely be the case with AMBULANCE GIRL, if for no other reason than Kathy Bates stars as an emergency medical technician . . . Thursday at 9 p.m. on Lifetime.

***** MR. CURIOUS HERE *****

The new TV season is upon us . . . for joy, for joy! . . . seriously, do let me know what you think about HEAD CASES (above) and/or any new shows you may catch . . . what's worth viewing? and, perhaps even more importantly, is there anything that should definitely be missed?

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6. Parting shot

It was impossible to ignore the couple in the booth next to ours. They were arguing so loudly everyone in the restaurant was staring. She repeatedly accused him of seeing someone else. He kept denying it.

Finally, she gave up, but not without a parting shot: "Now I know how your wife must feel!"

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7. Websites

A. Even if you're not a paid subscriber to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, you can access this FREE website if you have any interest in the subject of entrepreneurship:

<http://www.startupjournal.com>

You will find all sorts of articles about starting your own business, finances, businesses for sale, and various opportunities geared toward people who own, or want to own their own business. It's a great resource and has many useful ideas and suggestions.

B. If you subscribe to the belief that kindness to animals builds a better place for all of us, then please click:

<http://www.bestfriends.org>

You'll find information on how to work toward a society wherein there are no homeless pets . . . in addition, you'll find some amazing stories about how some pets survived Hurricane Katrina and what you can do to help still others.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

On the left, you'll see "Radio Show" . . . go to that link if you want to see a history of my radio career . . . you can also hear one of my shows.

As you may have read in a past issue, a recent management change at WWFM has resulted in my show being taken off the air . . . but, hopefully, I'll resurface soon again . . . on another station and/or even with my own cable show.

Please do keep me in mind if you have any media contacts for me to pursue with respect to the above possibilities.

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8. Computer tip

Cynthia does something with her e-mail that I wish I could do more often; i.e., she processes it as she goes through it . . . that way, she doesn't have to keep going through some pieces of e-mail over and over.

The above is also a basic time management principle; i.e., handle each piece of paper only once . . . Cynthia does this with her e-mail . . . she also keeps her finger near her delete key at all times, which results in having her the smallest inbox of saved items that I've ever seen.

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9. English as a twelfth language

English is becoming the international language of business. But you wouldn't know it by these signs, reportedly spotted around the globe: A Bangkok dry cleaner asks its customers to: "Drop your trousers here for best results." A Norwegian cocktail lounge isn't asking for much: "Ladies are requested not to have children in the bar." In the window of a Barcelona travel agency that may not last long: "Go away." A laundry in Rome proves it knows la dolce vita: "Ladies, leave

your clothes here and spend the afternoon having a good time." Obviously, not everyone works for a salary at the Budapest zoo: "Please do not feed the animals. If you have any suitable food, give it to the guards on duty."

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10. A quote I like

When life gets you down, just keep this in mind: The grass may look greener on the other side. But believe me, it's just as hard to cut!--Little Richard, quoted in 100 WAYS TO BEAT THE BLUES (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11) by Tanya Tucker

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11. Thought for the day

As you can see, 100 WAYS TO BEAT THE BLUES (see also Sections 2, 4C and 10) by Tanya Tucker is another book that I really liked, as evidenced by the fact that I have now cited it four separate times in this newsletter . . . the following passage was written by Rocky Bleier, former NFL running back:

As a young man I learned a very valuable lesson: I have a choice. Every morning when I wake up I have a choice in how I want to spend my day. I have a choice in how I want to feel, how I treat people, and what my disposition will be. For most of my life I have been very positive. It's just easier. It takes a lot of energy to be negative. That outlook got me through Vietnam, two years of rehab, and twelve years of getting the crap beat out of me in the NFL. But on those rare occasions when I allow myself to wallow in self-pity and beat myself up for being human, all I have to do to beat the blues is remind myself that I am not in a fox-hole in Vietnam, or a bed in the hospital, or looking into the eyes of a 250-pound linebacker who wants to hurt me. Now I look into the eyes of my two little girls, who are six and five years old, and I see all the hope, love, and wonderment they possess. It reminds me that I have a choice. They need me. Life is good.

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12. Advance planning department

A. I'm speaking on "Positioning: How to Differentiate Yourself from the Competition" at Bucks on Thursday at 6:30 p.m. and repeated on Tuesday, September 20 at the same time . . . e-mail me if you'd like to attend, so that I can get you the room location.

B. Please feel free to register for either of Cynthia's "Move Your Body" courses that she will be teaching over the next few months . . . they are designed for men and women of all ages who wish to have a (to quote from the brochure):

Fun, easy way to get aerobic exercise by following simple dance moves to music from around the world. Start with stretches to warm up and end feeling wonderfully relaxed. The result will leave you feeling renewed and invigorated.

It will be offered by Hillsborough Adult Community Education at Hillsborough High School in Hillsborough, NJ, from 6:30-7:30 p.m. on October 6, 20, 27, November 3, 17, and December 1 . . . call 908.722.0233 to register.

It will be also offered by Franklin Township Adult Community Education at Sampson G. Smith School in Somerset, NJ, from 4:45-5:45 p.m. on October 11, 18, 25, November 8, 15, 22, 29, and December 6 . . . call 732.873.1227 to register.

C. Michelle in Pennsylvania wrote to invite readers to the following career workshops she is presenting:

Teen Workshop for ages 13 to 19

When : Saturday, October 1, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

When: Saturday, October 8, 1-4 p.m.

Location: The new Community Conservatory of Music,
4459 West Swamp Road, Doylestown, PA 18901

Cost : \$75.00 per student

Register : Online at <http://www.cbsd.org>

(go to the Community School link on the right)

or call 267.893.5700.

Adult Workshop for ages 20 to 100

When : Wednesdays, Sept 28, Oct. 5, 12, 19,
and 26, 7-7:45 p.m.

Location: Central Bucks West High School, Doylestown, PA

Cost : \$150.00 per student

Register :Online at <http://www.cbsd.org>

(go to the Community School link on the right)

or call 267.893.5700.

Costs include workbook and assessment. For more information call: 215.439.8977.

Workshops presented by Michelle Wirtz, career consultant/coach.

D. Natalie in Pennsylvania asked me to share this press release:
Get jazzed with Christina Pirello and friends

Christina Pirello, the Emmy award-winning host of the television series CHRISTINA COOKS on PBS and CN8, the Comcast Network, will present an all day off-air fundraising event for New Jersey Public Television and Radio at 25 S. Stockton Street, Trenton on October 15 from 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Doors open at 8 a.m. with a complimentary breakfast, and an optional yoga/stretching class will start at 9 a.m..

CHRISTINA COOKS airs on over 135 public television stations nationwide and 50 foreign countries.

Pirello is the author of several best-selling cookbooks.

Several other speakers will be joining Christina for the event. This will be a day to replenish your spirit, learn how to take better care of yourself and become inspired to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Christina will cook recipes to "glow by," and share her secrets on health, beauty and longevity and how to keep your glow!

Joining Christina will be Dr. Beth DuPree, breast cancer surgeon at St. Mary Medical Center, Langhorne, PA, who will speak about finding and creating balance in your health. Reverend Denny Daikeler, author of WHAT COLOR IS YOUR SLIPCOVER, is an interfaith minister and interior designer, who has appeared numerous times on the Home and Garden Channel. She will address the audience on the healing power of the home and how to live with passion, by letting go of the need to please, and by awakening to your own beauty and beliefs.

Lastly, Gloria Dodd, who trained with Deepak Chopra and is a certified educator in the Seven Spiritual Laws of Yoga and Primordial Sound Meditation, will share how you can feel more alive and reclaim the magic of living everyday, by finding balance and harmony.

Music to stir your heart will be provided by Jon Michaels of Nashville, Tennessee, who wrote the theme song for CHRISTINA COOKS, as well as performing an original song for each of the 26 episodes currently airing coast to coast.

Registration is limited to 150 participants, with proceeds benefiting NJN. Attendees will receive a healthy lunch, an autographed copy of Christina's book, GLOW, and a manual of healthy lifestyle tips from the speakers. For more information and to register, call 800.939.3909 or go online:

<http://www.christinacooks.com>

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane Katrina's wrath and, also, that we get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . in the meantime, make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is: bginbc@aol.com.

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

Blaine Greenfield
19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
Phone : 828.633.1049

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #466

9.5.05

In this issue:

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1. Reflections

A. The semester began at Bucks County Community College this past week with In-Service Day on Tuesday . . . there was the traditional Employee Breakfast, and yours truly was in the skit that was part of the morning's entertainment . . . I was none other than Justin Guiarini (minus the hair), a participant in a version of HOLYWOOD SQUARES . . . it was a lot of fun.

Classes then got underway the next day, and they seem to be going quite well . . . which reminds me of . . .

YOUR LAST CHANCE:

If you're a faculty member or student--or know of one, feel free to subscribe to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL at a special reduced educational rate . . . as many of you, I absolutely LOVE this publication . . . I often contend that half of what I know comes as a result of reading THE JOURNAL on a daily basis.

The rates are \$32 for 15 weeks, \$54 for 26 weeks or \$108 for 52 weeks . . . by subscribing through me (actually, via the College), you get the BEST RATES that are out there and, also, FREE access to the online version.

If interested, e-mail me back your name, address, e-mail address, and phone number, along with your desired length of subscription . . . please put JOURNAL SUBSCRIPTION in subject line.

B. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I went with friends to a lovely weekend at the Omega Institute for Holistic Studies (800.944.1001) in Rhinebeck, NY . . . it reminded me of my daughter Risa's days in summer camp . . . we stayed in a cabin, ate in a large mess hall and got to frolic on the beautiful grounds.

And frolic we did, participating in an improvisation workshop run by Alan Arkin . . . if the name sounds familiar, it is because he's been in such classic films as CATCH-22, THE IN-LAWS (the original version), THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING, THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING, etc.

We enjoyed ourselves and found the experience quite enlightening, too . . . our only regret: Arkin unfortunately got sick and was there for just half of the sessions . . . methinks we just might register for the program again, when and if it is next offered.

So with some extra time on our hands, we drove into town one night and dined outdoors at Gigi Trattoria (845.876.1007) . . . the evening was beautiful, and the food was delicious . . . being with our friends made it even better.

For dessert, we returned to the Omega to visit its cafe . . . although I wasn't that big a fan of food served at the regular meals (it is primarily vegetarian, but a saving grace for me was an excellent organic peanut butter), I did like what was available in this separate facility . . . the almond joy ice cream quickly became a real favorite of mine.

On Sunday, we attended a "Magical Poet" session, conducted by Rachel Fleischman . . . it was a very pleasant surprise, in that we had no expectations going into it . . . however, Cynthia and I both enjoyed the chance to explore our creativity via dancing, art and poetry--all within two hours . . . so much so that when and if we see that Fleischman will be conducting another workshop, we will make an attempt to be there.

NOTE:

Rachel Fleischman regularly teaches a "Dancing Your Bliss" course on Sunday afternoons in the San Francisco area . . . this is an ecstatic blend of yoga, dance, theater, contract improvisation and spirited journeying . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.dancingyourbliss.com/>

C. For those NOT on the West Coast and/or who just want to participate in a fabulous learning experience with Cynthia, please feel free to register for either of the "Move Your Body" courses she will be teaching over the next few months . . . they are designed for men and women of all ages who wish to have a (to quote from the brochure):

Fun, easy way to get aerobic exercise by following simple dance moves to music from around the world. Start with stretches to warm up and end feeling wonderfully relaxed. The result will leave you feeling renewed and invigorated.

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It will be also offered by Franklin Township Adult Community Education at Sampson G. Smith School in Somerset, NJ, from 4:45-5:45 p.m. on October 11, 18, 25, November 8, 15, 22, 29, and December 6 . . . call 732.873.1227 to register.

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

This week, it goes to Adena L. Twersky (973.731.5100, ext. 107)--director

Here goes. First of all, people need to realize that by looking in the "Trend" for contractors, they are looking for a "cheap" way to get what they want done. Looking for a cheap way to fix something is reality, but most of the time you will NEVER find a good contractor who is cheap that will do a quality job. NEVER! And if you do, chances are, the contractor grossly underbid the job!!!!

We all look for a cheap prices to get things done and that is fine. BUT Contractors who advertise in the "Trend" usually do not have the resources of a company like General Motors. We confuse this all the time. We think since we are the paying customer, we can demand all sorts of customer service. Ha!!!!!! Contractors are trades people and are NOT negotiators. They are NOT good at people skills and usually are NOT good business people. Remember, you sought them out to save money. When saving money is the goal, you will get short changed in other areas. So don't forget that!!!!!!!!!! They do not have secretaries. They do not have marketing departments. They do not have a staff to handle collections, bills and discrepancies or customer complaints. They are usually just a one man show and sometimes they may have a support person like their wife helping out. Period! They do not have degrees from Penn or Harvard. They are not supermen. Sadly most are contractors who are doing a balancing act between trying to keep customers happy and trying to make a decent living. Not Billions of dollars, but a decent living just like your writer would want to make. . . .

My suggestion? No matter what, be as nice as you can to a contractor--especially tradespeople. Think hard before you say something or make a demand. They are getting scarcer and scarcer to find!!!!!!!!!!!! No joke!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Fighting will get you nowhere. Trust me!!! Nowhere!!!!!!!!!! Look at the situation your friend is in now. Is it worth it?? Trying to demonstrate your machismo over someone else is not a good idea, especially with a contractor. Remember, as in the case of your friend, the contractor showed that your friend needed him more than he needed your friend, right? Your friend is now stuck and needs to take the contractor to court. And if he wins, all the contractor has to do is refund a portion of the money. And your friend's still stuck and will have to shell out more money besides the court costs. Think about it!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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3. All of the above

A husband stepped on one of those scales that tell you your fortune and weight and dropped in a quarter.

"Listen to this," he said to his wife, showing her a small, white card. "It says I'm energetic, bright, resourceful, and a great lover."

"Yeah," his wife nodded, "and it has your weight wrong, too."

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4. Reviews ...

A. RED EYE, directed by Wes Craven, is an old-fashioned thriller about a passenger in distress on an airplane . . . although the

premise isn't necessarily new, the film held my attention right from the beginning (in large part because of its effective use of music) . . . Rachel McAdams and Cillian Murphy were both believable as the two main characters . . . only the ending was disappointing, in that it was too easy to predict what was going to happen in virtually every scene over the last 10 minutes . . . yet that said, the film had a cute final line that put a smile on my face and left me thinking that this is one to recommend to others . . . rated PG-13.

B. Too often, when several stories interweave in a movie, the results are confusing . . . that's not the case with CRASH--a tale of two days in Los Angeles that I enjoyed and is now out on DVD . . . there's a collection of interrelated characters: a black police detective with a drugged out mother and a thieving younger brother, two car thieves who are constantly theorizing on society and race, the distracted district attorney and his irritated and pampered wife, a racist veteran cop (caring for a sick father at home) who disgusts his more idealistic younger partner, a successful black Hollywood director and his wife who must deal with racist cop, a Persian-immigrant father who buys a gun to protect his shop, a Hispanic locksmith and his young daughter who is afraid of bullets, and still more . . . somehow, their stories all manage to come together . . . you also begin to care for each person as his or her story unfolds on screen . . . the acting is excellent, and I particularly liked the performances by Terrence Howard and Matt Dillon . . . rated PG-13.

C. MONEYBALL by Michael Lewis was one of the best baseball books that I have ever read . . . so when I saw the author had another book out, COACH, I made it a point to get and read that one too . . . and I wasn't disappointed, though it is radically different from his earlier effort.

MONEYBALL dealt with the economics of professional baseball as it is played today . . . COACH is the story of the author's coach when he was in high school who now--because he hasn't changed his approach--isn't completely understood by his players or their parents . . . in fact, many even want to see him replaced.

And that's a shame because as Lewis notes, [he was] "a man trying to give boys a sense that their lives could be something other than ordinary."

Others have that same opinion, too, including Peyton Manning who might be the highest-paid player in pro football:

"As far as the respect and admiration I feel for the man, I couldn't put it into words. Just incredibly strong. For me, personally, he prepared me for so much of what I faced at the college and pro level. Unlike some coaches--for whom it's all about winning and losing--Coach Fitz was trying to make men out of people. I think he prepares you for life. And, if you want my opinion, the people who are screwing up high school sports are the parents. The parents who want their son to be the next Michael Jordan. Or the parent who beats up the coach, or gets into a fight in the stands. Here's a coach who is so intense. Yet he's never laid a hand on anybody."

My only complaint about COACH is that it is quite short--only

91 pages, in fact, in a 5" x 7" format . . . it left me wanting to read more about Lewis' high school days and how he described them . . . such as in the following passage:

Graduating from Babe Ruth to the varsity with only the slightest physical justification (I now resembled less a scoop of vanilla ice cream than a rounder Hobbit) meant coping with an out-of-control hormonal arms race. A few of our players had sprouted sideburns; but the enemy retaliated by growing terrifying little goatees and showing up at games with wives and, on one shocking occasion, children. I still had no muscles, and no facial hair, but I did have my own odor. I smelled, pretty much all the time, like Ben-Gay. I wore the stuff on my perpetually sore right shoulder and elbow. I wore it, also, on the bill of my cap, where Fitz had taught me to put it, to generate the grease for a spitball that might just compensate for my pathetic fastball. Everywhere I went that year, I emitted a vaguely medicinal vapor; and it is the smell of Ben-Gay I associate with what happened next.

D. Heard the Nightingale-Conant CD program, MIND DYNAMICS--written and read by Sidney Friedman . . . this most informative program will help you tap into your subconscious, which can be most useful in life because as the author notes, "The conscious mind knows a limited amount of information compared to the subconscious mind, which seems to know just about everything."

Some of what Friedman talks about might be a bit "out there" for some listeners; e.g., his use of a pendulum for making decisions . . . but if you can get beyond your natural skepticism, you'll get a lot of useful ideas that you may well want to implement.

What I particularly liked was the advice that I gained from listening that is applicable to practically any aspect of life . . . among the tidbits:

Every six months, reinvent yourself to maintain your vitality. Do the same for your company or organization. Complete the following statement: I am (fill-in the blank). Or if you're an organization, complete: We are (fill-in the blank).

The moment you decide not to impress anybody but yourself is the moment the road to greatness begins.

Put your major desire down in 2-7 words. Then put this down in several places. Don't tell others; they'll find out.

A wonderful way to love and be in life: Preserve the past, experience the present and anticipate the future--all at the same time.

If you write it out, you get it out.

Don't set goals, make predictions. Then make the predictions come true.

Action negates fear.

And, lastly, I loved Friedman's advice to go "fish," which is short for Fantastic Idea Shower Hour. It gave me a whole new spin on brainstorming; namely, you state a problem then ask others to come up with solutions. Others MUST respond to the solution with a statement such as "Super" or "Terrific." There can be

no "no's" on the first day. After an hour or so, move on to something else. Only review these ideas the next day. This can be done with others, as well as by yourself.

This fine program is available for purchase or rental . . . if you want to get it, please click:

<http://www.achievement.com>

Above is the tape rental club I belong to; i.e., the Achievement Tape Library . . . this a great way to hear CDs and/or audio cassette tapes, view videos, etc.--all for a fraction of what it would cost to buy them . . . call the head of the firm (Paul Arroyo) directly at 1.800.735.3660 and mention my name . . . that way, you'll be sure to pay even higher prices . . . NOT.

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5. VCR alert

A. An episode on P.O.V., "The Hobart Shakespeareans," follows L.A. teacher Rafe Esquith as he challenges his inner-city fifth-graders with the Bard . . . Tuesday at 8 p.m. on PBS Channel 13 (NYC) . . . PBS dates and times vary, so check your local listings.

B. GARBO, according to TV GUIDE, is a "fascinating portrait" that had the reviewer "in tears" when watching a rare screen test done when the actress was 44 . . . Tuesday at 8 p.m. on TCM.

C. Dave Matthews Band is featured on STORYTELLERS on Saturday at 10 p.m. on VH1.

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6. Boredom

Stuck in a strange city by bad weather, the drinker was bored. He sat in the bar and looking to strike up a conversation, turned to bartender and said, "Hey, about those Democrats in the Congress . . . "

"Stop. I don't permit talk about politics in my bar!" interrupted the bartender.

A few minutes later the gent tried again, "People say about the Pope . . . "

"No religion talk, either," the bartender cut in.

"Look, how about sex. Can I talk sex?"

"Sure."

"Then screw you."

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7. Websites

A. Even if you don't subscribe to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, please click:<http://www.careerjournal.com/>

This is a great FREE website, which has current employment information including articles about interviewing techniques, networking, career events, and information for finding a job.

B. Looking for a place to find, buy and sell used CDs, used games, and used DVDs? They sometimes even include prepaid envelopes. All you do is type-in the name of what you are looking for and up pops an offer price. Then you can either mail-in the item for cash or get a store credit. For more information, check and/or all of the following:

The nice addition this website offers is that when you sell three or more CDs for store credit, it will reimburse your shipping cost. To learn more, please click:
<http://www.wherehouse.com/>

The added feature with this website is that the company will pay you cash instead of store credit, as long as you don't mind taking 50 cents on the dollar. For more information, please click:
<http://www.secondspin.com/>

This website is also worth checking out. It claims to pay top dollar for your CDs, games and DVDs. To learn more, please click:
<http://www.uzed.com/>

It's worth doing some comparison shopping because the offers can vary quite a bit. And prices seem to change daily.

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click:
<http://www.blainesworld.net>

As you hopefully know by now, you should ALWAYS feel free to mention this newsletter to your friends, relatives, etc. . . . should they want to subscribe (AT NO COST), all they have to do is go to my homepage . . . then click on "Special Offer" at the bottom . . . it's that simple!

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8. Computer tip

If your mailbox is like mine, you probably accumulate a LOT of e-mail . . . quickly, too.

Once a month, I've started to make it more manageable by just eliminating ALL the e-mails from a certain date; for example, February of 2005 . . . I figure that if I haven't looked at or used it by now, that's as good a time as any to just use my trusty delete button.

It still leaves me with some six months of e-mail at any point in time!

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9. Invitation reply (to the scientist's ball)

Ampere was worried he wasn't current.

Audubon said he'd have to wing it.

Boyle said he was under too much pressure.

Darwin waited to see what evolved.

Descartes said he'd think about it.

Dr. Jekyll declined-he hadn't been feeling himself lately.

Edison thought it would be illuminating.

Einstein thought it would be relatively easy to attend.

Gauss was asked to attend because of his magnetic personality.

Hawking tried to string enough time together to make space in his schedule.

Heisenberg was uncertain that he could make it.

Hertz said in the future he planned to attend with greater frequency.

Mendel said he'd put some things together and see what came out.

Morse's reply: "I'll be there on the dot. Can't stop now, must dash."

Newton planned to drop in.

Ohm resisted the idea.

Pavlov was drooling at the thought.

Pierre and Marie Curie were radiating enthusiasm.

Schrodinger had to take his cat to the vet. Or did he?

Stephenson thought the whole idea was loco.

Volta was electrified, and Archimedes buoyant at the thought.

Watt reckoned it would be a good way to let off steam.

Wilbur Wright accepted, provided he and Orville could get a flight.

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10. A quote I like

Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind.--Theodore Geisel (1904-1991), aka Dr. Seuss, beloved author of children's books

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11. Thought for the day

Having a bad day?

In a hospital's Intensive Care Unit, patients always died in the same bed, on Sunday morning, at about 11:00 a.m., regardless of their medical condition.

This puzzled the doctors and some even thought it had something to do with the supernatural. No one could solve the mystery as to why the deaths occurred around 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, so a worldwide team of experts was assembled to investigate the cause of the incidents.

The next Sunday morning, a few minutes before 11:00 a.m., all of the doctors and nurses nervously waited outside the ward to see for themselves what the terrible phenomenon was all about. Some were holding wooden crosses, prayer books, and other holy objects to ward off the evil spirits.

Just when the clock struck 11:00, Pookie Johnson, the part-time Sunday sweeper, entered the ward and unplugged the life support system so he could use the vacuum cleaner.

Still having a bad day?

The average cost of rehabilitating a seal after the Exxon Valdez Oil spill in Alaska was \$80,000.00. At a special ceremony, two of the most expensively saved animals were being released back into the wild amid cheers and applause from onlookers.

A minute later, in full view, a killer whale ate them both.

Still think you are having a bad day?

A woman came home to find her husband in the kitchen shaking frantically, almost in a dancing frenzy, with some kind of wire running from his waist towards the electric kettle. Intending to jolt him away from the deadly current, she whacked him with a handy plank of wood, breaking his arm in two places. Up to that moment, he had been happily listening to his Walkman.

STILL think you're having bad day?

Two animal rights defenders were protesting the cruelty of sending pigs to a slaughterhouse in Bonn, Germany. Suddenly, all two thousand pigs broke loose and escaped through a broken fence, stampeding madly.

The two helpless protesters were trampled to death.

What . . . STILL having a Bad Day?

Iraqi terrorist Khay Rahnajet didn't pay enough postage on a letter bomb.

It came back with "Return to Sender" stamped on it. Forgetting it was the bomb, he opened it and was blown to bits.

There now . . . feeling better?????

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12. Advance planning department

A. CHANCE TO WIN \$500 . . . and learn "How to market yourself" . . . be my guest at a FREE presentation at the College on Tuesday, September 6 at 6:30 p.m. . . . for room location, please e-mail me with the following words in your subject line:
SEPTEMBER 6 INVITE

B. A nice invitation recently came from Laura in New Jersey: The Fall Series of FREE Irish Dance Classes will start on Thursday night, September 8.

This is Kaeli dancing, which is Irish folk dancing--NOT step dancing.

It is FREE and lots of fun as well as a good aerobic workout . . . AND . . . you will learn to dance the Kaeli dances when Willy Lynch is playing at Mannion's or some other place.

The classes are given in the PeopleCare Center, 120 Funderne Avenue, Bridgewater, NJ; 908.927.0618. Park in the back and enter in the main entrance, which is recessed between the two main parts of the building.

The lessons start at 7:30 and go to 9:00 PM.

You meet lots of nice people and have fun. You do not need to bring a partner. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE IRISH.

Don't worry if you miss the first the first session or cannot make all of them. Newcomers get a lot of individual attention by the great instructors, and they do keep going over the dances. Also, there is a series of sessions in the winter that ends right before St. Patrick's Day.

It is sponsored by the local chapter of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, which is an Irish organization that promotes Irish culture as well as quite a few charities.

If I can do it, you can do it!

C. And Bev in Pennsylvania wrote to extend this invite to all: A free community-wide event, "KESHER: Jewish Americans & Israel--Making the Connection," will be presented at Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel in Elkins Park on Sunday, September 18 at 9:45 a.m.

Featured speakers will be Mitchell Bard of the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise and Roz Pothstein of StandWithUs. An optional breakfast (\$5.00) will be available at 8:45. Registration is required. Call 215.887.2832 for details.

The program is sponsored by the Israel Action Committees of KI and Old York Road Temple-Beth Am and is made possible in part by a grant from the Kehillah of Old York Road, a project of the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia.

My husband Jim and I are on the planning committee for this program.
One assurance: The program will conclude in time for all to see the
Eagles home opener that afternoon.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon recover from Hurricane
Katrina's wrath and, also, that we get our remaining soldiers back
from Iraq . . . in the meantime, make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need
to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send
me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the
weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter
that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites;
reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me
e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention
this missive to your friends.

Blaine Greenfield
19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #465

8.29.2005

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1. Reflections

A. CONGRATULATIONS to Tobi Bruhn, a reader and friend, who was just named interim executive director of the Bucks County Community College Foundation . . . he had previously done a great job as coordinator of development projects, and I'm sure he will continue to do a fine job . . . his enthusiasm and competence make it a real pleasure to work with him.

***** SPECIAL OFFER *****

The mention of Bucks reminds me that my classes will be starting this week . . . consequently, I'd like to invite you consider the following invitation:

If you're a faculty member or student--or know of one, feel free to subscribe to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL at a special reduced educational rate . . . as many of you, I absolutely LOVE this publication . . . I often contend that half of what I know comes as a result of reading THE JOURNAL on a daily basis.

The rates are \$32 for 15 weeks, \$54 for 26 weeks or \$108 for 52 weeks . . . by subscribing through me (actually, via the College), you get the BEST RATES that are out there and, also, FREE access to the online version.

If interested, e-mail me back your name, address, e-mail address, and phone number, along with your desired length of subscription . . . please put JOURNAL SUBSCRIPTION in subject line.

B. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had the pleasure of having my folks and brother visit our new place . . . we're getting a kick out of showing it off to others and who knows: you may well be the next to come see the Greenfields of Belle Meade!

We're also getting to enjoy the many fine dining establishments in the area . . . one of our favorites has become Tiger's Tale (609.9218336) in nearby Skillman, NJ . . . we often get steaks there, and Cynthia says that their ribeye is always excellent . . . the place is often crowded and the later you get there, the longer you have to wait for a table and the noisier it becomes . . . so our strong recommendation is to get there early.

C. On Sunday, we took a ride to nearby New Hope, PA, to see STATE FAIR at the Bucks County Playhouse (215.862.2041) . . . we enjoyed it, but did not love it--probably because the show is not one of Rodgers & Hammerstein's better musicals . . . the songs are pleasant enough, but there are no truly memorable numbers . . . and the storyline is bland, at best.

Nevertheless, the cast was very lively . . . we also thought the dancing was excellent . . . the background "canned" orchestration was somewhat disconcerting . . . it sounded somewhat similar for every song.

STATE FAIR runs through September 4.

Afterwards, we went to Mother's Restaurant (215.862.5857), also in New Hope, for dinner . . . this is one exception to a rule that I typically follow: "Never eat at a place with Mom's or Mother's in the name" . . . our burgers were fantastic, and we also enjoyed the sweet potato fries that accompanied them . . . the salads were excellent, too.

I hadn't been to Mother's for quite some time; methinks that was a mistake that we'll be rectifying by many return visits in the future.

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

This week, it goes to Kristen Holland--an EZ Move representative with Verizon . . . when we moved, we had to merge Cynthia's cellphone account into mine . . . and we had to get her a new number (a real pain!), in that she had been in a different zone and for some reason, Verizon did not allow her to retain her original number.

After getting placed on hold far too many times and, also, not being able to get through to a live representative, I finally reached Kristen . . . she answered all my questions and provided superior service . . . most impressively, she did a great job on follow-up; i.e., she said she'd call me back a few days later--and she actually did.

For some inexplicable reason, people calling back when they say they will is no longer the norm . . . so when it happens, I'm impressed.

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2. FYI

I'm often asked about how to find out whether working for a particular company or in a certain industry is the "right" decision . . . here's how I often respond: try it out first; e.g., by taking a part-time job.

I recently gave this advice to a friend who is thinking about investing in a franchise operation . . . he has gone into the store and has liked both the product and the concept . . . however, I told him, it's a big difference between liking something and investing a great deal of money and time in it . . . but by working a few months at the store he likes (or some other similar one), he'll get a much better feel about whether the opportunity is a fit for him.

Years ago, I told another friend to do the same when he was thinking about starting up a carwash business . . . after a few short months working in the industry, he decided it wasn't for him.

FYI, part 2

* Diane in New Jersey:

I've been working on this Working Women's Retreat with a colleague. This is one of my new ventures. I really want to make a difference in the lives of working women and am spreading the word about it.

Would you be willing to pass onto those who you know?

Working Women's Retreat

Please pass this onto any women you know who want to change their lives.

Diane Allen from Encore Business Coaching LLC and Claudia Monte from CAM Consulting Group LLC are delighted to announce an upcoming event . . . The Working Women's Retreat - Taking Care of You.

Do you know of any women who would like to manage their career with more wisdom, or find what's next for them? Please pass this message onto them. Our Working Women's Retreat promises to guide women into a mindset of reflection, action, and increased awareness of how they can take more control over their lives and live the life they really want.

Renewal is one of the strongest methods of creating a happy, satisfying life. This renewal will take place at the beautiful oceanfront Stella Maris Retreat Center in Elberon, New Jersey.

This retreat is designed for the working woman who is questioning: "Is there more to my life than I am now experiencing?" Come and explore the possibilities with Diane Allen and Claudia Monte, two women who have made significant changes in their own lives. Design your dreams through reflection, education, and networking with other women.

Give yourself this gift and participate in sessions on the Power of Journals, Extraordinary You, Speak Your Truth, Stress Management, Keeping It All Together, The Four Agreements, and Five Steps to Success. Plan on relaxing and having fun in a beautiful setting.

Limited to first 22 women who register.

Arrival: Sunday, October 16, 2005 - 3:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Departure: Tuesday, October 18, 2005 - 2:00 p.m.

Fee: \$350.00 - Includes overnight accommodations, meals, sessions, coaching, and all participant materials. Light supper with wine reception on Sunday.

\$75 Deposit-non-refundable To Learn More: Please contact us via phone at 609-291-1937, or email: dallen@encorecoaching.com, or cmonte@cam4consulting.com

Our wisdom to achieve an extraordinary life is created by our belief in ourselves. We can expand our beliefs and achieve positive change through mutual support, guidance, and action.

* Bruce in Pennsylvania:

This is a reminder. Starting on September 1, 2005, PA residents will be eligible for a free annual credit report by the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003 (FACTA). You may visit the website:

<http://www.annualcreditreport.com>

[It] is jointly sponsored by the 3 main credit bureaus: TransUnion, Experian and Equifax.

NOTE:

Residents from any state can go to and use this useful website.

* Uday in Pennsylvania:

I don't know if you or anybody will be of any help to me. I had a bad experience with a contractor who advertises in the "Trend of Bucks County Times". He came to do my bathroom but after signing the contract and starting the work turned out to be really arrogant and not working everyday. He was rude and did not listen to our requests. From my side, I too did not have start and finish dates for the project in the contract. But midway when asked to give some date in writing, he refused and said he will not be able to work. He did not refund our money and asked us to take him to court. He seems to be really unprofessional, and I am sure he must have cheated a lot of people.

Right now, I have filed a complaint in the district court and am waiting. I have also put a complaint into the BBB. Please suggest what else to do. Also, I wanted to know if I would be able to get his address as the one I have is a PO Box. And is there anyway we can stop such advertisements?

There are a lot of people like me who are recent homebuyers and first time homebuyers who come across such people.

MY TWO CENTS:

Definitely contact the newspaper to complain about the advertiser. In the future, don't every deal with anybody who doesn't give you a valid street address. And perhaps most significantly, immediately contact Mike Bannon--the director/chief sealer for the Office of Consumer Protection in Bucks County (PA) . . . his number is 215.348.7442, and he's the BEST for dealing with such problems.

Should Mercer County (NJ) folks unfortunately have similar problems, they would do well to contact Donna Giovanetti--division chief for the Office of Consumer Affairs . . . her number is 609.989.6671, and she is tied with Mike for being the BEST!

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3. Pager problems

One of my friends works in the customer service call center of a national pager company. He deals with the usual complaints regarding poor pager operation,

as well as the occasional crank caller demanding to be paged less often, more often or by more interesting people.

The best call came from a man who repeatedly complained that he keeps being paged by "Lucille." He was instructed that he would have to call her and tell her to stop paging him.

"She don't never leave no number, so I can't call her back," he said.

After three such calls, someone thought to ask how he knew it was Lucille if she didn't leave a number.

"She leaves her name," was the reply.

After establishing that the customer had a numeric-only pager, the light bulb came on. "How does she spell her name?" the service rep asked.

"L-O-W-C-E-L-L"

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4. Reviews ...

A. Cynthia and I were mildly amused by THE 40-YEAR-OLD VIRGIN, a goofy comedy about a guy who had never had sex before . . . so his friends decide help him out, and as you can imagine, there are complications aplenty . . . some scenes even had me laughing out loud, including the one where Steve Carell (as the virgin) has his chest hair waxed . . . ouch! . . . others fell a bit flat, but overall, I'd recommend the film . . . Catherine Keener, always one of my favorites, is good as his girlfriend, and I Seth Rogen stood out as one of Carell's sidekicks . . . rated R.

B. WALK ON WATER is now out in both VHS and DVD formats . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #447 follows:

WALK ON WATER is a complex drama that will hold your interest . . . it is a combination part spy thriller, part romance about an Israeli hit man who finds that things are not always quite what they seem when he is sent to help track down an old Nazi war criminal . . . I liked everything about it: the music, the acting, and the scenery in such countries as Turkey, Israel and Germany . . . you may have to look some to find this film, in that it won't typically be found in your local multiplex . . . but when you do, your effort will be worth it . . . Not Rated; however, I do believe it would be appropriate for anybody over the age of 15.

C. I'm ordinarily not a big fan of espionage thrillers, but that said, I enjoyed John Grisham's latest book: THE BROKER . . . like many of his books, a lawyer (Joel Backman) is the main character--but this one no longer practices the profession . . . in fact, he has spent the last six years in a federal prison and only gets out as the result of pardon by the President.

Backman winds up in Italy where he finds himself in hiding from the

Israelis, the Russians, the Chinese, and the Saudis . . . he manages to escape them all by learning Italian and immersing himself into that country's culture, a task that I actually found myself relating to because of Grisham's fine writing . . . it was almost as if I could feel what the onetime lawyer was going through.

The book kept my interest until the very end--always a good sign . . . also, I appreciated the fact that the author just didn't rely on what has worked for him in the past; i.e., he tried something different and, as a result, it didn't feel like I was reading the "same old Grisham" just recycled.

D. Heard the taped version of HOW DID I GET HERE? by Barbara De Angelis and found it most helpful in thinking about that very question . . . you will, too, particularly if you are having one of "those days" when nothing seems to be going right.

Yet De Angelis--through many relevant examples from her own life--helps you get beyond a feeling of being stuck in your life . . . in addition, she makes you grateful for all the many blessings you do have though may not always recognize.

She does a great job of narrating her book; it's almost as if you feel you are working with her on a one-on-basis.

There were several memorable passages; among them:

* [quoting Christopher Reeve] Some people are walking around with full use of their body, and they're more paralyzed than I am.

* To move forward, just take one step.

* You can't learn anything by doing nothing.

* Your passion is your unexpected grace. It keeps you surging forward.

* Living with passion means you hold nothing back. It means you won't end your life with regret.

* Do you live a passionate life? If you can't answer "yes," then you can't put the passion back into your relationships.

* I find my deepest contentment comes from simple moments of sweetness and delight.

I also liked the bonus interview at the end of HOW DID I GET HERE? . . . De Angelis answered a number of revealing questions, giving me further insight into what makes her tick and why she wrote this particular book.

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5. VCR alert

A. ROME, a mammoth 12-episode drama about the rise of the Roman Empire, kicks off this week . . . according to TV GUIDE, it is "Violent, realistic and raunchy . . . [and] a handsomely mounted production, thanks to a reported budget of \$100 million" . . . airs on Sundays at 9 p.m. on HBO and repeated throughout the week . . . for the full schedule, please click:

<http://www.hbo.com/apps/schedule/ScheduleServlet?>

B. The drama of buying and selling a home is chronicled in BUY ME, a series which debuts on Wednesday at 9 p.m. on HGTV.

C. THE FESTIVAL is a fake reality documentary about a young director trying to get his film, "The Unreasonable Truth of Butterflies," shown at the Mountain United Film Festival . . . according to THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER, "THE FESTIVAL is everything a mock documentary should be: sassy, glib, subtle, biting, and consistently hilarious" . . . Fridays at 10:30 p.m. and repeated throughout the week . . . for the full schedule, please click:

<http://www.ifctv.com/ifc/what/0,5266,CAT0-45-CAT1-6547-SHID-18963-AID-13453-TZ-ET-TB-4-CLR-blue-BCLR-00A8EC-,00.html>

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6. Bar talk

A man walks into a bar. There's a beautiful woman sitting there, and they sit and have a drink together.

She leans over and says: "I want you to make me feel like a real woman."

So he takes off his shirt and says, "Here, iron this."

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7. Websites

A. Want to see if your name is one of the top-1,000 names in history? If so, please click:

<http://babynamewizard.com/namevoyager/>

Take a name--e.g., "Blaine" one totally at random . . . type it slowly and you'll see the relevant data starts to appear . . . allow your mouse to hover over different points you can find, and you'll see that it was ranked 462 in 2004 (having once been as high as 481 in the 1880s)!

B. The following website will take you to a phone call from a man in Texas who witnessed a car accident involving four elderly women:

<http://www.chumfm.com/MorningShow/bits/march24.swf>

You obviously must put your sound on when you go to it, but you'll get a laugh when you do . . . it was so popular when it was on the air that the station decided to put it on its website.

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click: <http://www.blainesworld.net>

THANKS to Dan Becker, my webmaster, who has done a great job putting past issues back on the website . . . just click above, then Newsletter, Past issues, and you'll be taken to an area where you can see the past month's issues . . . more will be added.

Best of all, if you go to any past issue, you'll be able to "jump" from one section to the next--much like I plan to do with future current

issues of BLAINESWORLD.

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8. Computer tip

Last week, I mentioned that you might want to check to see if your e-mail is being "blocked" by somebody else's Internet service provider.

There's a way you can create your own "white list" . . . this will enable you to determine what e-mail you wish to receive and read, while automatically sending everything else to a "not approved" folder that you don't even have to peruse . . . the result: a whopping 99 to 100% reduction in spam!

The process will take about 30 minutes of your time, and you need to use an e-mail client wherein you can make rules or filters (such as Outlook or Outlook Express).

For complete step-by-step instructions, please click:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whitelist>

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9. Now you know

I have been a Travel Agent in the Washington D.C. area for thirty years. This is why we're in trouble!

I had a New Hampshire Congresswoman ask for an aisle seat so that her hair wouldn't get messed up by being near the window.

I got a call from a candidate's staffer, who wanted to go to Capetown. I started to explain the length of the flight and the passport information, then she interrupted me with, "I'm not trying to make you look stupid, but Capetown is in Massachusetts." Without trying to make her look like the stupid one, I calmly explained, "Cape Cod is in Massachusetts, Capetown is in Africa." Her response (click).

A senior Vermont Congressman called, furious about a Florida package we did. I asked what was wrong with the vacation in Orlando. He said he was expecting an ocean-view room. I tried to explain that is not possible, since Orlando is in the middle of the state. He replied, "Don't lie to me. I looked on the map, and Florida is a very thin state!"

I got a call from a lawmaker's wife who asked, "Is it possible to see England from Canada?" I said, "No." She said, "But they look so close on the map."

An aide for a Bush cabinet member once called and asked if he could rent a car in Dallas. When I pulled up the reservation, I noticed he had only a 1-hour layover in Dallas. When I asked him why he wanted to rent a car, he said, "I heard Dallas was a big airport, and we will need a car to drive between the gates to save time."

An Illinois Congresswoman called last week. She needed to know how it was possible that her flight from Detroit left at 8:20 a.m. and got into Chicago at 8:33 a.m. I tried to explain that Michigan was an hour ahead

of Illinois, but she could not understand the concept of time zones. Finally, I told her the plane went very fast, and she bought that!

A New York lawmaker called and asked, "Do airlines put your physical description on your bag so they know whose luggage belongs to whom?" I said, "No, why do you ask?" She replied, "Well, when I checked in with the airline, they put a tag on my luggage that said (FAT), and I'm overweight. I think that is very rude?" After putting her on hold for a minute while I 'looked into it' (I was actually laughing) I came back and explained the city code for Fresno, CA is (FAT), and that the airline was just putting a destination tag on her luggage.

A Senator's aide called to inquire about a trip package to Hawaii. After going over all the cost info, she asked, "Would it be cheaper to fly to California and then take the train to Hawaii?"

I just got off the phone with a freshman Congressman who asked, "How do I know which plane to get on?" I asked him what exactly he meant, to which he replied, "I was told flight number is 823, but none of these darn planes have numbers on them."

A lady Senator called and said, "I need to fly to Pepsi-Cola, FL. Do I have to get on one of those little computer planes?" I asked if she meant fly to Pensacola, FL on a commuter plane. She said, "Yeah, whatever!"

A senior Senator called and had a question about the documents he needed in order to fly to China. After a lengthy discussion about passports, I reminded him that he needed a visa. "Oh, no I don't. I've been to China many times and never had to have one of those." I double checked and sure enough, his stay required a visa. When I told him this he said, "Look, I've been to China four times and every time they have accepted my American Express!"

A New Mexico Congresswoman called to make reservations, "I want to go from Chicago to Rhino, New York." The agent was at a loss for words. Finally, the agent said, "Are you sure that's the name of the town?" "Yes, what flights do you have?" replied the lady. After some searching, the agent came back with, "I'm sorry, ma'am, I've looked up every airport code in the country and can't find a Rhino anywhere." The lady retorted, "Oh, don't be silly! Everyone knows where it is. Check your map!" The agent scoured a map of the state of New York and finally offered, "You don't mean Buffalo, do you?" "That's it! I knew it was a big animal," she said.

Now you know why Government is in the shape that it's in.

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10. A quote I like

The only way to discover the limits of the possible is to go beyond them into the impossible.--Arthur C. Clarke, science fiction author

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11. Thought for the day

Two wolves

A Native American grandfather was talking to his grandson about a problem he was grappling with. He said, "I feel as if I have two wolves fighting in my heart. One wolf is the vengeful, angry, violent one. The other wolf is the loving, compassionate one."

The grandson asked him "Which wolf will win the fight in your heart?"

And the grandfather answered, "The one I feed."

Author Unknown

(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

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12. Advance planning department

CHANCE TO WIN \$500 . . . and learn "How to market yourself" . . . be my guest at a FREE presentation at Bucks on Thursday, September 1, at 6:30 p.m. and repeated on Tuesday, September 6 at the same time . . . for room location, please e-mail me with the following words in your subject line:

SEPTEMBER 1 INVITE or SEPTEMBER 6 INVITE

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PS. I'm blessed to have Labor Day off . . . hoping you're as equally fortunate, may you get to enjoy it with your friends and/or loved ones . . . when you do, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great rest of the week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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1. Reflections

A. What a marvelous day last Wednesday was . . . I got to spend it with my beautiful bride Cynthia, my brother and his wife and my parents as we all celebrated my mother's birthday . . . don't ask me for the age 'cause a wise son never tells; however, that's irrelevant in that she is doing marvelously well for any age . . . I should only remain as chipper all my life!

We dined at Centolire (212.734.7711), a most attractive restaurant in New York City on Madison Ave. between 85th and 86 Streets . . . the Italian-American menu featured a delicious ribeye steak that Cynthia and I not only split, but had enough to take home for a second meal . . . and she said her Caesar Salad (prepared tableside) was as good as she has ever had.

B. On Saturday, we met friends for dinner at Cafe Antonio (215.428.1733) in Morrisville, PA . . . Cynthia and I split our two dishes: Spaghetti Bolognese and Veal Parmigiana, and as is always the case at this restaurant, we were delighted with the taste . . . the price is also reasonable, given the fact that you get extremely large portions here--again, more than enough for a second meal . . . and a fresh salad is always included with your meal--something that I wish all dining establishments would offer.

From there, we went around the corner to the Heritage Center (215.295.3694) for an uplifting performance of THE MAN WHO BOUGHT A COUNTRY . . . this is a musical about Robert Morris, a financier and one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Joe Doyle, a friend and longtime BLAINESWORLD subscriber, wrote the book, music and lyrics for the show . . . think about

that for just a minute; i.e., that one person could do all these three things . . . it's an amazing accomplishment, and Joe has carried it off . . . the production is one to be seen . . . there are many beautiful musical numbers, as well as some sprightly ones, and there's a great cast headed by Steve Lobis as Morris.

Best of all: You can still catch THE MAN WHO BROUGHT A COUNTRY . . . it runs through September 4 . . . call the above number for tickets, and you'll be pleasantly surprised that they are half the usual price (just \$10; \$5 for seniors) because of a special grant that Doyle obtained.

For more information, please click:
<http://www.actorsnetbucks.org>

C. Capping off the week was the marriage of our good friends Gail and Mark on Sunday . . . the actual ceremony was held outdoors, and it was quite impressive to see the couple arrive on a horse-drawn carriage . . . we then enjoyed both the ceremony and listening to the vows (that the couple had based on CONVERSATIONS WITH GOD) . . . from there, everybody went inside to an afternoon of fun and dancing . . . we all had a great time, especially since we got to spend the day with several other mutual friends.

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

This week, it goes to Peter Dominick--executive director of the Bucks County Community College Foundation.

He has headed this organization for the last three years and has done a fabulous job in both helping raise funds for the College and gaining it many friends in the outside community.

He's one of the hardest working guys I have ever encountered who truly inspires by example . . . Peter is also one of the nicest guys you'll ever meet.

As such, I wish him only the best in his latest venture . . . I recently heard that he will be leaving Bucks at the end of this coming week (our BIG LOSS) to take on a position as senior vice president with Premier Bank in Doylestown.

It has been a pleasure working with Pete Dominick for well over 20 years in a variety of capacities: Foundation, Chamber, United Way, etc. . . . my hope is that we will be able to continue our relationship, in that he is the ABSOLUTE BEST!

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2. FYI

I had each staff member call four of their best customers every week. Our staff would tell these customers about just-arrived merchandise. (There was no labor cost since the calls were made during a slow time of the day.) The customer would usually thank the salesperson for thinking of her.

When you call a customer you already have a relationship with, the phone call usually has a much more positive result than calling a total stranger.

In the years we did this, we estimated that we increased our business two percent a year with almost no increased cost.

SOURCE:

Murray Raphel, Neil Raphel and Janis S. Raye, authors of
THE COMPLETE IDIOT'S GUIDE TO WINNING CUSTOMER
LOYALTY (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11)

FYI, part 2

* Dr. Rob Schram, a longtime friend and subscriber, has just published his first book . . . it promises to be a "winner," just like he is.

For more information about it, please see below:
**ATTENTION: ALL PEOPLE SEEKING TO IMPROVE THEIR
SATISFACTION WITH DAILY LIVING**

A new book has just been published that addresses the secrets for living a full, happy, and harmonious life. It takes the reader on a journey that questions a myriad of individual and interpersonal areas asking each sojourner to record their private response to 152 issues from "Accentuating the Positive" to "Whenever you Fall."

**READ ON IF YOU WANT TO: MAXIMIZE LIFE
BY LIVING FOR PEACE, HARMONY, AND JOY . . .**

My journey started decades ago but it was only in the last ten years that I began to more fully appreciate life and all my G-d given gifts.

I began to list all the issues in life that we all experience: positive and negative attitudes, achievement, thoughts, action, acquisitions, time, change, avoidance, kindness, breathing, challenges, conflicts, criticism, control, dreams, violence, listening, gratitude, habits, imagination, failure, ego, love, errors, opportunity, passion, perfectionism, responsibility, tranquility, being stuck, goals, etc.

My list turned into chapter headings . . . ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY TWO IN TOTAL . . . and I began to write about the essence of each one.

It occurred to me, as I wrote the essence of each, I had some very memorable and sometimes life changing experiences with each...

I began to write my personal experience as the second page of each chapter under the repeating title of "ME" followed by a repeating title of "YOU" the reader...to record and examine your journey with each topic.
I WANT YOU TO LIVE A HAPPY LIFE LIKE ME!

******* SPECIAL PRE-PUBLICATION SALE *******

Take advantage of this one-time special offer to receive one of the first printed hardback copies of this fabulous book signed by the author and mailed directly to you!

Act now by mailing a check payable to: Maximize Life
for \$30.00 (INCLUDES ALL SHIPPING AND HANDLING)
and mail to: Jean Ryersbach, 19 Mulberry Lane Levittown, PA 19054.
Please provide your name, address, phone number and e-mail address with your payment.

It is anticipated that the first copies will roll off the press the week

of November 7, 2005. Your copy will be mailed the day it becomes available.

* Sharee in Pennsylvania:

YARDLEY (PA) TANGLEWOOD TOWNHOME FOR SALE BY OWNER

Tanglewood Cul-de-Sac, hardwood floors entire first floor, new berber carpet second floor. LR w/cathedral ceiling, 1 car garage, 2 car driveway, Lg MB and bath, 2nd flr BR up, 2 1/2 baths, large deck off DR, first floor, overlooking woods. Total privacy. Walkout basement to patio / yard/ woods. 3rd den, office or BR on first flr w/ French Doors, gas fireplace, new washer, dryer, refrigerator, water heater, built-in microwave, A/C. Pool, tennis courts. 1864 sq ft, \$369,900. Qualified buyers only. 215.321.7632. Ask for Nancy.

* Natalie in Pennsylvania asked me to help spread the word for the following event:

Love Train Peace Concert

When: Saturday, September 10, 2005, 8:00 p.m.

The Los Angeles based Agape International Choir (100+ voices) under the direction of Rickie Byars Beckwith will be performing with Philadelphia's Common Ground Interfaith Community Choir at a roof-raising, heart-opening 9/11 peace concert at Irvine Auditorium on the Penn campus (34th & Spruce St.) in Philadelphia.

The evening will also feature a keynote address by renowned author and inspirational speaker, Rev. Dr. Michael Bernard Beckwith. Don't miss this wonderful event.

Tickets \$20. in advance, \$25 at the door, \$15 for students and \$50 for Golden Circle seating.

For more event and ticket information:

e-mail: lovetrain@commongroundfellowship.com

or call Common Ground: (610) 526-2020.

Tickets now available on-line at:

<http://www.agapelive.com/events/specialevents/specialevents.html>

(click on "September 10 Philadelphia" at the bottom of the page)

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3. Poetry

A young lad decided to try his hand at poetry.

He figured if he could tap his unconscious mind, he would succeed.

To execute his plan, he left a pad and pen by his bed so he could write down any thoughts that came to him in the night.

Sure enough, later that first night, he awoke from a stirring event, and sought to capture those thoughts as they occurred.

However, as you might guess, it did not work as he went from bed to verse.

4. Reviews ...

A. WARNING:

You'll either love or hate THE ARISTOCRATS.

I fall in the former; Cynthia was more in the latter--though her opinion seems to have changed somewhat after revisiting the film in her mind . . . it is definitely not for the squeamish, in that the language is perhaps the dirtiest you'll ever hear.

Comics Paul Povenza and Penn Jillette (of the stage duo Penn and Teller) invited more than 100 of their closest friends to reminisce, analyze, deconstruct, and deliver their own version of the world's dirtiest joke in this documentary that had me repeatedly laughing out loud . . . I particular enjoyed the segments featuring George Carlin, Gilbert Gottfried, the characters from SOUTH PARK, and Philadelphia's Todd Glass.

Not rated and definitely not for anybody offended by foul language.

As to the actual joke, a cleaned-up version goes something like: This guy walks into a talent agent's office and says, "I've got a great act. It's a family act. My wife and little son and daughter are in it. We walk on state and (censored), then we (censored), and then I (censored, censored) while she (really censored), and for the finale, we all (really, really censored)."

The talent agent says, "That's horrible. It's disgusting. I've never heard anything like it. What do you call yourselves?"

After a perfect comic beat, the guy proclaims, "The Aristocrats!"

WARNING, part 2

Miss BROKEN FLOWERS, the supposed-comedy starring Bill Murray . . . don't believe the generally positive reviews you may see; it's terrible . . . rated R.

B. I again am disagreement with the critics--this time with respect to MILLION DOLLAR BABY, now out on DVD . . . the story had an interesting premise; i.e., hardened manager, Clint Eastwood, takes a woman boxer, Hilary Swank, under his wing . . . their performances were OK, though I did not think Swank deserved her Oscar for best actress (nor should Morgan Freeman have gotten best supporting actor for his role as her trainer) . . . however, the whole second half of the film was a real downer for me . . . and, also, the whole thing looked like it was shot on a back lot . . . rated PG-13.

C. Sometimes, a fine book gets mislabeled with an inappropriate title . . . that well might be the case with THE COMPLETE IDIOT'S GUIDE TO WINNING CUSTOMER LOYALTY (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11) by Murray Raphel, Neil Raphel and Janis S. Raye.

I say that because the above is one that should be read by just about anybody who has to deal with customers: salespeople, educators, politicians, etc. . . . and you shouldn't need to feel intimidated by that fact, nor have

the belief that you're an idiot.

Instead, open yourself up to idea that you can learn from this marvelous trio of authors who also happen to be part of the same family business . . . it will feel like you are attending one of their informative seminars.

As such, be prepared to read with a pen or pencil in hand, in that you'll most probably be like me and find yourself jotting down countless notes about things you can immediately use in your business or daily life . . . for example:

* Norm Thompson in Oregon has a famous guarantee. Their mail-order company has trademarked their special guarantee, which they call their "You Be the Judge" Guarantee. What that means is that you decide if you are happy with their merchandise, and you are the sole judge of when that time should be. Not 30, 60, 90 days or even a year. If you're unhappy, at any time, just return the merchandise for a full refund or exchange. Your choice.

* Don Gallegos tells a great story about catering to one of his best customers. At the time, Don was president of King Soopers, a division of the large supermarket company Kroger. King Soopers' big competitor was Albertson's Supermarket.

One of Don's best customers told him that although he did most of his grocery shopping at King Soopers, he preferred the taste of Albertson's private label applesauce. Don knew what he had to do. He went right over to Albertson's and bought a case of their applesauce.

Then Don brought the customer into his office. He said, "We'll always have this applesauce in my office for you so you don't have to make an extra trip to Albertson's."

"Oh, by the way," Don added, "The applesauce is cheaper here than at Albertson's."

* Feargal Quinn's Superquinn supermarkets in Ireland have an interesting way of rewarding customers. The issue customers, "Goof Points" for pointing out mistakes the store makes (wrong pricing of items, broken shopping carts and so on.)

Superquinn has figured out that rewarding customers for finding mistakes empowers a whole new army of volunteer quality-control officers. This program has the double benefit of rectifying mistakes and making sure that people don't feel bad about pointing out flaws in the operation.

D. Enjoyed listening to CRACKING THE MILLIONAIRE CODE by Mark Victor Hansen, creator of the best-selling CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL series, and Robert Allen, best-selling author of NOTHING DOWN.

The two authors go back and forth in the narration, and I liked the informality of their presentation . . . it felt almost as if I was meeting with them on a one-on-one basis.

In addition, I liked the overall message; i.e., that a more abundant lifestyle is "out there" for the taking . . . and it can be obtained by combining entrepreneurial thinking with spirituality.

There were many valuable insights I gained from listening; among them:

* Ask powerful questions. Don't ask, "Why am I bad with my money?" But instead ask, "How can I better handle my money and make it grow?" (Either way, you'll get a host of suggestions.)

* Ask suppliers and customers for ideas on how to improve your business, then reward them for these ideas.

* Follow the Star Rule: Do unto others exactly as they want done for them.

Hansen and Allen have also set up an informative website for those wishing to take their concepts further . . . to see it for yourself, please click:

<http://www.crackingthemillionairecode.com/>

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5. VCR alert

A. HI-JINKS is a show that has unsuspecting kids tripped up by adults or a celebrity guest . . . TV GUIDE calls it a "21st-century update of CANDID CAMERA . . . [one with] ingenious and slickly produced pranks" . . . Tuesdays at 9:30 p.m. on Nick at Nite.

B. BIOGRAPHY, in "CHILD STARS II: GROWING UP IN HOLLYWOOD," covers mostly success stories, such as those of Ron Howard, Leonardo DiCaprio, Drew Barrymore, Rick Schroeder, and Mayim Bialik . . . Mayim Bialik, yes she of BLOSSOM fame who is now pursuing a Ph.D . . . Friday at 8 p.m. on A & E.

C. FIGHTING THE ODDS: THE MARILY GAMBRELL STORY stars Jami Gertz in a fact-based drama about teens with parents in jail . . . Saturday at 9 p.m. on Lifetime.

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6. World's shortest fairy tale

Once upon a time, a guy asked a girl, "Will you marry me?"

The girl said, "No."

And the guy lived happily ever after and went golfing and fishing a lot.

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7. Websites

A. If you want to save for college (for yourself or a child, grandchild, etc.) or pay off a student loan, then please click:

<http://www.upromise.com/>

Every time you make a purchase, a certain percentage is put into an account that can be used for either of the above reasons . . . from what

I understand, it can really mount up over a period of time, and you can use it to help others too.

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

Anybody have any experience using this website? If so, please share, so I can then tell other readers.

B. Want to be amazed? Please click:

<http://www.gujaratplus.com/cball/middle.html>

This is a well-done update of an old trick that methinks you'll enjoy and even want to share with others.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

To see the many books I've reviewed and generally enjoyed, go to Blaine's Best (on the left) and then letter "O" . . . check the second paragraph there, and you'll be taken to my reviews that have been posted at amazon.com's website.

If you like any of these past reviews and/or find them helpful, please indicate that is the case by doing the following:

1. Take a book I reviewed previously, say BUZZMARKETING (from last week).

2. Go to amazon.com website:

<http://www.amazon.com>

3. Type:

BUZZMARKETING

4. Find my review (it will usually be toward the top; in this case, I believe it is fourth).

5. At the end, you are asked: Was this review helpful to you? Indicate YES.

Doing so will enable me to move up in amazon's list of "Top 500" reviewers . . . currently, I'm #494 based on 1,854 favorable comments on my 451 reviews.

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8. Computer tip

Sometimes, you might not get mail--perish the thought!--from me . . . or somebody, say, of lesser importance.

It happens because some providers (including AOL, but others as well) block certain mail and artificially determine it to be spam.

What you might sometimes want to do: Check what mail is being filtered if your Internet service provider allows you to do this . . . then you make the determination of what you want to get, as opposed to having somebody else do it.

Also, ask about what's known as a "white list" or list of accepted e-mail

addresses that will always be allowed.

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9. Room 302

A sweet grandmother telephoned Mount Sinai Hospital. She timidly asked, "Is it possible to speak to someone who can tell me how a patient is doing?"

The operator said, "I'll be glad to help, Dear. What's the name and room number?"

The grandmother in her weak tremulous voice said, "Holly Finkel, Room 302."

The Operator replied, "Let me check. Oh, good news. Her record says that Holly is doing very well. Her blood pressure is fine; her blood work just came back as normal and her physician, Dr. Cohen, has scheduled her to be discharged Tuesday."

The Grandmother said, "Thank you. That's wonderful! I was so worried! God bless you for the good news."

The operator replied, "You're more than welcome. Is Holly your daughter?"

The Grandmother said, "No, I'm Holly Finkel in 302. No one tells me sh*t."

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10. A quote I like

Occasionally, a customer would come in angry, unhappy, dissatisfied. After we listened quietly, we would say, "Tell us what you want, and the answer is 'yes.'" Since the customer was expecting an argument, our kindness changed her attitude. A confrontation became a "win-win" dialogue.

SOURCE:

Murray Raphael, Neil Raphael and Janis S. Raye, authors of THE COMPLETE IDIOT'S GUIDE TO WINNING CUSTOMER LOYALTY (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11)

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11. Thought for the day

You can tell I REALLY like I book whenever I mention it more than once in any single newsletter . . . that's certainly the case with THE COMPLETE IDIOT'S GUIDE TO WINNING CUSTOMER LOYALTY (see also Sections 2, 4C and 10), which is the source for the following story:

Tommy

I was working in my clothing store one afternoon in June. It was a busy day, and I was wrapping gifts at the back counter. A young 14-year-old boy, Tommy, came back to the counter where I was

working and said, "Hello." I've known Tommy since the day he was born. I delivered his baby clothes to his mother in the hospital.

"Mr. Raphael, may I use the phone?" he asked. "Sure, Tommy, go ahead," I answered.

He picked up the phone, dialed and I heard him say, "Hi, Ma'am. Just want past your house. Saw you had a big lawn. I cut lawns to make some extra money. I also trim hedges. And I was wondering if . . . "

He paused, listening and then continued. "I see. Are you satisfied with the work they are doing?" Another pause.

"I see. Well, would it be all right if I called you back again in a month or so? I can? Thank you." And he hung up.

I tried to console him. I said, "Tommy, forgive me, but I was standing here, and I heard everything you said to that woman. And Tommy, I want you to know that everything you said to that person on the phone was great. Promise me: You won't be disappointed because you didn't get the sale."

He answered. "Oh, Mr. Raphael. That was just one of my customers. I was just checking up to see how I'm doing."

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12. Advance planning department

CHANCE TO WIN \$500 . . . and learn "How to market yourself" . . . be my guest at a FREE presentation at Bucks County Community College on Tuesday, September 6, at 6:30 p.m. and repeated on Thursday, September 8 at the same time . . . for room location, please e-mail me with the following words in your subject line: SEPTEMBER 6 INVITE or SEPTEMBER 8 INVITE

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is: bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line: BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

Blaine Greenfield
19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
Phone : 828.633.1049

Contact Us at bginbc@aol.com

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #463

8.15.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had the pleasure of hosting friends for dinner for the first time in our new home . . . we enjoyed getting to show our place and find ourselves getting to enjoy it more every day.

The meal came out just right, though I must admit to being prejudiced toward Cynthia's cooking . . . she made a delicious dinner of salad, string beans, lamb chops, and brown rice.

We passed on dessert only because we all went to The Off-Broadstreet Theatre (609.466.2766), which serves an array of desserts and fruit salad before each show . . . the production we then saw was MESHUGGAH-NUNS, a musical comedy about a group of nuns who join a Jewish man to put on a variety show for a cruise ship.

I've seen a bunch of fine shows at this charming playhouse, but this was one of the best . . . the cast worked well together, and though the tunes weren't overly memorable, two stood out: "A Love Like This," a touching duet, and "Matzo Man," a number that had everybody clapping.

Michelle Russell, as Sister Robert Anne, really impressed us with her ability to belt out a song . . . and Angela Sytko, as Sister Amnesia, had us laughing every time she was on stage.

MESHUGGAH-NUNS runs through this coming weekend; catch it if you can . . . if you do, you'll even find yourself laughing at such corny jokes as the following:

What do you get when you cross Jehovah's witness with an atheist?

People knocking at your door for no reason at all!

B. Earlier in the week, Cynthia and I were interviewed by Greg Marano--a reporter from the COURIER NEWS . . . he was doing a story on Internet dating, and we found it interesting to share our experiences . . . the amazing thing is that what he wrote made us sound even more intelligent than we are.

Greg was accompanied by Kathy Johnson, a talented photographer, whose picture captured Cynthia just perfectly . . . to see for yourself, please click:

<http://c-n.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050814/NEWS/508140332>

You'll also get to read Greg's find article at the above link . . . and in case you missed an earlier COURIER NEWS article about the unique wedding celebration we had, please click:

<http://www.c-n.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050731/FEATURES02/507310310/1023>

C. THANKS to Dale Larson, publisher, and Guy Petroziello, editorial page editor, of the BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES for having chosen me as a community member of the editorial board . . . I enjoyed my term of service over the past few months and greatly appreciated the opportunity to meet Sen. Rick Santorum, State Senator Conti, Bucks County DA Diane Gibbons, Terry Houck (who is running to unseat Gibbons), and others . . . it was also informative to learn about plans for the future of Bucks County, including a 2-1-1 phone network that will help anybody to find out more about various social service agencies by means of one simple phone call.

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

This week, it goes to Mark White (908.240.2507)--head of his own, White Speed Construction, in Bridgewater, NJ . . . he's the contractor/handyman who has helped get our house into its current great shape.

Since we've become "the Greenfields of Belle Meade," he has helped finish our deck, made an area for our cats, installed lights in the kitchen, and done a variety of smaller, fix-it type repairs.

He's friendly, knowledgeable and reasonable with respect to his pricing. I recommend him highly.

He's also the husband of Mary White (908.240.2507), our realtor and another person I recommend highly.

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2. FYI

The following information--from BUZZMARKETING (see also Section 4C) by Mark Hughes--should prove to be useful to anybody seeking feedback as to how to improve their performance:

Surveying is good in any form, informal or formal. It shows intent . . . it shows you seek improvement and you seek information. You're ahead of the game. But chances are if you're surveying employees, distributors, and customers formally, you're asking too many questions and probably the wrong ones.

I can save you lots of money and lots of time.

Throw out every question except for two. Every other question is meaningless data dung.

The first question: How did you first hear about us? This tracks word-of-mouth percentage and marketing effectiveness.

The second and perhaps most important question: Would you go out of your way to recommend our product to a friend?

Notice the deliberate wording. It doesn't simply ask, "Would you recommend to a friend?" But rather, would you go out of your way to recommend to a friend. A subtle but important distinction. A distinction measuring customer evangelism--or buzz.

Every other question is worthless, wasting your money and time. "Overall experience"-- data dung. "Overall quality"--data dung.

What "overall quality" misses is the discovery of the buzz factor for your product. If you measure overall quality, that tells you zero about the most important ingredient for getting buzz--whether your customers will evangelize for you. It's one thing to have an average product that does an okay sort of job, but if you have a product you're proud of and expect customers to be highly satisfied with, then you have a right to hope for word-of-mouth buzz. If customers won't evangelize for you, you won't get buzz and take off.

To break out and get buzz, you need to measure if your customers are evangelizing for you. Do they go out of their way to talk about you? If they do, great. Now keep on surveying to make sure you don't lose it and reach a point where, for some reason, they are no longer evangelizing you.

Measure "overall quality" and you're stuck in the world of average. But measure evangelism, and you'll be on the road to getting buzz. Remember the survey rule of two questions.

FYI, part 2

* Joyce in New Jersey asked me to mention two cars her family is looking to sell:

97 Honda Accord Ex Coupe: Sun Roof, Spoiler, Automatic, CD player, very good condition, great car for a new driver or college student. 116, 000 miles, \$5500. Call 973.736.8089.

98 Nissan Altima GXE Automatic: CD player, very good condition. Great for new driver or college student. 122,000 miles, \$3,200. Call 973.736.8089.

* Sandy in Pennsylvania:

On websites for music lyrics [see last week's issue]: I have been using music by powermusic.com in my exercises classes and some of the songs are remakes. Words were not clear, and I was asked to find out what they were singing. The music company connected me with a great website called:
<http://www.amiright.com>

You can see misinterpretations of lyrics of popular songs and also add your own. Sometimes you think you hear words one way

and you find out years later that it was not what they were saying.
Check it out! It is great FUN!

* Walter in New Jersey:
Always like your sites. However, these well, do you review first?

One was in German. One got only "could not connect to" to the url.
One was a membership.

Not to clog you down in details on each one.

NOTE:

I usually check websites before I send them out . . . however,
Walter was referring to something run last week (that was originally
from well over a year ago) . . . I checked the information out
when it first run, but must admit to not having checked them
again . . . thanks for pointing this out, Walter, and I encourage
as always any reader to let me know if I've goofed in any similar
fashion.

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3. Redneck hunting

A couple of redneck hunters are out in the woods when one of them falls to the ground. He doesn't seem to be breathing, and his eyes are rolled back in his head.

The other guy whips out his cell phone and calls 911.

He gasps to the operator, "My friend is dead! What can I do?"

The operator, in a calm soothing voice says,
"Just take it easy. I can help. First, lets make sure he's dead."

There is a silence, and then, a shot is heard.

The hunter says, "OK, now what?"

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4. Reviews ...

A. MUST LOVE DOGS had a great beginning, then went downhill from there . . . it's a romantic comedy that just wasn't very romantic or funny . . . the premise was promising; i.e., the world of cyberdating . . . and I've almost always enjoyed the work of the two main stars, Diane Lane and John Cusack . . . but they have little chemistry here, and their dialogue is stilted . . . rated PG-13.

Nevertheless, even though I don't recommend this film, I still thought you'd find the following tips--from Lane, as cited in a recent newspaper article--of interest:

* DO go where you can meet potential dates. "Going to yoga would be pretty much an opportunity for men."

* DO take a risk. "My dad always got the pretty girl in college because everybody was afraid to call the pretty girl."

* DO be open-minded. "I never thought I would date a father."

* DON'T put on a show. "My mom always said, 'Don't do in the beginning of a relationship what you're not willing to be doing throughout the relationship.' "

B. THE WEDDING DATE is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #437 follows:

MISS THE ONE ALERT:

THE WEDDING DATE takes a cute premise (girl hires escort to accompany get back at ex who dumped her) and goes absolutely nowhere with it . . . I urge you to not see it in the theaters and/or when it comes out on video/DVD release . . . rated PG-13.

C. I often tell my students that word of mouth advertising is the best way to go when you want to promote your product or service . . . but that said, I add that it is easier said than done; i.e., until BUZZMARKETING by Mark Hughes came along.

This excellent book, subtitled GET PEOPLE TO TALK ABOUT YOUR STUFF, gives step-by-step instructions on how to implement a word-of-mouth campaign that works . . . and Hughes should know, in that he was the guy who persuaded the town of Halfway, Oregon, to rename itself Half.com--called "one of the greatest publicity coups in history" by TIME.

What makes BUZZMARKETING both interesting and useful are the many examples, ranging from Miller Lite during the "Tastes Great--Less Filling" era to AMERICAN IDOL'S use of buzz to become a global phenomenon . . . Hughes also suggests that coming up with the big idea isn't necessarily easy; in fact, "to get that one gem of an idea," [he's] "had to create and discard seventy more that never see the light of day because, quite frankly, the first seventy really suck."

Yet rather than leave you with the feeling that this is impossible to do, he then gives this an actual technique that he has employed . . . such as, "When advertising responsibilities were added on top of my marketing at Pep Boys, one of the first things I did was bring the agency account team to Las Vegas . . . to work in the stores. We donned our uniforms, felt our customer's anxiety, solved our customer's problems, say what they looked like, heard what they sounded like. We got under hoods, and inside their heads."

Simple stuff when you think about it, but it works . . . as did many other tidbits cited in BUZZMARKETING; to name just a few:

* In a very different kind of business, a man named Ian Klein decided to go into the online dating business five years ago. But when you're competing against Match.com, things get pretty competitive. His sister was one of the 64 percent of overweight Americans, and also one of the eighty million single people in America. In time, he made the connection, pushed an unusual button, and created a niche site called OverweightDate.com. Among overweight singles, the whispers started. At Weight Watchers meetings, at bars, everywhere.

* I decided to see if we could print a message on a urinal screen--the rubberized screen preventing bubble gum, cigarette butts, and other stuff from clogging up the pipes. Sure enough, it could be done. But what would we print? A simple logo seemed very NASCAResque--a mindless logo slapped on without any vivid connection to our brand or context. Once again I wanted Burma Shave contextual humor to make people smile. I also knew we had to push the envelope in order to generate word of mouth.

Ultimately we printed this on the urinal screen: "Don't piss away half your money, head to Half.com." A bit controversial, yes. And we weren't oblivious to the potential risk. In fact, we asked both males and females for their opinion of the copy (not that females would ever see it, but they would certainly hear about it.) We knew it would eventually get press, so we wanted to make sure we had the gumption to take the heat and handle it with a sense of humor. It was a go, and we launched the campaign in urinals across Manhattan.

* How many people do you know who don't read what is says on the little paper inside the fortune cookie at a Chinese restaurant? Not many. Just about everyone reads them--96 percent, according to on study. So in place of the lucky numbers on the back of the fortune cookie paper, what if we put an ad for our company? Perhaps the modern day equivalent to Allan Odell's billboard--the smallest billboard on earth with undivided mind share.

D. Heard the cassette version of FAMILY FIRST, written and read by Dr. Phil McGraw . . . even if you're not a parent or grandparent, methinks you'll find a useful advice here about improving any family . . . and it would be a good book for present or prospective teachers to read, in that it contains suggestions as to how to both better understand and relate to children of all ages.

In listening, I got the same feeling that I do when seeing Dr. Phil on television--only better, if that's possible . . . it was like having him in front of me, telling me what can and has worked . . . however, I also liked how he gave examples (many from his own life) of times when things didn't work--and what could have been done differently.

Perhaps most significantly, I took away this one idea that can be applied to virtually any situation: Don't say you can't contain your anger. That's not true. What is true is that you don't control your temper, as you do when at church, work or at a restaurant with friends.

In addition, if you want to create the "phenomenal family" that the author frequently mentions, you'll find the following thoughts helpful:

* If there are any problems with a child, the family has to be looked at too.

* Continually ask yourself: What can I do today to make my family better?

* Best time to get a divorce: When you are past the hurt feelings.

* If you want your children to be able to handle anger, then you have to be able to handle it yourself.

* The things in life you won't regret will be the things you don't do.

* Provide family members with at least one supportive statement each day.

* Don't tell a child what NOT to do.

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5. VCR alert

A. TOMMY LEE GOES TO COLLEGE has the former Motley Crue drummer chronicling his adventures (and misadventures) at the University of Nebraska . . . Tuesdays at 9 p.m. on NBC.

B. HIDDEN HOWIE: THE PRIVATE LIFE OF A PUBLIC NUISANCE is a six-part sitcom, wherein comedian Howie Mandell plays pranks on unsuspected folks and videotapes them with a hidden camera . . . if this is half as funny as Mandell's appearances on THE TONIGHT SHOW, will be a show to watch . . . Thursdays at 11 p.m. on Bravo.

C. JOURNAL EDITORIAL REPORT debuts Friday on PBS Channel 13 (NYC) . . . it is a weekly news and discussion series consisting of what promises to be thoughtful conversations with editors and columnists from THE WALL STREET JOURNAL about the week's major developments . . . PBS times and dates vary, so check your local listings.

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6. Fashion sense

A man is at work one day when he notices that his co-worker is wearing an earring.

This man knows his co-worker to be a normally conservative fellow, and is curious about his sudden change in "fashion sense." The man walks up to him and says, "I didn't know you were into earrings."

"Don't make such a big deal, it's only an earring," he replies sheepishly.

"So, really? How long have you been wearing one?"

"Ever since my wife found it in our bed."

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7. Websites

A. Looking for a lawyer? Need legal advice? If so, the following website may be able to help you. It's a forum where you can ask questions about legal topics such as bankruptcy, accident & injury, business law, contract law, real estate, wills & trusts, insurance, criminal and much more. For more information, please click: <http://forum.freeadvice.com/>

This is FREE for anyone to use. And you can get information without

registering; i.e., you can even read what others have posted. However, if you wish to actually participate in the forums, then you will have to become a member. To do so is simple; you just need to provide a user name and password.

B. You can become a voyeur to an animated character performing a tongue-in-cheek striptease that Gap describes as PG-rated . . . at this website, you'll first be guided through steps to create a computer likeness of yourself, down to hair style, eye color and chest size . . . with a few clicks of a mouse the computer model--which can be male or female--sheds its clothes down to undergarments and dances furiously while tinny disco music plays . . . then the model retreats into a dressing room and comes out, still struggling, in a new outfit of the viewer's choosing . . . to see for yourself, please click:

<http://watchmechange.com>

Gap is hoping that people will stumble onto the site and pass the word on to others--an advertising technique known as viral marketing . . . you may be surprised to find out that you can't buy any clothes for purchase here.

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click: <http://www.blainesworld.net>

On the left, you'll see "Radio Show" . . . go to that link if you want to see a history of my radio career . . . you can also hear one of my shows.

As you may have read in a past issue, a recent management change at WWFM has resulted in my show being taken off the air . . . but, hopefully, I'll resurface soon again . . . on another station and/or even with my own cable show.

Please do keep me in mind if you have any media contacts for me to pursue with respect to the above possibilities.

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8. Computer tip

Last week, I used the word "via*ra" in a joke . . . I spelled it out completely, but lo and behold, some copies of the newsletter came back as undeliverable.

Apparently, some companies now block any e-mail containing that word from their employees.

I mention this for two reasons:

1) If you did not get BLAINESWORLD #462, that well might have been the reason why . . . should you still want it, just send me an e-mail to that effect; and

2) I'll now try to remember to spell "via*ra" and other such words with an asterisk . . . please be aware that this is being done so future e-mails to you don't get blocked . . . you might also want to consider doing something in e-mails you send out; e.g., if they are sent to companies who have blocking software available.

The above reminds me of an experience I had in one of my first years of teaching, way back when God was a little girl . . . I was

then employed at South River High School in New Jersey, and I get a call to appear in the superintendent's office.

Some parent had complained that I was talking about breasts in my Business Law class . . . turns out that this was not the case; rather, I had distributed a TIME article about malpractice insurance . . . the first paragraph mentioned a woman who was suing because an operation had resulted in her nipple being inverted . . . I actually got a verbal slap on the wrists and was told that had I wanted to use the article, I should have removed the offending portion!

CLARIFICATION:

Also in last week's issue, I mentioned AOL's Calendar and Remind Me options . . . both are great . . . somebody asked me how to access them . . . sorry I did not provide that information . . . just go to the Keyword area and type "Calendar" or "Remind Me."

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9. To err

Alexander Pope wrote, "To err is human, to forgive, divine."

It was the inspiration for this e-mail signature:
To err is human, to moo, bovine.

And these others followed:
To err is human, to snort, porcine.

To err is human, to bark, canine.

To err is human, to purr, feline.

To err is human, to howl, lupine.

To err is human, to baa, ovine.

To err is human, to neigh, equine.

To err is human, to roar, leonine.

To err is human, to yip, vulpine.

To err is human, to growl, ursine.

To err is human, to soar, aquiline.

To err is human, to trumpet, elephantine.

To err is human, to prick, porcupine.

To err is human, to miss, deadline.

To err is human, to surf, online.

To err is human, to drink, red wine.

To err is human, to flash, neon sign.

To err is human, to dry, clothes line.

To err is human, to march, ensign.

To err is human, to tie, entwine.

To err is human, to lie, recline.

To err is human, to recede, hairline.

To err is human, to lean, incline.

To err is human, to sew, hemline.

To err is human, to join, combine.

To err is human, to fly, airline.

To err is human, to "trig," cosine.

To err is human, to climb, alpine.

To err is human, to p*ss, urine.

To err is human, to explode, landmine.

To err is human, to snub, maline.

To err is human, to end, <sig-line>.

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10. A quote I like

A life devoid of service to others is a life devoid of meaning.--Marianne Williamson, author and lecturer

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11. Thought for the day

Marilyn in Arizona, commenting on last week's "Thought for the day," wrote:

Thought you might find these interesting, as per your comments about time:

Computers in the future may weigh no more than 15 tons.--POPULAR MECHANICS, forecasting the relentless march of science, 1949

I think there is a world market for maybe five computers.--Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943

I have traveled the length and breadth of this country and talked with the best people, and I can assure you that data processing is a fad that won't last out the year.----The editor in charge of business books for Prentice Hall, 1957

There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their

home.--Ken Olson, president, chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977

This "telephone" has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us.--Western Union internal memo, 1876

The wireless music box has no imaginable commercial value. Who would pay for a message sent to nobody in particular?--David Sarnoff's associates in response to his urgings for investment in the radio in the 1920s.

The concept is interesting and well-formed, but in order to earn better than a "C," the idea must be feasible.--a Yale University management professor in response to Fred Smith's paper proposing reliable overnight delivery service. (Smith went on to found Federal Express Corp.)

I'm just glad it'll be Clark Gable who's falling on his face and not Gary Cooper.--Gary Cooper on his decision not to take the leading role in GONE WITH THE WIND

A cookie store is a bad idea. Besides, the market research reports say America likes crispy cookies, not soft and chewy cookies like you make.--response to Debbie Fields' idea of starting her company, Mrs. Fields' Cookies

We don't like their sound, and guitar music is on the way out.--Decca Recording Co. in rejecting the Beatles, 1962

Stocks have reached what looks like a permanently high plateau.--Irving Fisher, professor of economics, Yale University, 1929

Airplanes are interesting toys but of no military value.--Marechal Ferdinand Foch, professor of strategy, Ecole Superieure de Guerre

Everything that can be invented has been invented.--Charles H. Duell, commissioner, U.S. Office of Patents, 1899

Louis Pasteur's theory of germs is ridiculous fiction.--Pierre Pachtet, professor of physiology at Toulouse, 1872

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12. Advance planning department

CHANCE TO WIN \$500 . . . and learn "How to market yourself" . . . be my guest at a FREE presentation at Bucks County Community College on Tuesday, September 6, at 6:30 p.m. . . . for room location, please e-mail me with the following words in your subject line: SEPTEMBER 6 INVITE.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #462

8.8.2005

In this issue:

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1. Reflections

A. CONGRATULATIONS to Mark in New Jersey, a good friend, who recently earned his pilot's license . . . he worked really hard for this accomplishment, and my beautiful bride Cynthia and I look forward to hearing about the trips he will soon be taking with his bride-to-be Gail.

B. Cynthia continues to amaze me with the way she has gotten our new home in shape . . . with her good friend Edina, she hung up pictures in every room--and that alone has made quite a difference in how the house now looks.

We then joined Edina and her husband Tunc for a delicious dinner at Pheasant's Landing (908.281.1288) in Hillsborough, NJ . . . this is the restaurant where Cynthia and I had our first date, so it has special memories for us.

On this particular night, we enjoyed splitting our orders of Wienerschnitzel and Sauerbraten . . . both dishes were accompanied by spätzle--perhaps our favorite side dish . . . and the desserts (an apple strudel and a decadent chocolate something) were scrumptious.

It seemed we ate the week away.

Earlier, we joined several members of Cynthia's family for a celebration of her brother-in-law's birthday . . . for the first time, I went to a Portuguese restaurant: Casa Vasca (973.465.1350) in Newark, NJ . . . the food there was also superb.

And on Sunday, we went to the wedding of our friend's daughter at the Spring Mill Manor in Ivyland, Pennsylvania . . . it was an elegant affair, made special by the fact that Cynthia and I spent a large part of the afternoon dancing to a superb 9-piece orchestra.

We also enjoyed listening to the groom serenade his bride--the first time he had ever sung in public . . . now that took guts . . . also, neither of us had been to a wedding for quite some time . . . there's apparently a new tradition, wherein the wedding couple gives favors to all those in attendance . . . we liked the fact that Jamie and Gabe instead decided to make a donation to charity in honor of their guests.

C. Cynthia's mom, Elsie, had a rough week of it . . . after she fainted, she spent almost a week in St. Barnabas Medical Center--a hospital in West Orange, NJ.

I remember getting a kick out of this one guy's comment that I overheard when she was in the emergency room . . . a doctor came up and asked him how he felt . . . his reply: Not so great; why do you think I'm here!

The fact that I could hear this comment, though, bothered me in that I was not impressed with how the hospital handled HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) guidelines . . . from what I understand, patients are supposed to have a certain amount of privacy . . . at this hospital, that wasn't the case . . . doctors were even coming up to patients and/or their families right in front of everybody else . . . that simply shouldn't be the case.

Fortunately, Elsie is now out of St. Barnabas and on her way to recovery at the St. Cloud Nursing Home--also in West Orange . . . thinking about her experience reminds me:

How true it is

Another year has passed
and we're all a little older.
Last summer felt hotter
and winter seems much colder.

I rack my brain for happy thoughts,
to put down on my pad,
But lots of things that come to mind
just make me kind of sad.

There was a time not long ago
when life was quite a blast.
Now I fully understand
about "Living in the Past."

We used to go to friends' homes
football games and lunches.
Now we go to therapy, to hospitals,
and after-funeral brunches.

We used to have hangovers,
from parties that were happy.
Now we suffer body aches
and sleep the night away.

We used to go out dining,
and couldn't get our fill.
Now we ask for doggie bags,
come home and take a pill.

We used to often travel
to places near and far.
Now we get backaches
from riding in the car.

We used to go out shopping
for new clothing at the Mall
But, now we never bother . . .
all the sizes are too small.

That, my friend is how life is,
and now my tale is told.
So, enjoy each day and live it up . . .
before you're too damned old!

Author Unknown
(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

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

This week, it goes to Katie Sprovieri and Rebecca Bednar--employees
at Maggie Moo's (908.359.6020) in Hillsborough, NJ.

They were the two folks who ran the fun wedding celebration
we recently had there . . . for more information, see the link
mentioned in last week's issue.

Also, they are always so friendly whenever Cynthia and I
come into the store--not only to us but to everybody else
as well . . . they put a smile on our faces and somehow
make the ice cream seem even better than it is, which
is going some!

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2. FYI

I've long been a big fan of Staples . . . the store almost always has
just the product that I need, and the prices seem reasonable--especially
when buying the store brand.

Rubber bands, if you can believe it, are one of the favorite things I buy
there . . . but not just any rubber band . . . I really like the
big kind: 7" x 1/8" . . . these never seem to break, and they are
perfect for bundling up papers or just about anything else.

At \$2.16 for 24 of the store brand, you won't go wrong!

FYI, part 2

* Jeffrey Marx, author of SEASON OF LIFE (reviewed in
BLAINESWORLD #450:

Thank you for taking the time to write and for sharing your review with me.
I'm glad you enjoyed SEASON OF LIFE. I'm also pleased that you want
to share the book with others. The whole idea is to keep reaching people
with the wonderful concepts that Joe Ehrmann and Biff Poggi are teaching
on that high school football field in Baltimore. Wishing you all good things.

* Shelley in Pennsylvania (on disposing of dryers, washers, etc.):

This group is a grassroots effort to keep things out of
landfills:<http://www.freecycle.org/display.php?region=US%20Northeast>

You can post that you have the dryer and then those looking for one will get in touch with you. I did this with a washing machine. A woman with two children came and got it. I'm not sure where you are located right now, so I am sending you think to the groups from the Northeast. Good luck to you and Cynthia in your new home and new marriage!

* Marilyn in Arizona (commenting on the "Thought for the day" in last week's issue):

I think Christopher Walken told this story over and over in the movie CATCH ME IF YOU CAN . . . he was Leonardo's father . . . I don't remember if he ever gave credit to the author of the story.

* Bruce in New Jersey:

I love to read your newsletter and was wondering if any readers might know of a website that shows the words to some of the old songs. I'm talking from the big bad era straight through the 70s and some of the 80s music.

I would greatly appreciate it and, also, any companies that might have out of date record albums as well. I thank you and all your readers for any help possible.

NOTE:

I thought that Bruce and other readers might like to see the following that was run in BLAINESWORLD #391:

B. What to know the lyrics to any of your favorite songs? The list below combines several options for you to check.

Each site has free song lyric search engines, organized by artists. You can find song lyrics by today's hottest music artists or your favorite artist from "back when."

Among the possibilities that you might want to check, consider:

<http://www.lyrics.com/>

<http://lyrics.astraweb.com/>

<http://www.thesonglyrics.com/>

<http://www.songtext.net/>

<http://www.musicsonglyrics.com/>

<http://www.lyricsworld.com/>

http://www.letssingit.com/http://www.music.indiana.edu/music_resources/songlyr.html

And then there's this one, containing several of the above links--as well as others:

<http://www.musicsonglyrics.com/>

At many of the above websites, you can also find sheet music and/or posters of your favorite artist(s).

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3. Psychic abilities

A woman goes to the local psychic in hopes of contacting her dearly departed grandmother. The psychic's eyelids begin fluttering, her voice begins warbling, her hands float up above the table, and she begins moaning.

Eventually, a coherent voice emanates, saying,
"Granddaughter? Are you there?"

The customer, wide-eyed and on the edge of her seat,
responds, "Grandmother? Is that you?"

"Yes granddaughter, it's me."

"It's really, really you, grandmother?" the woman
repeats.

"Yes, it's really me, granddaughter."

The woman looks puzzled, "You're sure it's you,
grandmother?"

"Yes, granddaughter, I'm sure it's me."

The woman pauses a moment, "Grandmother, I have
just one question for you."

"Anything, my child."

"Grandmother, when did you learn to speak English?"

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4. Reviews ...

A. Loved WEDDING CRASHERS . . . Vince Vaughn and Owen Wilson play divorce mediators and lifetime friends whose hobby every spring is to crash weddings, regardless of the ethnic group involved . . . they are both hilarious in this raunchy film, which had me frequently laughing out loud . . . there's a great soundtrack, too . . . I've seen a lot of terrible comedies lately; it was good to have this one finally break the streak . . . rated R.

B. BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #443 follows:

Enjoyed BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE, an adaptation of the popular children's novel of the same name by Kate DiCamillo . . . it is the tale of a 10-year old girl who, after being abandoned by her mother when she was three, adopts a stray dog . . . the pooch then helps her meet an eclectic group of townspeople and rekindle her almost lost relationship with her father . . . newcomer AnnaSophia Robb is excellent as Opal, as is Jeff Daniels as her preacher-father . . . I also loved the work of the dog who played Winn-Dixie; he was excellent . . . rated PG-13.

C. I never thought I'd choose to read a book about economics; i.e., until I came across FREAKONOMICS by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner . . . subtitled A ROGUE ECONOMIST EXPLORES THE HIDDEN SIDE OF EVERYTHING, it kept me fascinated from beginning to end.

Levitt, who teaches economics at the University of Chicago, looks at things differently than just about everybody else . . . for example, when considering why crime declined in this country, he came up with a simple explanation: Roe v. Wade . . . it had

nothing to do with more police on the street; rather, it had everything to do with the fact that millions of poor women were no longer having babies they may have had in the past.

He also got me thinking about the answers to such other questions as: Which is more dangerous, a gun or a swimming pool? Why do drug dealers still live with their moms? How much do parents really matter?

And this one I really enjoyed pondering: What do schoolteachers and sumo wrestlers have in common? The answer: They both cheat!

As much as I don't like to admit the latter fact, Levitt does an excellent job of backing up his statements with facts . . . by the same token, he is highly critical of real estate professionals who make more money selling their own homes than those of non-realtors due to the simple fact that they keep them on the market just a bit longer.

There were many thought-provoking passages; among them:

* How any give expert treats you, therefore, will depend on how that expert's incentives are set up. Sometimes his incentives may work in your favor. For instance: a study of California auto mechanics found they often passed up a small repair bill by letting failing cars pass emissions inspections-the reason being that lenient mechanics are rewarded with repeat business. But in a different case, an expert's incentives may work against you. In a medical study, it turned out that obstetricians in areas with declining birth rates are much more likely to perform cesarean-section deliveries than obstetricians in growing areas-suggesting that, when business is tough, doctors try to ring up more expensive procedures.

* Most impressively, fully 70 percent of the women claimed "above average" looks, including 24 percent claiming "very good looks." The online men too were gorgeous: 67 percent called themselves "above average," including 21 percent with "very good looks." This leaves only about 30 percent of the users with "average" looks, including a paltry 1 percent with "less than average" looks-which suggests that the typical online dater is either a fabulist, a narcissist, or simply resistant to the meaning of "average". (Or perhaps they are all just realists: as any real-estate agent knows, the typical house isn't "charming" or "fantastic", but unless you say it is, no one will even bother to take a look.) Twenty-eight percent of the women on the site said they were blond, a number far beyond the national average, which indicates a lot of dyeing, or lying, or both.

* The data show that, on average, a person with a distinctively black name-whether it is a woman named Imani or a man named DeShawn, does have a worse life outcome than a woman named Molly or a man named Jake. But it isn't the fault of their names. If two black boys, Jake Williams and DeShawn Williams, are born in the same neighborhood and into the same familial and economic circumstances, they would likely have similar life outcomes. But the kind of parents who name their son Jake don't tend to live in the same neighborhoods or share economic circumstances with the kind of parents who name their son DeShawn. And that's why, on average, a boy named Jake will tend to earn more money and get more education than a boy named DeShawn. A DeShawn is more likely to have been handicapped by a low-education, single-parent background. His name is an indicator, not a cause, of his outcome. Just as a child with no books in his home

isn't likely to test well in school, a boy named DeShawn isn't likely to do as well in life.

D. Heard the informative Nightingale-Conant CD program THE FOUNTAIN OF WEALTH, written and read by Paul Zane Pilzer . . . he's a former economic advisor to President Reagan who was also a multi-millionaire at age 26.

He presents in clear fashion his ideas for creating wealth through a process he calls "economic alchemy" . . . I particularly liked how they can be applied to several areas of your individual life, and that they were practical as opposed to being theoretical.

For instance, Pilzer urges you to choose a job where you learn more than you do. (If the ratio ever goes the other way, then it is time to leave.)

Also, he points out that your goal should be to find a job or profession that you do with ease and, also, better than anybody else.

And if you want to find the next trillion dollar industry, look no further than the wellness industry. He further gives advice on starting a wellness business of your own.

Pilzer even urges you to heed the advice given to him by his father; specifically: In a recession, your neighbor loses his job; in a depression, you lose your job.

Listening to THE FOUNTAIN OF WEALTH will certainly help prevent that from happening.

This fine program is available for purchase or rental . . . if you want to get it, please click:

<http://www.achievement.com>

Above is the tape rental club I belong to; i.e., the Achievement Tape Library . . . this a great way to hear CDs and/or audio cassette tapes, view videos, etc.--all for a fraction of what it would cost to buy them . . . call the head of the firm (Paul Arroyo) directly at 1.800.735.3660 and mention my name . . . that way, you'll be sure to pay even higher prices . . . NOT.

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5. VCR alert

A. UNFORGETTABLE MOMENTS IN TELEVISION ENTERTAINMENT will feature clips ranging from Sammy Davis Jr. planting a kiss on Archie Bunker on ALL IN THE FAMILY to Amy Brenneman and David Caruso going somewhat further on NYPD BLUE . . . Wednesday at 8:30 p.m. on NBC.

B. HOOKING UP, a look at 11 women over a 12-month span of Internet dating, concludes Thursday at 9 p.m. on ABC.

C. A FATHER . . . A SON . . . ONCE UPON A TIME IN HOLLYWOOD is a documentary profiling Kirk and Michael Douglas . . . according to TV GUIDE, it's "a first-rate double bio [that's] also touching" . . . Saturday at 8 p.m. on HBO.

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6. Little pill

An elderly gentleman went to the local drug store and asked the pharmacist for the little blue Viagra pill. The pharmacist asked "How many?"

The man replied, "Just a few, maybe a half dozen. I cut each one into four pieces."

The pharmacist said, "That's too small a dose. That won't get you through sex."

The old fellow said, "Oh, I'm past eighty years old and I don't even think about sex much anymore. I just want it to stick out far enough so I don't pee on my new shoes."

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7. Websites

A. This website is great fun for the child in the house . . . or for you, if you qualify as that person . . . it's also a good little lesson in geography . . . to test your knowledge about United States geography, please click:

http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/states_experiment_drag-drop_Intermed_State15s_500.html

Feel free to share your scores with me!

B. Want to have some fun? If so, please click:

<http://www.izpitera.ru/lj/tetka.swf>

You can even move the bikini-clad woman around by moving your mouse. Enjoy!

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

As you hopefully know by now, you should ALWAYS feel free to mention this newsletter to your friends, relatives, etc. . . . should they want to subscribe (AT NO COST), all they have to do is go to my homepage . . . then click on "Special Offer" at the bottom . . . it's that simple!

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8. Computer tip

If you're an AOL user, there's a neat FREE calendar function that is worth checking out . . . it also gives you the daily weather forecast . . . and what I like best: you can also send yourself e-mail reminders for important upcoming events.

Furthermore, you can share your calendar with other friends

and/or family members, and you can access it from other computers too.

Even if you're not an AOL user, you might want to tell your friends about this feature . . . in addition, you might want to see if your Internet provider offers a similar service.

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9. Golf meditations

(for golfers and/or to pass along to those who play the game)

If you really want to get better at golf, go back and take it up at a much earlier age.

Since bad shots come in groups of three, a fourth bad shot is actually the beginning of the next group of three.

No matter how bad you are playing, it is always possible to play worse.

When your shot has to carry over a water hazard, you can either hit one more club or two more balls.

A golf match is a test of your skill against your opponent's luck.

Every time a golfer makes a birdie, he must subsequently make two triple bogeys to restore the fundamental equilibrium of the universe.

You can put "draw" on the ball, you can put "fade" on the ball, but no golfer can put "straight" on the ball.

Don't buy a putter until you've had a chance to throw it.

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10. A quote I like

The person who says it cannot be done should not interrupt the person who is doing it.--Chinese proverb

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11. Thought for the day

Time . . . a fable

Once upon a time, there was an island where all the feelings lived: Happiness, Sadness, Knowledge, and all of the others, including Love.

However, one day it was announced to everybody that the island would sink, so all prepared their boats and left.

Love was the only one who stayed. Love wanted to stay

until it started sinking. When Love was almost sinking, he decided to ask for help.

Richness was passing by Love in a beautiful boat. Love said, "Richness, can you take me with you?"

Richness answered, "No, I can't. There is a lot of gold and silver in my boat. There is no place here for you."

Love decided to ask Vanity who was also passing by, "Vanity, please help me?"

"I can't help you Love. You are all wet and can probably damage my boat," Vanity answered.

Sadness was close by so Love asked for help, "Sadness, let me go with you."

"Oh . . . Love, I am so sad that I prefer to go alone!"

Happiness passed by Love too, but she was so happy that she did not listen when Love called her!

Suddenly, there was a voice, "Come Love, I will take you." It was an elderly person.

Love became very happy that he even forgot to ask the name of the elderly person. When they arrived to the other side, Love asked Knowledge who the elderly person was.

"It was Time."

"Time? But why did Time help me?"

"Because only Time is capable of understanding such a great Love."

METHINKS:

Time is capable of solving anything. Things today may not have a solution but tomorrow you will find one! The time has come for us to stop tuning separate instruments and, together, to create a symphony.

Author Unknown

(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

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And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #461

8.1.2005

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1. Reflections

A. My beautiful bride Cynthia Rubin--oops, I have to get used to the fact that she is now Cynthia Greenfield--is truly amazing . . . we began moving last Wednesday and some 22 hours later, we were done . . . it was a difficult move, in that we moved on the hottest day of the year . . . plus, we . . . on second thought, I won't bore you with the details . . . the good thing: nothing was broken!

Back to Cynthia . . . within a few days, she had everything unpacked and our new home in fine shape . . . since I also moved out of Washington Crossing on Wednesday, and she moved our cats out of Hillsborough on Sunday, we are now officially . . . drum roll, please: the Greenfields of Belle Meade!

***** SPECIAL FREE OFFER *****

We had thought a dryer was a dryer and would work anywhere . . . yet when we moved, we found out that this is not necessarily the case . . . since Cynthia's dryer was electric and we have gas heat, we need to buy a new one.

This means that we have no need for her dryer, which is only some three years old . . . it is white and medium-sized . . . if you have any interest in it and can arrange to pick it up within the next week, send me an e-mail with the following words in the subject line: INTERESTED IN DRYER

Please send your e-mail to: bginbc@aol.com . . . the dryer will go to the first reader who can arrange for pick-up.

B. We are sooooo glad to have returned from our honeymoon . . . though we had a great trip, we both agree that the little things we've been doing mean just as much to us--if not more.

For example, we have woods and a great walking path right behind our home . . . then there are our occasional dinners at Star Diner in Hillsborough . . . a visit the other night to a local carnival . . . using our Jacuzzi . . . and, of course, our frequent excursions to MaggieMoo's Ice Cream and Treatery in Hillsborough.

Which reminds me . . . our local paper ran a great article on our recent ice cream reception at the aforementioned establishment . . . you unfortunately won't be able to see the pictures that accompanied the article; nevertheless, methinks you'll still get a kick out of reading it:

<http://www.c-n.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050731/FEATURES02/507310310/1023>

C. I'm VERY GRATEFUL to all who have taken the time to visit my book reviews at amazon.com's website . . . as a result, I've now made the "Top 500" reviewer list for the first time.

As of this writing, I'm #500 and hopefully climbing . . . that rating is based on the 1,808 favorable comments on my 443 reviews.

To see these ratings for yourself (of books I've generally enjoyed), please click:

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/cdp/member-reviews/a2hm0bzwqrv1ef/002-5382917-6435211>

And if you like any of my reviews and/or find them helpful, please indicate that is the case by clicking the "Yes" option . . . that will enable me to stay in the Top 500!

**** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD ****

This week, it goes to Judy Jones--principal clerk typist for Trenton's Municipal Court . . . she is the person who helps schedule the mediation work that I do when not teaching.

I've had the pleasure of working with Judy for many years, and she has always been most helpful . . . she is also quite competent, and to top it off, she always has a great attitude about both her job and career.

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2. FYI

Wanting a backpack for when were touring on our honeymoon, I came across something even better at my local Target: a Sling Bag from Eddie Bauer . . . it has plenty of pockets and carries a great deal . . . best of all, it straps across for your front . . . this makes for easy access and, for the most part, makes it impossible for a pickpocket to sneak up from behind and take whatever would be contained in a backpack.

Online, it is also available at:

http://www.eddiebauer.com/eb/product.asp?product_id=28308&nv=5|21474|208&lview=&cm_cg=C208&tid=&c=&sc=&lp=v1i005

FYI, part 2

* Norean in New York:

Blaine, you are a lucky man; Cynthia is a beauty. Great to hear that you had a wonderful honeymoon. I am so happy for you and hope you both have MANY years of wedded bliss. Thanks for sharing the photos of your

special day, and I can't wait to see the ones to follow.

* Warren in New Jersey:

[answering my questions about LinkedIn]

LinkedIn is an on-line networking tool that is useful for both professional and personal purposes. I originally was introduced to it by an old friend trying to reestablish old contacts. . . . Just by having already linked-up with 15 people who have accepted my invitation, I now have access to over 5,000 people. I have direct contact with those who have accepted my invitations, and with those whose invitations I have accepted. In addition to those connections, I have indirect access to all of those people's other contacts, as well as each of their contacts, and so on.

A high school business teacher I know intends to make use of it in the fall to make contacts with area businesses to try to arrange for guest speakers and/or for mock interviews for her students. There is much to be gained from this networking tool, which gains value as more people become linked into it. There are no fees involved, no solicitations (other than an initial invitation from someone you know) and so far, no downside.

It is also perfect for people searching for new career opportunities.

If anybody is interested in joining, send me an e-mail with the following in the subject line: Invite me to LinkedIn . . . my e-mail address is: Wkmfriel@aol.com

* Alan Kravitz, a talented photographer and longtime reader of BLAINESWORLD, informed me that he has a new updated portfolio of work . . . to view it, please click:
<http://www.cameraworksonline.com>

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3. Magic

An boy and his father were visiting a mall. They were amazed by almost everything they saw, but especially by two shiny, silver walls that could move apart and back together again.

The boy asked, "What is this, Father?"

The father (never having seen an elevator) responded, "Son, I have never seen anything like this in my life, I don't know what it is."

While the boy and his father were watching with amazement, an older lady in a wheelchair rolled up to the moving walls and pressed a button. The walls opened and the lady rolled between them into a small room. The walls closed and the boy and his father watched the small circular numbers above the walls light up sequentially. They continued to watch until it reached the last number and then as these numbers began to light in reverse order.

The walls opened up again and a beautiful young woman stepped out.

The father, not taking his eyes off the young woman, said quietly to his son, "Go get your Mother."

4. Reviews ...

A. SAVE YOURSELF MONEY DEPARTMENT: Hoping this warning isn't too late, I urge you not to rush out to see WAR OF THE WORLDS . . . in fact, don't even bother with it when it comes out on DVD or video . . . billed as a contemporary retelling of H.G. Wells' classic book of the same title, this sci-fi adventure thriller starts off with an some impressive special effects--then goes rapidly downhill . . . Steven Spielberg seems to have just recycled his creatures from E.T. . . . Tom Cruise and Dakota Fanning are OK as father and daughter fighting to stay alive, but the usually excellent Tim Robbins is terrible in his role as a crazed survivor . . . rated PG-13.

NOTE:

If you are a fan of the tale, then catch THE 1953 version (THE WAR OF THE WORLDS) . . . it starred Gene Barry and Ann Robinson, and I recall liking it much it better than the current release.

B. GUESS WHO is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #449 follows:

I was mildly amused by GUESS WHO, a comedic take on the far superior 1967 drama GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER . . . this latest version has Ashton Kutcher, who's quite charming, coming home to meet his girlfriend's black parents . . . the father is played by Bernie Mac, a comedian who continues to impress me with his appearances in movies (I also liked his work in MR. 3000) . . . there are some funny moments in the film, but stretches of it were somewhat flat . . . rated PG-13.

C. When on our recent cruise, I found myself in the rare position of having nothing to read (in that I had finished the other book I had brought) . . . so I ventured to the ship's library and came across a paperback that looked interesting from a cursory review of the jacket: ABSENT WITNESS by Nancy Kopp.

Billed as a "legal thriller," it's a novel about a woman who is in a coma after a car accident . . . when she becomes impregnated while in the hospital, the search begins for the culprit.

Many twists and turns later, I still found myself interested in the outcome right up until the satisfying conclusion . . . in addition, there's a romantic subplot that added to my enjoyment.

I'll also make it a point to read other books by the author, though a quick check seems to indicate that for some reason she hasn't written anything after 2003 . . . too bad!

D. Heard the taped version of CHRONICLES, VOLUME ONE by Bob Dylan . . . it traces the singer's beginnings from when he first arrived in Manhattan in 1961 . . . I enjoyed his take on many recording artists, including the great Roy Orbison (he admired), Ricky Nelson (he didn't think would last), Dan Van Ronk, etc.

This isn't a typical autobiography, in that it doesn't follow

a straight chronological approach . . . rather, it is a collection of Dylan's observations on a wide range of topics including the music business, his loves and how he came up with ideas for his songs.

It left me looking forward to CHRONICLES, VOLUME 2--particularly if Sean Penn repeats the excellent job of narration he did on this first part.

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5. VCR alert

A. KATHY GRIFFIN . . . NOT NICOLE KIDMAN is an hour of stand-up where Griffin gives her take on such celebrities as Clay Aiken, Dick Clark, Ozzy Osbourne, and Anna Nicole Smith . . . it is followed by KATHY GRIFFIN: MY LIFE ON THE D-LIST, a six-part reality series about her persona life . . . Wednesday at 9 p.m. on Bravo.

B. STARVED is about four New Yorkers with eating disorders . . . according to TV GUIDE, it is "the most outrageous new sitcom in years . . . think SEINFELD with even more neuroses" . . . Thursdays at 10 p.m. on FX.

C. MOTOWN: THE EARLY YEARS features new performances by Martha Reeves, the Countours and Mary Wells, as well as archival clips of Diana Ross and the Supremes, Marvin Gaye and the Temptations . . . Saturday at 8 p.m. on PBS Channel 13 (NYC) . . . PBS times and dates vary, so check your local listings.

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6. Eight long years

Our story begins in 1997 when our hero, an ardent golfer in his twenties, takes a cruise in the Caribbean. The ship is caught in a hurricane and all hands are lost. Well--almost all hands. Our young man manages to cling to a piece of driftwood until the sea and winds push him onto a small deserted island where he spends the next eight years surviving on coconuts, crabs, and whatever flotsam and jetsam he can scavenge.

Then one day our survivor is sitting under the shade of a palm tree cracking stone crab claws for lunch when he sees a strange, dark shape emerge from the surf. At first he hangs back in fear because it looks like the Creature From The Black Lagoon. But then his body shudders with joy as he realizes it is a scuba diver in a wetsuit.

In eight years this is the first human being he has seen. And not only that, but this diver's form indicate it is female.

Of course the diver is frightened too when she sees this wild-looking man approaching across the sand. But something about him tells her that he is harmless. She allows him to approach and he tells her his story--the shipwreck, his drift to this island and his long tenure here in isolation. As she listens, he realizes that her questioning hazel eyes are more beautiful than any he's dreamed of, and he's had plenty of time to dream.

"You poor man" she says, taking off the wetsuit hood to reveal a cascading mane of auburn hair. "How long has it been since you've had any real food?"

"Real food?" He feels a lump in his throat. "Real food! My God--it's been eight years."

She smiles and undoes the top of her wet suit, reaches inside and fishes out a Snickers candy bar. He takes it, hefts it, turns it this way and that, reads every word on the label, then finally unable to contain himself at the thought of something other than coconut and raw crabmeat, he tears open the package, takes a bite, chews and swallows. As he finishes the candy bar, she tells him about the events of 9/11. And she looks at him with pity in her eyes.

"You poor man! Has it been that long since you had a smoke?" She reaches back into her wet suit and fumbles around for something. Then she realizes that she has to unzip it a little further to find what she's looking for.

"A smoke?" A tear appears in his eye. "A smoke!--it's been eight years. Don't tell me you have a cigarette in there." As she further unzips, the wetsuit falls down a little and her neck and the top part of her shoulder are revealed. I don't think I have to tell you where our hero's eyes were focused.

She smiles an even lovelier smile, reaches inside, and brings out a pack of Winstons and a Zippo lighter. She offers him the pack, which he gratefully accepts. He selects one and holds it under his nose smelling it as a cigar connoisseur would a fine Havana. Finally, he lights up and inhales deeply. As he smokes, she tells him about the bombings and their aftermath. And as he takes his last drag, she looks at him with pity in her eyes.

"You poor man. How long has it been since you've had a drink?"

"A drink?" His eyes start to mist over. "A drink! My word, it's been eight years." She unzips a little more of her wetsuit top and our hero's eyes are treated to a view of her pretty curves. He sees just enough flesh to wonder whether or not she has on a bathing suit.

"Don't tell me you have some booze in there!"

She smiles--an even more radiant smile--and hands him a half-pint flask. Hands shaking in anticipation, he opens the bottle, raises it to his lips, and pours a few drops of the amber liquid into his mouth. It's scotch--expensive, unblended, peat-smoked scotch. He dares not swallow. The moment is just too overpowering. Finally, he can stand it no longer, and allows the liquor to flow down his throat. He's almost in ecstasy. As he enjoys the alcohol, she tells him about Oprah Winfrey and what has happened to Michael Jackson.

And as he stands before her enjoying the last drop of the scotch, she begins to see him in a different light. He is, after all, a sun-bronzed man who has been swimming hours every day for the past eight years and whose body is lean, taut and hard. She looks at him with something other than pity.

"You poor man! How long has it been since you've played around?" She begins to further unzip the wetsuit.

"Play a round?" His body involuntarily jumps with joy. "Play a round! I can't believe it, but it's been eight long, horrible years."

This time her expression is different. Oh it's still a smile all right, but what a smile. This is the smile of desire, the smile of lust, the smile which turns men to stone. She slowly unzips the wetsuit all the way, starts to step out of it and at the last second turns away coyly.

"Don't tell me . . . ," he stops, almost unable to contain himself.

And she steps out of the wet suit.

He sees that his eyes were not fooled. Her lithe, supple body is not hampered by a bathing suit. He notes the tan line across her back and the contrast of her well-sunned legs with the pale moon-like curves of her hips.

"Don't tell me we can" His voice falls off as his dreams of eight long years are finally coming true.

She turns and stands in front of him nude--as supple and appealing as a Botticelli Venus. Her right hand reaches out, a gesture of invitation. In her left hand she holds the wetsuit.

"Play around? Don't tell me" He breaks down.

He begins sobbing. Sobbing with joy.

He can hardly think. His mind is filled with little fragments of thoughts.

"Finally after all these years . . ." Through his tears he looks at his new benefactor. "It's just too much . . . too much to believe. I'm still young, still have lots of energy...it's just too much."

He sobs and sobs and finally collects himself. Then he manages to say, "Don't tell me you have some golf clubs and a ball in that wetsuit."

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7. Websites

A. As many of you know, I'm a longtime fan of AAA . . . whenever I've used that fine company's services (e.g., when my car needed towing), the results have been on target.

The AAA website keeps getting better and better . . . everything is available to members, but non-members can also use it for many things too . . . see for yourself by clicking:

<http://www.aaa.com>

You can get Searchable TourBook Guides, an Internet TripTik, Drive Trips, Map Gallery, Attractions and Events, Travel Shopping, and Everything Travel (book flights,, hotels, cruises, vacation packages, travel money, attraction tickets, car rentals, and more).

Also, if you're not a member, you can join online!

B. The following website has some great tips and ideas for anyone in the midst of writing wedding vows:

http://www.brilliantweddingpages.com/couples/elvis_wedding_vows.asp

Although I did NOT use the this Elvis one, I did find it amusing:
It took a hard headed woman to make me king of the whole
wide world.

I thought you were the devil in disguise but you turned out to
be my puppet on a string.

I used to live in the hotel down the end of lonely street,
but now it's Viva Las Vegas 'cause I need your love tonight.

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

THANKS to Dan Becker, my webmaster, who has done a great job
putting past issues back on the website . . . just click above, then
Newsletter, Past issues, and you'll be taken to an area where you can
see the past month's issues . . . more will be added.

Best of all, if you go to any past issue, you'll be able to "jump" from
one section to the next--much like I plan to do with future current
issues of BLAINESWORLD.

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8. Computer tip

Windows has a terrible build-in search program . . . if you use it to
find something on your hard drive, you'll often be thwarted . . . I've
previously mentioned that both Google and Yahoo offer FREE search
desktop options with my preference being the latter (since unlike
Google, it offers a preview feature and, also, it can recognize
rich text files).

There's now another player in the field: MSN Desktop Search . . . to
check this one out, please click:

<http://toolbar.msn.com>

It looks promising, in that it has a preview feature . . . and it also enables
you to fill out online forms with one click.

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9. Excuses if you get caught sleeping in your cubicle, part 2 of 2 (concluded from last week)

11. "This is in exchange for the six hours last
night when I dreamed about work!"

12. "I was doing a highly specific Yoga exercise to
relieve work-related stress. Do you discriminate
against people who practice Yoga?"

13. "Darn! Why did you interrupt me? I had almost
figured out a solution to our biggest problem."

14. "Uh, hey, whaddaya expect... the coffee machine
is broken..."

15. "Someone must've put decaf in the wrong pot."

16. "Boy, that cold medicine I took last night just won't wear off!"

17. "Ah, the unique and unpredictable circadian rhythms of the workaholic!"

18. "I wasn't sleeping. I was trying to pick up my contact lens without my hands."

19. "The mailman flipped out and pulled a gun so I was playing dead to avoid getting shot."

20. "Geez, I thought you (the boss) were gone for the day."

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10. A quote I like

Some people take better care of their pets than they do themselves. Their animals can run like the wind and they can barely make it up a flight of stairs.---Jim Rohn, motivational speaker/business philosopher

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11. Thought for the day

Shake it off

One day a farmer's donkey fell into an abandoned well. The animal cried piteously for hours as the farmer tried to figure out what to do.

Finally, he decided the animal was old and the well needed to be covered up anyway, so it just wasn't worth it to him to try to retrieve the donkey.

He invited all his neighbors to come over and help him. They each grabbed a shovel and began to shovel dirt into the well.

Realizing what was happening, the donkey at first cried and wailed horribly. Then, a few shovelfuls later, he quieted down completely.

The farmer peered down into the well, and was astounded by what he saw.

With every shovelful of dirt that hit his back, the donkey was doing something amazing. He would shake it off and take a step up on the new layer of dirt. As the farmer's neighbors continued to shovel dirt on top of the animal, he would shake it off and take a step up.

Pretty soon, the donkey stepped up over the edge of the well and trotted off, to the shock and

astonishment of all the neighbors!

Life is going to shovel dirt on you, all kinds of dirt. The trick to getting out of the well is to not let it bury you, but to shake it off and take a step up. Each of our troubles is a stepping stone. We can get out of the deepest wells just by not stopping, never giving up! Shake it off and take a step up!

Remember the five simple rules to be happy:

Free your heart from hatred.
Free your mind from worries.
Live simply.
Give more.
Expect less.

Also, the donkey kicked the hell out of the guy that tried to bury him. Which brings me to another moral for this story: When you try to CYA, it always comes back and gets you.

Author Unknown
(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

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And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
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New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD (with honeymoon report)

Issue #460

7.25.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Sorry for the fact that there was no issue last week, but hey, a guy has to spend some time on vacation from time to time . . . and now I'm back; make that, we're back.

Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I just returned from our honeymoon . . . we had a marvelous time, though that wasn't totally unexpected given the company!

B. Paris was our first destination . . . our hotel, Castille Paris, was beautiful . . . we enjoyed taking a boat ride along the Seine, seeing the Eiffel Tower (one place to visit that's even more magnificent when you see it in person), visiting the Louvre, and going on rides at a nearby amusement park.

We even found time to catch a movie; see Section 4A . . . it was a bit strange to hear it in English and see subtitles in French, but after a few minutes, we got the hang of it.

C. From there, we went on a Windstar cruise of the Mediterranean . . . it was tough being two of only 300 passengers, though having some 150 employees on board at our beck and call made the week tolerable . . . Cynthia had perhaps the best observation . . . one day, we got a soda . . . before she could open it up, the waiter took it from her and said, "Let me do that for you" . . . Cynthia's reaction was that she could get used to living such a life.

Windstar cruises provide an alternative to cruises on big ships . . . they offer what almost amounts to personalized service, and what makes them nice is the fact that whenever possible, they use sails as opposed to an engine . . . it is almost like having your very own yacht . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.windstarcruises.com/>

We spent a leisurely and extremely enjoyable week visiting such ports as St. Tropez, Monte Carlo, Portofino (our favorite), Livorno, and Porto Vechio . . . in addition, Cynthia got two massage treatments . . . I only got one, but also--for the first time--I had reflexology done on my feet . . . hey, it's a tough life that somebody has to live . . . my thinking is that somebody might as well be me.

Meals were great for the most part . . . and best of all, we got to meet and spend time with many new friends including John and Marcia from Georgia, Steve and Cathy from New Jersey, Marvin and Reisa from Canada, Michael and Vicki from Ohio, Philip and Avril from Australia, and Rob and Lily from Massachusetts.

We also got to dance a lot . . . each night, we'd journey to the Compass Rose area where we were entertained by Callen & Joyce, a talented duo who played many of our favorite songs.

Pictures to follow, possibly as early as next week.

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

This week, it goes to Ray Trail--head of a company called Fix It UP (215.230.1836) . . . he provides excellent service at very reasonable prices for all sorts of small construction jobs, home repairs, etc.

I've used Ray ever since I moved into my Washington Crossing home and can honestly say that he has ALWAYS come through for me . . . one of the things I'll miss most in moving is having him probably too far away to be able to use his services any longer.

Ray is friendly, as well as knowledgeable about lots of fields including plumbing and electricity . . . furthermore, he is a guy who both returns calls and keeps appointments--something that I'm unfortunately finding is not the norm with many contractors today.

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2. FYI

Here's something from you might want to try that I gained from reading Richard Carlson's excellent book, EASIER THAN YOU THINK (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11):

A number of years ago a friend introduced me to Deborah, a very pessimistic woman who, to her credit was determined to change her negative ways. She told me the day we met that she had devised an experiment to get rid of her negativity. It was one of the simplest experiments I've ever heard of. She decided that she would write the words "Drop the negativity and focus on the blessings" on three-by-five index cards. She would carry one card in her purse, tape on to the visor in her car, and tape another to her refrigerator. Every time a negative thought crept into her mind, she would read the card.

Several months later she glowingly told me about the early results. When her old habit surfaced, she would look at the index card and repeat the words. After a while, she noticed that her negative attitude was beginning to change.

After six months Deborah and I bumped into each other again. The transformation was astonishing. She claimed to be one of the most genuinely positive people she knew. Speaking with her, I could sense she was right. She said that changing her habit of negativity was one of the easiest things she had ever done and doing so had changed her life forever.

FYI, part 2

* Debby in New Jersey (dsussna@comcast.net):

Once again I am looking for a house and pet sitter. I know there are a lot out there who are in this business, but they charge at least \$50 a night. In the past I have been able to find young people who have another job but want a chance to stay outside their parents' home and/or are looking for some supplemental income.

I now only have one cat but do want someone willing to stay overnight in my house located near Stockton, NJ--just 10 minutes from New Hope. I am willing to pay \$25 per night. Although I am hoping to go away at the end of August or the beginning of September, I am now more concerned with having someone on tap for future trips. Any leads that you can give me would be greatly appreciated.

THANKS to the many folks who were kind enough to send congratulations on our wedding . . . both Cynthia and I appreciated your taking the time to write . . . to cite just a few of the nice e-mails that we received:

* Laura in New Jersey:

Thanks for taking time to share your special event with all of your pen pals. Cynthia's dress was so beautiful. I swear I will have to take her shopping next time I need something. Your daughter is beautiful, and I see some of you in her which is good. When did you find time to get a newsletter out? Mazel Tov.

* Terry and Jerry in Florida:

Our heartiest congratulations on your wedding! Blaine, you look extremely happy. Cynthia looks like a wonderful person, and she is sooooo pretty!! And she makes you happy. That is so terrific. Your daughter is beautiful too!!!

* Geri in Pennsylvania:

Congratulations, and I wish the two of you to be twice as happy as you are now in 20 years. Have a wonderful life together and Mazel Tov!

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3. Warning!

To all grandparents:

Heed this warning. Do NOT lose your Grandkids in the Mall!

A small boy was lost at a large shopping mall. He approached a uniformed policeman and said, "I've lost my grandpa!"

The cop asked, "What's he like?"

The little boy replied, "Crown Royal whiskey and women with big boobs."

4. Reviews ...

A. Despite the mostly favorable reviews, I was disappointed with CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY--the second version of Roald Dahl's classic tale about a child who finds a winning ticket that enables him to meet a rather eccentric chocolatier . . . I think you'll be much better served by saving your money and renting 1971's WILLIE WONKA & THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY, starring Gene Wilder . . . I found his performance amusing; Johnny Depp--in the current film--is just strange . . . all I kept thinking about when watching was that there was Michael Jackson on screen (due to Depp's pale makeup, as well as his mannerisms) . . . rated PG.

B. Don't be put off by the G rating of ICE PRINCESS, now out on DVD . . . it's a heartwarming tale about a teen misfit who risks it all to discover her dreams of competitive figure skating . . . Michelle Trachtenberg is appealing as the main character, and Joan Cusack and Kim Cattrall both deliver as her respective mother and coach . . . it helped pass the time on my plane back from Rome . . . in the comfort of your own home, you'll enjoy it even more and will find it a perfect movie to watch with children of all ages.

C. Loved Richard Carlson's latest book, EASIER THAN YOU THINK (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11), but that's no real surprise because he is one of favorite authors . . . if his name isn't familiar, then methinks you might want to jot it down and start reading his DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF or anything else in that series.

Carlson has the unique talent to make things simple . . . in EASIER, his subtitle says it all: BECAUSE LIFE DOESN'T HAVE TO BE SO HARD . . . it really doesn't, especially if you start implementing what he mentions in his second subtitle: THE SMALL CHANGES THAT ADD UP TO A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE.

As an example, his advice from Chapter 18, "Set Your Expectations to Zero," hit home because of some of the stress I'm presently encountering with a move into a new home . . . he mentioned that when you work out, you should set your expectations to zero so you can appreciate your body, as opposed to resenting it and wishing you were different.

He then cites the story of a dear friend of his dad's who recently died: Even at the very end of Wally's life, he would say, "Life doesn't get any better than this. I have today. I have my friends. I can breathe. I'm alive. I'm very happy to be here." And the most beautiful part of Wally's attitude was that everyone who knew him know that he meant every single word.

There were many other tidbits I gained from reading EASIER THAN YOU THINK; among them:

You can make an articulate argument for either side--being grateful or being overextended. One will lead you toward satisfaction, and the other toward guaranteed and sustained grief. And the beautiful part is that you get to make the choice.

If we can accept the fact that the grass is as green as it needs to be and that it's possible for us to be happy right now, then our lives will be easier. Focusing on what is wrong as opposed to what is right leads to a never-ending cycle of frustration. There are things we simply cannot change or control no matter how much we would like to. If we let these things take over, we are choosing to make ourselves unhappy.

One of the most powerful observations I've ever made about stress is this: obsessing over what stresses us out can cause more stress than what originally made us stressed to begin with. I know that's a mouthful, but it's true. And once you see the wisdom in this statement, your life will never be the same. It goes to the heart of what really causes stress.

D. Your eyes are NOT deceiving you . . . what follows is a second book that I've just read, as opposed to having heard, in that I did not have access to a tape or CD player when cruising:

I'll admit it . . . from time to time, I'm a sucker for a love story, particularly if written by Nicholas Sparks (think THE NOTEBOOK, MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE, etc.).

So when his latest came out, TRUE BELIEVER, I just had to read it . . . and am glad to report that I was not disappointed . . . you won't be, either.

TRUE BELIEVER is the story of a New York writer who is an expert on debunking the supernatural . . . when in North Carolina to investigate a story, he meets a librarian who forces him to do something he's never done before; i.e., take a giant leap of faith.

As Sparks notes on the book's jacket, "One day, you're going to learn something that can't be explained with science. And when that happens, your life's going to change in ways you can't imagine."

Several other passages caught my attention, including:

* The facts, after all, spoke for themselves. For one thing, Jeremy hadn't loved a woman in years, and though it had been a long time, he could still remember how he'd felt back then. He was certain that he would have recognized the feeling again, and frankly, he didn't. And in light of the fact that he'd just met the woman, the whole idea seemed preposterous. Even his highly emotional Italian mother didn't believe that true love could blossom overnight. Like his brothers and sisters-in-law, she wanted nothing more for him than to marry and start a family, but if he showed up at her doorstep and said that he'd met someone two days ago and knew she was the one for him, his mother would smack him with a broom, curse in Italian, and drag him to church, sure that he had some serious sins that needed confessing.

* Deep down, she knew he was nurturing the hope that she would come with him to New York, but she couldn't figure out why. Didn't he understand that she cared nothing about money or fame? Or about shopping or going to shows or being able to buy Thai food in the middle of the night? Life wasn't about those things. Life was about spending time together, about having the time to walk together holding hands, talking quietly as they watched the sun go down. It wasn't glamorous, but it was, in many ways, the best that life had to offer. Wasn't that how the old saying went? Who, on their deathbed, ever said they wished they had worked harder? Or spent less time enjoying

a quiet afternoon? Or spent less time with their family?

* "You carry yourself with the sort of confidence that a lot of women find appealing. At the same time, I had the sense that you understand what women want, but that for some reason you're unwilling to give yourself completely."

"What's this got to do with anything?"

" Women want the fairy tale. Not all women, of course, but most women grow up dreaming about the kind of man who would risk everything for them, even knowing they might get hurt." She paused. "Kind of like the way you went to find Lexie at the beach. That's why she fell in love with you."

The book's ending completely surprised me, and I say that as a compliment to the author . . . it brought TRUE BELIEVER to a most satisfactory conclusion.

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5. VCR alert

A. LIVE FROM LINCOLN CENTER has soprano Renee Fleming opening Lincoln Center's 39th Mostly Mozart Festival . . . Thursday at 9 p.m. on PBS Channel 13 (NYC) . . . check local listings and times for a PBS station near you.

B. THE LAW FIRM is still another reality show that has young attorneys vie for celebrity lawyer Roy Black's approval and a cash prize . . . what makes this one different: the cases are real . . . Thursdays at 9 p.m. on NBC.

C. BILL MAHER: I'M SWISS is the comedian's latest stand-up show . . . airs Saturday at 10 p.m. on HBO.

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6. Confrontation

In the middle of a forest, there was a hunter who was suddenly confronted by a huge, mean bear. In his fear, all attempts to shoot the bear were unsuccessful. Finally, he turned and ran as fast as he could.

The hunter ran and ran and ran, until he ended up at the edge of a very steep cliff. His hopes were dim.

Seeing no way out of his predicament, and with the bear closing in rather quickly, the hunter got down on his knees, opened his arms, and exclaimed, "Dear God! Please give this bear some religion!"

The sky darkened and there was lightning in the air. Just a few feet short of the hunter, the bear came to an abrupt stop, and glanced around, somewhat confused. Suddenly, the bear looked up into the sky and said, "Thank you, Lord, for the food I'm about to receive . . ."

7. Websites

A. Finally: a search engine that works a little differently than others such as Google! This one answers questions and provides information within the website. Google and other search engines provide hyperlinks, where you continue to search for what you are looking for outside of the search engine site. At the following website, you get some direct answers to your questions (searches). For more information, please click:
<http://www.answers.com/>

For example, I typed in the word "Oscar" . . . here is what appeared:

Oscar A small statue given by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to winners of its annual awards. (See [Academy Awards](#).)

The noun Oscar has one meaning:

Meaning #1: an annual award by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for achievements in motion picture production and performance

Best of the Web

How?

Some good "Oscar" pages on the web:
<http://entertainment.howstuffworks.com>

If you click on any of the above links, you'll then be taken to additional websites that contain more and often useful information.

B. This website is more than just amusing, it also helps to bring attention to the stupidity generated by the persistent threat of lawsuits; i.e., the ridiculous warnings dictated by attorneys trying to shield clients from frivolous lawsuits. It lists some of the Wacky Warning Labels found on product labels. To see for yourself, please click:
<http://www.wackywarnings.com/>

To cite just a few examples of such wacky warning labels mentioned: A label on a flushable toilet brush warns users, "Do not use for personal hygiene."

A label on a 5" fishing hook with three huge barbs warns, "Harmful if swallowed."

And a label on a drain cleaner which cautions: "If you do not understand, or cannot read, all directions, cautions and warnings, do not use this product."

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click:
<http://www.blaineworld.net>

On the left, you'll see "Radio Show" . . . go to that link if you want to see a history of my radio career . . . you can also hear one of

my shows.

As you may have read in a past issue, a recent management change at WWFM has resulted in my show being taken off the air . . . but, hopefully, I'll resurface soon again . . . on another station and/or even with my own cable show.

Please do keep me in mind if you have any media contacts for me to pursue with respect to the above possibilities.

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8. Computer tip

One advantage to using AOL is that you get FREE anti-virus software from McAfee . . . I mention this because you should never have to pay for this product if you stay on AOL . . . however, when using it, you may sometimes get a message to the effect that your subscription has expired, and it is time to renew (at a cost(. . . NOT so! . . . just click on the AOL setting that updates your current McAfee virus protection . . . then ignore any messages you may get from the folks at McAfee.

Even if you're not on AOL, you might want to forward this tip to those who are so they don't pay for anything that they're entitled to get.

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9. Excuses if you get caught sleeping in your cubicle, part 1 of 2

1. "They told me at the blood bank this might happen."
2. "This is just a 15-minute power nap like they raved about in that time-management course you sent me to."
3. "I was working smarter-not harder."
4. "Whew! I musta left the top off the liquid paper."
5. "Oh, I wasn't sleeping! I was meditating on our mission statement and envisioning a new paradigm!"
6. "This is one of the seven habits of highly effective people!"
7. "I was testing the keyboard for drool-resistance."
8. "I was trying to remember where that difficult "Z" Key was, and now it is indelibly imprinted on my brain, or at least my forehead."
9. "I'm in the management training program."
10. "I'm actually doing a "Stress Level Elimination Exercise Plan" (SLEEP) I learned at the last mandatory seminar you made me attend."

(to be concluded next week)

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10. A quote I like

When my daughter Kenna was a little girl, she would occasionally wake up in the morning and say to me, "Daddy, this is so great, I get another one of these!" Have you heard the expression "Out of the mouths of babes?" The excitement in my daughter's voice suggested that she was thrilled to have been give yet another day to do with what she would. Even at a tender, young age, she somehow knew that she had the choice to make each day special.--Richard Carlson in EASIER THAN YOU THINK (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11)

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11. Thought for the day

You can tell when I REALLY like a book by the fact that I cite it more than three times in any one issue of this newsletter . . . such is the case with Richard Carlson's EASIER THAN YOU THINK (see also Sections 2, 4C and 10), which I once again find myself wanting to share with you . . . see below:

My dear friend John Welshons, author of one of the most profound books I've ever read, AWAKENING FROM GRIEF, told me the following story, shared with him originally by an old friend who didn't know who the original author was. Do pay close attention to the conscious choices the author makes in this story and think about how easily he or she could have made other choices.

I woke up early today excited about all I get to do before the clock strikes midnight. I have responsibilities to fulfill today. My job is to choose what kind of day I'm going to have. I can complain because the weather is rainy, or I can be thankful that the grass is getting watered for free.

Today I can feel sad that I don't have more money, or be glad that my finances encourage me to plan my purchases wisely and to guide my away from waste. Today I can grumble about my health, or I can rejoice that I am alive. Today I can lament over all my parents didn't give me when I was a child, or I can be grateful that they allowed me to be born.

Today I can cry because roses have thorns, or I can celebrate that thorns have roses. Today I can whine because I have a job, or I can shout for joy because I have a job to do! Today I can complain because I have to go to school, or I can eagerly open my mind and fill it with new tidbits of knowledge. Today I can murmur dejectedly because I have to do housework, or I can feel honored because the Lord has provided shelter for my mind and body and soul. Today stretches ahead of me waiting to be shaped, and here I am the sculptor who gets to do the shaping. What today will be like is up to me. I get to choose what kind of day I will have. So have a great day-unless you have other plans.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #459

7.11.2005

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1. Reflections

A. It is now official . . . Cynthia, my beautiful bride to be, has lost that title . . . she is now and always will be my beautiful bride--and wife, too!

We were married in a lovely ceremony on Sunday . . . everything was perfect: the weather, the service (Rabbi Rosenbaum was both funny and touching), the delicious meal afterwards at the Park Avenue Cafe in New York City (212.644.1900), and the music provided by our friends Gail on violin and Mark as the DJ.

I'll always remember the fact that our families were there with us, and that they saw our first dance together . . . the song was--you guessed it!--"Happy Together."

I'll also never forget how Cynthia serenaded me with her rendition of "You Send Me" . . . and in case you couldn't tell, she does that to me as well; i.e., sends me.

Another friend, Pat, joined us as the photographer of the event . . . if you'd like to see some of his initial shots, see below (I've also included them as attachments in case you can't read them in the body of the newsletter) . . . the first one is of the two of us, outside the restaurant:



and this one is of Risa, my daughter:



If you'd like to more of Pat's fine work on events other than our wedding, please click:

<http://printroom.com/pro/patrickhannigan>

B. That evening, a bunch of local friends met us at Maggie Moo's (908.359.6020) for an ice cream celebration . . . Devang and Malini Patel, who own the store, outdid themselves in making the event special . . . they even had games for us to play, led by two of our favorite employees there: Rebecca and Katie . . . Maggie Moos herself made a special appearance . . . see below for a picture of us with her, taken by Kevin in Pennsylvania:



C. Cynthia and I are next off to our honeymoon . . . we leave for Paris on Wednesday and then will go from there to a Windstar cruise of the Mediterranean.

Try not to be toooooo disappointed, but that means there will be NO ISSUE next week!

**** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD ****

This week, it goes to Marcia Steinberg--an employee at Christy's Added Touch Boutique (973.226.6800) in West Caldwell, NJ . . . Cynthia was shopping at this store a few days before our marriage . . . she

not only was impressed by Marcia's helpfulness and knowledge, but also her story . . . it touched Cynthia so much so that she actually asked Marcia to write it down and take it to her next door (where Cynthia was helping her mother shop).

The amazing this is that Marcia did just that!

What she wrote follows:

To Cynthia,

On the eve of your wedding I'd like to share the facts of my life . . . 3 and ½ months ago, my husband passed away and since that moment, I've been trying to celebrate him in every way I can.

You wouldn't believe the situations that this allowed to come to me in so many ways. I was offered a very well paying part-time job (where I've just met you) in a lovely boutique called Christy's That Added Touch just 5 minutes from my home in Roseland.

My husband Bill's avocation was music. He was the past president of the New Jersey Jazz Society. We spent 13 years together, and now our legacy lies in the lives of our 6 children and the 12 grandchildren they have bestowed on us. No.13 is coming in October, and "It's A Boy!"

On Monday, they're delivering a piano to my house, and I plan to have musical soirees as soon as I can, so all the beautiful music Bill loved will live through the rooms and continue to brighten my future.

To be continued . . .

Lovingly,
Marcia Steinberg

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2. FYI

I use Verizon for my cellphone . . . until lately, the service has been good to excellent . . . however, in the past few months, I've started to notice that more and more calls were being cut off in midstream . . . it got so bad that I finally inquired about this and was told by a Verizon representative that the problem, in part, was because of something that I was NOT doing.

It seems that on a monthly basis, all Verizon users are supposed to dial *228, then Send . . . they'll then be given several options . . . choose #2, which will both update and improve the quality of your service--particularly as it relates to coverage areas for calls.

Methinks that other cellular companies offer a similar service; check with them to find out.

FYI, part 2

* Hanan in New Jersey:
Congratulations and all best wishes [on your marriage]-- to both of you

and to your daughter. And I won't say "hopefully." As a lawyer who handles divorce and mediation matters, I learned that remarriage (especially to one's former spouse) is called "the triumph of hope over experience."

* Andrew in Pennsylvania:

I have a beautiful rental property in Lansdale that is going to be vacant on Sept 1st. Let your readers know that I will give them \$150 referral reward if the new tenant tells me that you sent them!

Here are the specifics:

Cute remodeled townhouse for rent in Montgomery County.

I have a 3BR 1.5 BA Morgandale Town home in Lansdale that I recently finished completely remodeling. I put in new hardwood flooring downstairs, new carpet upstairs, all new appliances, and fresh paint throughout.

There is also a beautiful patio in the backyard that is perfect for grilling. The home is also equipped with Central Air, Gas Heat, Washer Dryer, Storage and Utility Closets.

In addition to the quiet neighborhood, you will have access to private parking, a swimming pool, club house, bike shed, fitness trail, tennis courts. The home is 1 mile from the Northeast Extension, and minutes from local shopping in Lansdale.

Please give me a call if you are interested, the home will be available Sept. 1 for lease.

I am asking \$1349 a month plus util. I would also require a credit check and a security deposit of 1 month rent at signing. I look forward to hearing from you!

Andrew Shaffer
610-597-1373
andrewshaffer@hotmail.com

* Rita in New Jersey:

I am forever amazed at how small the world is . . . the Sharyn who wrote to you about her husband Hank needing a lung transplant to survive [is the wife of] my first cousin and "adopted" big brother when I was a kid. (Believe it or not, he was the person who introduced me to pizza when he and his father were visiting us one evening!)

Here is the follow-up to that note from Sharyn [in BLAINESWORLD #457], in case she hasn't written to let you know already:

Right after Hank was given three weeks to live, a donor was found late on Tuesday and Hank had a lung transplant yesterday (Wednesday) at U of P hospital! When I spoke with Sharyn last night, he was still sedated but resting comfortably and both of them are optimistic. Apparently, the lungs were a perfect match for Hank, and the whole family is very grateful to the donor for giving Hank a new and hopeful chance for continuing to watch his grandchildren grow.

MY TWO CENTS:

Please use the above as a reminder to serve as a donor for organ parts, eyes, etc. What a great way to help somebody else!

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3. Regulations

Hospital regulations require a wheelchair for patients being discharged. However, while working as a student nurse, I found one elderly gentleman--already dressed and sitting on the bed with a suitcase at his feet--who insisted he didn't need my help to leave the hospital.

After a chat about rules being rules, he reluctantly let me wheel him to the elevator. On the way down I asked him if his wife was meeting him.

"I don't know," he said. "She's still upstairs in the bathroom changing out of her hospital gown."

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4. Reviews ...

A. Liked the premise of BEWITCHED . . . an actor, Will Ferrell, sets his sights on a remake of the beloved 1960s situation comedy with the same name as the current movie . . . he accidentally meets a real-life witch, Nicole Kidman, and asks her to be his costar . . . the beginning was quite funny, and I found myself laughing at much of it . . . however, at about the halfway mark, the film lost impetus for me . . . and by the time the ending rolled around, I was thinking that it was something that I could have easily missed . . . so don't rush out to see it, either in the theater or when it's available via rental--despite winning performances by both Ferrell and Kidman and Michael Caine as the latter's father . . . rated PG-13.

B. A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #433 follows:

Saw A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT and found it very long . . . violent, too; in fact, it has more gore in it than any film I've seen since SAVING PRIVATE RYAN . . . yet that said, I still found it an interesting tale of a woman who would not give up hope that her fiance had not been killed in WW1 . . . part romance, part mystery, LONG ENGAGEMENT kept me guessing until the end as to what would happen next . . . the photography is magnificent, as is antiwar sentiment . . . rated R.

C. Loved SEASON OF LIFE (see also Section 11) by Jeffrey Marx . . . it is the author's account of the Gilman High School football team that is unlike any sports book that I've ever read, in that it is more about how Gilman's coaches use the game to teach such principles as love, empathy, integrity and living a life of service.

The 2001 Gilman Greyhounds did not go undefeated; in fact, they barely had a winning season (having previously been one of the top teams in the country) . . . however, their record was never the important thing.

As the head coach noted when a mother asked him how successful did he think the boys were going to be, he replied, "I have no idea. . . . I won't really know how successful they're gonna be till they

come back to visit in twenty years. . . . Then I'll be able to see what kind of husbands they are. I'll be able to see what kind of fathers they are. I'll see what they're doing in the community."

Marx often quotes Joe Ehrmann, a former NFL football star and volunteer Gilman coach . . . now also an ordained minister, Ehrman devotes his life to teaching the Gilman team the precept of his Building Men for Others program: Being a man means emphasizing relationships and having a cause bigger than yourself. It means accepting responsibility and leading courageously. In addition, it means players saying "I love you" to each other and coaches professing their love for their players.

There were several memorable passages; among them:

* [Ehrmann] "And I think the second criterion--the only other criterion for masculinity--is that all of us ought to have some kind of cause, some kind of purpose in our lives that's bigger than our own individual hopes, dreams, wants, and desires. At the end of our life, we ought to be able to look back over it from our deathbed and know that somehow the world was a better place because we lived, we loved, we were other-centered, other-focused."

* "I expect greatness out of you," Biff [Poggi, the head coach] once told the boys. "And the way we measure greatness is the impact you make on other people's lives."

* Ultimately, Biff said, the boys would make the greatest overall impact on the world--would bring the most love and grace and healing to people--by constantly basing their thoughts and actions on one simple question: What can I do for you? . . .

"Because in case you haven't noticed yet, we're training you to be different," Biff said. "If we lose every game of the year, go oh-and-ten on the football field, as long as we try hard, I don't care. You learn these lessons, and we're ten-and-oh in the game of life."

Toward the end of the book, there's a thrilling account of Gilman's last game of the year . . . yet I was even more moved by the author's last chapter . . . at the conclusion of the season, he visited his father and took some of the lessons that he had learned during the season to help revitalize that relationship.

D. Heard THE SOUTH BEACH DIET by Dr. Arthur Agatston . . . it is something that I've been reading about for years, so I figured I was past due to find out what it actually does and doesn't involve.

Now having done so, I like that it doesn't require that you go hungry and that you can enjoy normal-size helpings of meat, poultry and fish. I also like that I can eat eggs, cheese, nuts, and vegetables, as well as both snacks and desserts.

I'm less crazy about the fact that I need to avoid bad carbs like white flour and sugar, yet Agatston makes it seem relatively painless . . . and worthwhile, given that he says that following his diet will make it possible to lose stubborn belly fat first.

In presenting his diet, he gave many useful suggestions along the way; among them:

1. Don't skip on meals and snacks.

2. Try Jello-type products that have a sugar substitute for something that will solve your sweet cravings.
3. Strawberries with dark chocolate can make a good snack.
4. French fries can actually be better than baked potatoes. Best: sweet potatoes.
5. Mash up broccoli (with a butter substitute, such as I Can't Believe It's Butter) for a delicious alternative to mashed potatoes.
6. A potato with steak and broccoli is better for you than just the potato along. You'll create less of an insulin rush.
7. Take a spoonful Metamucil with glass of water 15 minutes before a meal. Will give you fiber that will then help you digest you food easier.
8. Eating an apple is far better than having the juice from the apple.
9. Sugar in beer causes a beer belly.
10. Low glycemic foods satisfy your hunger longer and reduce your craving.
11. Eat some protein before you dine out at a restaurant.
12. Tell the waiter to skip the bread basket.
13. Order a double order of vegetables instead of potatoes.
14. Order gravy on the side. [My tip: Do the same for salad dressings.]
15. Have three bites of any dessert, then put the rest aside. That will satisfy your cravings for a sweet. Or even better: Share your dessert with others.

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5. VCR alert

- A. MANTLE is a portrait of the Yankees superstar . . . if you followed baseball in the 1950s and 60s, you'll want to catch this documentary . . . Wednesday at 9 p.m. on HBO; repeated on Thursday at 8 p.m. on HBO2.
- B. HOOKING UP is still another reality show . . . this one follows 12 women for up to a year as they are wined, dined, wooed, and dumped by the men they meet online . . . Thursdays at 9 p.m. on ABC.
- C. MURDER IN THE HAMPTONS airs on Saturday at 9 p.m. on Lifetime . . . according to TV GUIDE, "True crime doesn't get any better than this."

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6. Robbery in progress

WARNING:
Brunette joke alert. Methinks it's unfair that so many jokes

are told about blondes, so as a public service, I think it is past time that BLAINESWORLD runs the following brunette joke.

Robbery in progress

A brunette police officer was calling up her station on her pocket radio.

"I'm outside the Plaza Mall," she reported. "A man has been robbed. I've got one of them."

"Which one?" asked the operator.

"The one that was robbed."

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7. Websites

A. Don't be fooled by companies that sell lists of homes that have been foreclosed by various government agencies. There is FREE information out there. The following website was recently unveiled by the US Department of Housing & Urban Development, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Agriculture Department. It includes more than 90% of all government foreclosures. For more information, please click:

<http://www.homesales.gov/>

This website has more than 10,000 homes for sale and is updated daily. Just click on the state you are interested in and choose among the various communities.

B. Barbara in Florida:

I was surfing the net the other day and found this really cool website that has old school pictures. Believe it or not, they had some with you! Thought Cynthia might like to see what you looked like back then.

I'm not so sure that I want you to see my school pictures, though you'll be surprised to find out that your pictures MIGHT well be on this website . . . to see for yourself, please click:

<http://www.worldschoolphotographs.com/>

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

As you hopefully know by now, you should ALWAYS feel free to mention this newsletter to your friends, relatives, etc. . . . should they want to subscribe (AT NO COST), all they have to do is go to my homepage . . . then click on "Special Offer" at the bottom . . . it's that simple!

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8. Computer tip

Computers are good for lots of things, including dating . . . as you may know, they made it possible for me to meet Cynthia, in that we met

via match.com . . . I'm obviously quite pleased to have been part of that service.

Walter in New Jersey e-mailed me about this very same topic: You are not alone in meeting on the net. Pat and I met online. How many of your readers got married from Match.com or others?

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

Anybody else care to share? I'd be interested in hearing about long term relationships, too. And if you have met as a result of using the computer, please advise what service you used (match.com, eHarmony, etc.)

I'll publish the results in an upcoming issue.

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9. Now that's sheer

A husband walks into Victoria's Secret to purchase some sheer lingerie for his wife. He is shown several possibilities that range from \$250 to \$500 in price, the more sheer, the higher the price. He opts for the most sheer item, pays the \$500 and takes the lingerie home.

He presents it to his wife and asks her to go upstairs, put it on and model it for him.

Upstairs, the wife thinks, "I have an idea. It's so sheer that it might as well be nothing. I won't put it on, but I'll do the modeling naked, return it tomorrow and keep the \$500 refund for myself."

So she appears naked on the balcony and strikes a pose.

Her husband says, "Good Lord! You'd think that for \$500, they'd at least iron it!"

He never heard the shot.

Funeral on Friday.

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10. A quote I like

I think people who aren't positive don't succeed. And people who are pessimists, it's like a prophecy fulfilled.--Ann Landers (1918-2002), American advice columnist

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11. Thought for the day

That guy in the glass

When you get what you want in your struggle for self
and the world makes you king for a day,
then go to the mirror and look at yourself

and see what that guy has to say.

For it isn't your mother, brother or friends
whose judgment you must pass.
The person whose verdict counts most in your life
is the one staring back in the glass.

You can go down the pathway of years
receiving pats on the back as you pass.
But your final reward will be heartaches and tears
if you cheated that guy in the glass.

SOURCE:

A poem that hung outside the Baltimore Colts dressing room, as presented in SEASON OF LIFE (see Section 4C) by Jeffrey Marx . . . he has no idea who first wrote the words or when they were written, so if you do, please let me know so I can give appropriate credit.

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PS. Make it a great week . . . and please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq.

NOTE:

Although I'm not big into requests asking me to have you forward something, this one time I will make an exception since it was received from my good friends Joan and Fred in Pennsylvania, whose son is now overseas:

Hi. I am sure you have seen this e-mail many times . I feel it's is appropriate since our son is serving with the PNG in Iraq.

Prayer:

"Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. Amen."

When you receive this, please stop for a moment and say a prayer for our troops around the world.

There is nothing attached. Just then send this to all the people in your address book. Do not let it stop with you, please.

Of all the gifts you could give a US Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine and others deployed in harm's way, prayer is the very best one.

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter

that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #458

7.4.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Last Monday, Cynthia and I moved a step closer to being married; i.e., we got our wedding licenses . . . we had to go to New York to do so, in that we'll be married (just before our immediate family) in New York City this coming Sunday!

By the way, in case you haven't yet had the pleasure of meeting Cynthia and wanted to know what she looks like, see below . . . she is NOT the person in costume . . . the picture was from my recent birthday celebration, at which time Cynthia surprised me with this singing banana.



B. I've often thought about how little things can change our lives . . . we had one such experience this past

weekend that, fortunately, had a happy ending.

On Saturday night, we were showing our new Belle Meade house to Cynthia's sister, brother-in-law and mother . . . we had all left the house, only to have Cynthia see a light that we had left on upstairs.

We ordinarily might not have even gone back to turn it off, but since it was on a high chandelier (that's very difficult to change), Cynthia went back in--only to come running back out seconds later . . . she was shouting to all of us that there was a flood, and that we had better come inside.

When we came in, we saw water gushing from the guest bathroom . . . it had already covered our new hardwood floors, and it was also dripping through the floors into the basement.

It turns out that the toilet did not turn off properly . . . had Cynthia not gone back for the lights, it would have kept overflowing for at least the next several days . . . God only knows what that would have done to the house . . . and what's more, she doesn't tell us!

C. We had a marvelous Fourth of July weekend, celebrating the holiday a day in advance at our good friends' house in Lake Hopatacong, NJ . . . they live directly on the lake . . . not only is the view magnificent, but so is their house (a large part of which they have rebuilt themselves).

After a delicious barbecue dinner that left us quite stuffed, we then went on a boat ride around the lake . . . doing so also enabled us to see many displays of fireworks that were being shot-off throughout the evening.

**** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD ****

This week, it goes to Lisa Angelo--my longtime colleague at Bucks County Community College and second vice president/grievance chair of our faculty union.

She has recently been named as interim chair of the Math Department and while I'm glad for her, I'm not so happy about the fact that we'll need to replace her . . . she has served with distinction for many years and I can honestly say, having worked closely with her, that she is the ABSOLUTE BEST.

To name just a few of her many attributes as a leader: she has been conscientious, dedicated, talented, and knowledgeable . . . I'd continue, but since she'll probably see this at some point in time, I'd better stop since I don't want her to become (like I am) a legend in her own mind!

Lisa, you shall be missed!

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2. FYI

In the past, I used the word "hopefully" quite often . . . yet I'm going to attempt using it less often, especially after thinking about what

somebody told me the other day . . . I was telling this person about my upcoming marriage to Cynthia, and how I'm looking sooooo forward to spending the rest of m life with her.

As we were exchanging good-byes, he said something to the effect, "Hopefully, your marriage will go well for you."

I immediately responded and said, "Of course it will!"

When you think about it, isn't the person's initial remark a dumb thing to say? I don't want him or anybody else to hope that things will go well for us. For one thing, I know they will. And, also, I'd rather dwell on the positive and help make it a reality--as opposed to thinking about things that leave open possibilities of doubt.

FYI, part 2

* Joe Haggar III:

Thank you so much for your kind words about our cool 18 and comfort equipped pants [mentioned in last week's newsletter] . . . and we are glad we made your newsletter.

In about a month, we are introducing comfort equipped coats. They will be just as comfortable as the pants and will stretch at all the "stress points" of the coat.

Thank you for being a Haggar Customer.

* Bettina in New York:

I was just flipping through BLAINESWORLD, and you asked for suggestions on how to smoothly exit a party in sign language. Dave and I have not yet perfected a suitable secret sign strategy. However, I can offer you my father's tried and tested (many million times) method. When we are at a lunch function and he wants to leave, he exclaims that he has a wedding to attend later that evening. If it is an evening party, he claims (very loudly) that he is a plane to catch. Works every time!

* A reader who wishes to remain anonymous added:

My wife has a hand signal for me: MIDDLE FINGER POINTED UP.

MY TWO CENTS:

Funny that somebody wrote in to share that experience, in that I often encounter something similar . . . I'll be driving along and folks will wave at me . . . they'll wave a finger and tell me that I'm NUMBER ONE in their books . . . I used to be so happy to hear that until Cynthia told me to that I should put on my glasses (to see that they were waving a different finger) . . . imagine thaaaaat!

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3. Identification

The little daughter of a lieutenant answered a telephone call while her parents were out. A man called, identifying himself as Colonel Hendrick.

She asked if he would please spell the name slowly.

He said, "H as in horse, E as in egg, N as in nose, D as in doggie, R as in rabbit, I as in Indian, C as in cat, K as in kite."

When her father returned, he found the following message:
"Daddy, call Colonel Horseeggnosedoggierabbitindiancatkite."

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4. Reviews ...

A. Don't believe the reviews for MY SUMMER OF LOVE . . . it is a coming-of-age tale of two young women that was loved by the critics and hated by me (Cynthia, too) . . . in thinking about it, I can't believe that we didn't walk out in the middle . . . somehow, it received a 93% favorable rating at rottentomatoes.com . . . trust me on this one and miss it . . . rated R.

B. BRIDE AND PREJUDICE is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #442 follows:

BRIDE AND PREJUDICE is a Bollywood update of Jane Austen's classic tale, wherein an attempt is made to find suitable husbands for a family's unmarried daughters . . . much of the music makes no sense, and the same could be said for the dancing . . . yet that said, I loved every minute of this film from the director and team that created the equally marvelous BEND IT LIKE BECKHAM . . . if you want to have a good time out, catch this; you won't be disappointed . . . rated PG-13.

C. As you may know, I met my beloved bride-to-be Cynthia via an online dating service (match.com) . . . consequently, the subject of online romances has fascinated me ever since . . . and so when I came across I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M BUYING THIS BOOK! by Evan Marc Katz, I just had to read it if only because of its subtitle: A COMMONSENSE GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL INTERNET DATING.

I was curious to see whether the author used some of the same techniques I used to catch Cynthia's eye . . . also, I wanted to see if the advice he gave others was as clever as his own personal ad: "Funny Guy with Killer Body and Money to Burn Seeks Woman Who Doesn't Believe Everything She Reads."

I was not disappointed . . . I CAN'T BELIEVE is a terrific book, not only for those seeking an online date--but for just about anybody needing to market a product or service . . . in addition, it contains a lot of advice that could be used for those job hunting.

Katz presents much useful advice in a humorous fashion that had me laughing--and thinking at the same time . . . he went through every step of the process and what he says is applicable to both guys and gals.

There were many useful suggestions; among them:
You can apply this to anything that might initially seem specific.
"Sports, community service, and travel" may give a reader a glimpse into your interests. Contrast that with "I've been ice-skating since

before I could walk; twice a month, I volunteer to cheer up residents at an old-age home; and I just returned from two weeks on a guided back-packing tour of the Amazon Basin." These kinds of specifics not only make you more interesting, but if a reader can find some connection with you in your essays, if what you write sounds like you're talking directly to her, she's more likely to feel that you're what she's looking for. With just a few extra strokes on the keyboard, you've now piqued her interest. If you've written her first, it will at least be enough to get her to write you back so that you can open up a dialogue.

There are those who maintain that they simply cannot imagine being discovered by anyone they know seeing their face on the Internet. To these people, I say one thing: "If someone is looking at your picture on an online dating website, then, guess what? They're online dating themselves." In short, there's nothing to be embarrassed about. The perceived stigmas attached to online dating are gone. (And if they're not, boy, am I going to be embarrassed when this book turns into a best-seller and Oprah wants to interview me and I have to admit on national television that I'm an "expert" at online dating. How horrifying.)

What will ultimately differentiate you from everyone else who is sending her email is your comment on her profile. Find something that stood out in her essays and give a quick but thoughtful one paragraph response to it. From this, she'll know two things: 1) you've read her essays and 2) you have something in common. Congratulations. You've just leapt ahead of 80 percent of the other emails she's received.

D. I think I've read every book by Richard Carlson (DON'T SWEAT THE SMALL STUFF and DON'T WORRY, MAKE MONEY, to name just a few) and have long been inspired by his writings . . . so imagine my surprise when I came across a Nightingale-Conant program just available on audio cassette: CREATING MIRACLES EVERY DAY.

I loved every minute; in fact, my only disappointment is that there were only two cassettes.

As the subtitle implies, by listening, you get ideas for HOW TO TURN ORDINARY MOMENTS INTO EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCES . . . it really got me thinking about how I could do just that--and gave me specific suggestions on what's needed for me to view the world differently.

Among them:

1. To put yourself in a state of gratitude, ask yourself, "Could this be the last day of my life?"
2. If the person knows you appreciate them, it brings out the best in them.
3. Describe the average American in two words or less: Easily bored.
4. Be sure to tell people in your family how much you love them.
5. Life is rarely exactly as we meant it to be. The sooner we accept this, the happier we will be.

6. Life will not be easier or make us happier when things change. Life is the way it is.
7. We are all here for a purpose.
8. We are all special and deserve to be treated that way.
9. Everything that happened in your past is just a thought, and you can let it go.
10. Your life is not your enemy, but your thinking can sure be.
11. It's a lot easier to change your thinking than the nature of life.
12. Imaging yourself at your own funeral allows you to be very reflective about what you want your life to stand for.
13. If you practice being negative, you'll be a very negative person. Better to practice positive thinking.
14. Ask at dinner: What was the best thing that happened? What did you see that inspired you? Did you see somebody being nice to somebody else?
15. Mother Teresa said, "We can't do great things on this Earth. But we can do small things with great love."

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5. VCR alert

- A. FIRE ME . . . PLEASE concludes its first season of showing people actually trying to get fired . . . Tuesday at 9 p.m. on CBS.
- B. THE WASHINGTON POST'S Bob Woodward discusses his relationship with Mark Felt, Watergate's "Deep Throat" on TOM BROKAW REPORTS on Wednesday at 10 p.m. on NBC.
- C. Comedian Carlos Mencia debuts on a new sketch-comedy series that TV GUIDE calls "hilarious" . . . Wednesday at 10:30 p.m. on Comedy Central.

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6. Lost

Two old guys are pushing their carts around Wal-Mart when they collide. The first old guy says to the second guy, "Sorry about that. I'm looking for my wife, and I guess I wasn't paying attention to where I was going."

The second old guy says, "That's OK, It's a coincidence. I'm looking for my wife, too. I can't find her and I'm getting a little desperate."

The first old guy says, "Well, maybe I can help

you find her. What does she look like?"

The second old guy says, "Well, she is 27 years old, tall, with red hair, blue eyes, long legs, big busted, and is wearing short shorts. What does your wife look like?"

To which the first old guy says, "Doesn't matter . . . let's look for yours."

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7. Websites

A. This website is worthy of a bookmark! It offers some of the best deals and coupons on the Internet. Before you buy anything, be sure to check here first to help ensure getting the lowest possible price. For more information, please click:

<http://www.dealtaker.com/>

You will find many name brand items, popular stores and every category imaginable including, clothing, jewelry, pets, electronics, appliances, travel, toys, grocery, restaurants, make up, and health.

B. I always did consider myself a good judge of character; e.g., until I took the following online quiz:

<http://www.malevole.com/mv/misc/killerquiz/>

By just looking at a picture of somebody, you have to determine if he is a serial killer or computer geek . . . my score was 7 out of 10; what's yours?

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

THANKS to Dan Becker, my webmaster, who has done a great job putting past issues back on the website . . . just click above, then Newsletter, Past issues, and you'll be taken to an area where you can see the past month's issues . . . more will be added.

Best of all, if you go to any past issue, you'll be able to "jump" from one section to the next--much like I plan to do with future current issues of BLAINESWORLD.

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8. Computer tip

Marty in Texas had this to add to last week's tip on deleting files: Nicely done. Now teach them the other half on how to delete, such as every other file in a list. Holding the control key will let you select only the files clicked on. So if you want 4 out of 12 files deleted, click on the 4 with control key depressed, release, then hit delete.

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9. Fashion guidelines

Many of us (those over 40, WAY over 40 or hovering near 40) are quite confused about how we should present ourselves. We're unsure about the kind of image we are projecting, and whether or not we are correct as we try to conform to current fashions.

Despite what you may have seen on the streets, the following combinations DO NOT go together and should be avoided:

1. A nose ring and bifocals
2. Spiked hair and bald spots
3. A pierced tongue and dentures
4. Miniskirts and support hose
5. Ankle bracelets and corn pads
6. Speedo's and cellulite
7. A belly button ring and a gall bladder surgery scar
8. Unbuttoned disco shirts and a heart monitor
9. Midriff shirts and a midriff bulge
10. Bikinis and liver spots
11. Short shorts and varicose veins
12. Inline skates and a walker

And last, but not least . . . my personal favorite:

13. Thongs and Depends

Please keep these basic guidelines foremost in your mind when you shop.

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10. A quote I like

Age is a question of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.--Satchel Paige (1906-1982), American baseball player who at 42 became the oldest player to make his major league debut.

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11. Thought for the day

When God made fathers

When the good Lord was creating Father's, he started with a tall frame. A female angel nearby said, "What kind of a Father is that? If you're going to make children so close to the ground, why have you put the Father up so high? He won't be able to shoot marbles without kneeling, tuck a child in bed without bending, or even kiss a child without stooping" God smiled and said, "Yes but if I make him child size, who would children have to look up to?"

And when God made a Father's hands, they were large. The angel shook her head and said, "Large hands can't manage diaper pins, small buttons, rubber bands on pony tails, or even remove splinters caused from baseball bats." Again God smiled and said, "I know, but they're large enough to hold everything a small boy empties from his pockets, yet small enough to cup a child's face in them."

Then God molded long slim legs and broad shoulders, "Do you realize you just made a Father without a lap?" The angel chuckled. God said, "A Mother needs a lap. A Father needs strong shoulders to pull a sled, to balance a boy on a bicycle or to hold a sleepy head on the way home from the circus."

When God was in the middle of creating the biggest feet anyone had ever seen, the angel could not contain herself any longer." That's not fair. Do you honestly think those boats are going to get out of bed early in the morning when the baby cries, or walk through a birthday party without crushing one or two of the guests?" God again smiled and said, "They will work. You will see. They will support a small child who wants to ride to Branbury Cross or scare mice away from a summer cabin, or display shoes that will be a challenge to fill."

God worked throughout the night, giving the Father few words, but a firm authoritative voice; eyes that see everything, but remains calm and tolerant. Finally, almost as an after thought, He added tears. Then he turned to the angel and said, "Now are you satisfied he can love as much as a Mother can?" The angel said nothing more.

Author Unknown

(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

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PS. It is still not toooo late to make it a spectacular Fourth of July . . . if it hasn't been one for you already, just click:

<http://www.njagyouth.org/liberty.htm>

Make sure you follow the directions, as well as turn on your sound card ... at the same time, please continue to join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great rest of the week!

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If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is: bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD (with a SPECIAL OFFER)

Issue #457

6.27.2005

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***** THE SPECIAL OFFER *****

Mark, a good friend, gave me a two-wheeled walker for my dad . . . it is in mint-like condition, and I don't think it has ever been used . . . since my dad already has a similar walker, Mark has graciously allowed me to make this one available to the first person who sends me an e-mail and who can arrange to pick it up from me . . . feel free to get it for yourself and/or anybody else you think might be able to use it . . . I hate to see it go to waste!

1. Reflections

A. My parents celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on Sunday . . . to mark the grand occasion, their good friend Ceil took them out, along with Cynthia and I, to The Jolly Fisherman & Steak House (516.621.0055) in Roslyn, NY . . . Cynthia and everybody but me feasted on the crab meat; I liked my chicken francaise dish . . . everybody at the table also split a couple of deep dish apple cobblers with ice cream that added to our enjoyment of the meal.

Cynthia and I also had a superb dinner at the Washington Crossing Inn (215.493.3634) on Friday . . . we each had a delicious salad, followed by two main courses that we split: lamb chops and charbroiled, sesame-crusting tilapia . . . the latter item was probably the best fish dish either of us ever had . . . our dessert, a caramel/apple/cake/ice cream concoction, was equally scrumptious.

Though our meal wasn't quite as good on Tuesday, we had a fun time with friends at a get-together at their place: Korman Suites (732.564.1602) in Somerset, NJ . . . this is an apartment complex that features monthly socials where guests are allowed; hence, our presence . . . there was a DJ, chair massages and plenty of picnic-like food that was plentiful and tasty.

B. I forgot to mention another fun event we had last week . . . other friends invited us to join them at a production of BOY GETS GIRL, a drama presented at the Circle Playhouse (732.968.7555) in

Piscataway, NJ . . . it is the story about a blind date that turns into a nightmare.

We very much liked the theater, some 80 or so seats--all in the round . . . and the performances, particularly by Christie Leigh Carver and Jonathan Wierzbicki, were outstanding.

For more information about this theater "find" that Cynthia and I look forward to revisiting, please click:

<http://www.circleplayers.com/>

C. I feel honored to have been chosen as a community member to serve on the COURIER TIMES editorial board for the next several weeks . . . this group meets once a week with the paper's publisher, editor and some other staffers to discuss issues of concern to readers . . . as an example, at my first meeting, there was a very interesting discussion about proposed Medicaid cuts . . . several representatives from local hospitals were also in attendance.

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

This week, it goes to Karville Biggs (732.356.1456)--operations manager at Bed Bath & Beyond in Bridgewater, NJ . . . Cynthia and I just registered with that chain, and he made the whole process both easy and fun.

He spent several hours with us, giving great advice and somehow managing not to get tired with our many questions.

Karville even made me somewhat of an expert with the scanning gun . . . he showed me how to operate it, then let me do the actual scanning of the various items . . . I realize that this is an involvement device to make the guy feel at least somewhat needed in the whole process, and it worked.

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2. FYI

I'm typically not a big fan of shopping, but that said, I do like Kohl's . . . the stores always tend to have a big assortment of merchandise at very good prices . . . also, it is displayed in a fashion that make finding stuff relatively easy . . . and unlike many department stores, the personnel seem to do a better job than most at keeping merchandise where it belongs; i.e., making it possible to find something in your size without having to search through the entire store.

Recently, I came across another reason for shopping at Kohl's: its wide range of Hagggar slacks . . . in particular, I bought several pairs from that company's Cool 18 line . . . they come comfort-equipped, meaning that they expand when you need them to do so (say after a big meal) . . . this is a great feature; make that, a REALLY great feature . . . furthermore, they are wrinkle-free and quick drying, and from what I understand, they virtually resist stains.

FYI, part 2

* Sharyn in Pennsylvania with AN URGENT REQUEST:
Happy Birthday, and I hope you have a wonderful year. Just to update

you, my husband Hank is in University of Pa. hospital. He has taken a turn for the worse with this Interstitial Pulmonary Fibrosis disease. He is 100% on oxygen, and the disease has traveled from the bottom of his lungs to diffusion--meaning that it is literally giving him no oxygen other than by mechanical means.

They have to get a lung immediately, so if you or any of your readers have any suggestions please e-mail me (Nannyscsx3@aol.com).

* Kent Nerburn, author of SMALL GRACES--a book I enjoyed and reviewed in BLAINESWORLD #440:

Thank you, Blaine. I try to move gently over deep waters, and it sometimes can be deceiving. I'm glad you were able to see the deeper truths I try to convey. I tell people that, at heart, I'm a guerilla theologian. You never know what kind of spiritual outfit I will be wearing. But I'll always be trying to fight the good fight.

* Edina in New Jersey:

I read your newsletter and I thought it was really funny this time. Regarding the text of the answering machine, I would go for the "Hi, I'm either on the phone or under my desk. Please leave a message after the tone." I laughed a lot. I was just imagining you are really under your desk and waiting for phone calls . . . hahahahaha, that is REALLY funny.

* Sharon (from the Tom Hopkins organization):

Thank you for writing and for sharing from your online newsletter. Tom is out of the office for the next few days and has asked me to respond to your email on his behalf.

He is delighted to learn that you attended the Get Motivated seminar in Philadelphia earlier this month. Tom believes that ongoing education is such a vital part of success and it is good to know that you continue to be a student. Just as important is your willingness to take the time to share all this good information. You never know when some small tip will be the impetus for someone else's success. What a Champion!

Blaine, our best wishes to you for an unbelievable finish for 2005. Keep up the good work and continue to go for greatness.

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3. Signage

A hospital posted a notice in the nurses' lounge, saying:
"Remember, the first five minutes of a human being's life are the most dangerous."

Underneath, somebody had written: "The last five are pretty risky, too."

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4. Reviews ...

A. Enjoyed SAVING FACE, a charming movie about a Chinese widowed mother who becomes pregnant and must move in with her lesbian daughter . . . parts of it were quite humorous; others were quite touching . . . then ending was particularly touching . . . and make sure you stay for the credits . . . rated R.

B. The DVD and VHS releases this week are terrible, so let me instead recommend one of my all-time favorite films--out in both DVD and VHS formats:

JEAN DE FLORETTE, director Claude Berri's 1986 tale of a farmer (Gerard Depardieu) and the farmer (Yves Montand) who covets his land, is a fantastic French film that will keep you on the edge of your seats . . . I also liked the sequel, MANON OF THE SPRING, which focusses on the daughter (Emmanuelle Beart) as she plans to avenge her father's demise . . . both are rated PG-13, but probably wouldn't hold much interest for younger teenagers.

C. Online dating probably isn't for everybody, but it certainly worked for me . . . after all, that is how I met Cynthia--my beautiful bride-to-be.

That is why I also found myself drawn to the book, FALLING IN LOVE FOR ALL THE RIGHT REASONS (see also Section 11) by Dr. Neil Clark Warren . . . its subtitle, in particular, caught my attention: HOW TO FIND YOUR SOUL MATE.

I wanted to see if Warren, founder of eHarmony.com, could help me understand why Cynthia and I have clicked the way we have . . . furthermore, I wanted to see if Warren's concept of a soul mate matched mine . . . methinks it does.

As he notes:

A soul mate is to his or her soul mate as a Mercedes Benz automobile door is to the Mercedes auto frame. They fit together perfectly; they match. You wouldn't want to put a Chrysler door on a Mercedes car; you wouldn't even want to put a Cadillac, Lexus, or a BMW door on the Mercedes body. Although each one may be a marvelous door in its own right, it would not be the perfect match for the Mercedes automobile.

Warren presents a very practical guide for finding true love, including:

- * The 29 dimensions of compatibility--the foolproof test to determine if two people will be happy together;
- * Your core personal dimensions--the 16 factors that can make or break your relationship; and
- * The "marriage killers"--the red flags you can spot during your first two dates.

There were many memorable passages; among them:

How does the person you are considering as a potential marriage partner deal with anger? Does he have his temper under control? Anger mismanagement causes more divorces, I believe, than any other single factor. Many people simply cannot handle their anger, and they take it out on their spouses. Sadly, husbands often take out their anger on their wives, and wives often take out their anger on the children, thus perpetuating a downward spiral into the next generation. Anger, of course, is often the means a person uses to attempt to handle his or her pain. But it can destroy an otherwise good relationship if it is not expressed correctly.

As I mentioned previously, I'm convinced that the selection of a marriage partner is the most important, far-reaching decision you will ever make. Let me tell you why. For the rest of your life, every day, you will wake up with this person; much of your day will revolve around this person in one way or another, whether you are at work or at home. You will come home to this person, eat dinner with this

person, sit and talk with this person and, hopefully, you will go to bed with this person. When you wake up in the morning, this person will still be there! You will have a lot of thoughts about this person all day long, because this person and you will have numerous things in common, including your children, your money, your plans about your careers, and plans about your retirement. Think about that. One person...for the rest of your life! That's a lot of togetherness! Yet that's what marriage is supposed to be, and that's what marriage can be, if you select the correct partner. It is such an important decision that it should be made with great clarity and with as much wisdom, insight, and expertise as you can muster.

That may not be the most profound definition of compatibility, but it is a good one. He gets me. She gets me. At a deep level, this person understands and cares about who I am and what is important to me.

D. Loved the Nightingale-Conant CD program, DREAMS DON'T HAVE DEADLINES--written and read by Mark Vincent Hansen . . . in case you don't recognize the name, he is the co-creator of the hugely successful CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL series that has surpassed the 60 million mark in sales . . . yet he did not achieve success until he was well into his 40s . . . and he was only able to flourish then because he came to the realization that it wasn't necessary to limit his dreams because of the fact that he was no longer young.

Hansen gives countless examples, using folks in all walks of life who have done well in what is now called "the second half" of life . . . the key is to not set artificial limits.

Here are just some of the many ideas I got from DREAMS DON'T HAVE DEADLINES:

No dream has to have a limit on it unless you set one.

According to Earl Nightingale, more jobs are ruined and more marriages are ruined by a bad attitude than by anything else.

You never have a money crisis; you have an idea crisis.

Don't take a course first unless you audit the teacher.

My wife and I get remarried every year.

The more goals you set, the more goals you're going to get.

A dream is your unrealized potential.

According to George Burns, the secret to leading a good life is to keep breathing.

Practice the law of reciprocity; i.e., give to others, and they will give back to you.

Age doesn't matter. It only matters if it matters to you.

Oprah Winfrey journals every day, and she reads two books every week.

This fine program is available for purchase or rental . . . if you want to get it, please click:

<http://www.achievement.com/>

Above is the tape rental club I belong to; i.e., the Achievement Tape Library . . . this a great way to hear CDs and/or audio cassette tapes, view videos, etc.--all for a fraction of what it would cost to buy them . . . call the head of the firm (Paul Arroyo) directly at 1.800.735.3660 and mention my name . . . that way, you'll be sure to pay even higher prices . . . NOT.

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5. VCR alert

A. MADE, now in its sixth season, is a reality show that helps teenagers reach previously unthinkable goals by setting them up with a coach and a month of intense training . . . this is a jewel of a family show . . . Wednesdays at 10 p.m. on MTV.

B. 30 DAYS continues on Wednesdays at 10 p.m. on FX . . . this week's episode, the third of Morgan Surlock's walk-a-month-in-my-shoes documentaries, features an evangelical Christian insurance salesman living for 30 days with a Muslim family.

C. STELLA, according to TV GUIDE, is a "hilarious and absurd series about three loopy roommates" . . . Tuesdays at 10:30 p.m. on Comedy Central.

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6. Birds & bees (updated)

At long last, the mystery is gone as to the burning question: How was I born?

The little boy asks his father, "Daddy, how was I born?"

Dad responds, "Ah, my son, I guess one day you will need to find out anyway! Well, you see, your Mom and I first got together in a chat room on MSN. Then I set up a date via e-mail with your Mom, and we met at a cyber-cafe. We sneaked into a secluded room, where your mother agreed to a download from my hard drive.

"As soon as I was ready to upload, we discovered that neither one of us had used a firewall, and since it was too late to hit the delete button, nine months later a blessed little Popup appeared and said:

"You've got male!"

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7. Websites

A. You might be a little surprised to learn about how much money people make. PARADE magazine puts out an interesting annual report about what people earn. The following link is the interactive salary showdown game.

It's a fun way to test your knowledge about what people earn for a living--looking at all different professions, such as teachers, dancers, politicians, scientists, CEOs, real estate brokers, athletes, actors, etc. To play the game, please click:

<http://whatpeopleearn.parade.com/>

If you have a dial-up connection, be patient, the game uploads slowly. However, it is worth the wait. You even get to guess who earns more, Catherine Zeta Jones or Angelina Jolie. There is also a bonus round, where you will be asked to answer which quarterback earned the highest salary for the 2004-05 season. Your choices are Peyton Manning, Brett Favre, Donovan McNabb, or Michael Vick. Chances are that any one of these guys earn more than all of my newsletter readers and me combined. I guess it pays to know how to throw a football!

B. The following website offers much more than just greeting cards. It has a great deal of information regarding Feng Shui, I Ching, Chinese Zodiac, Astrology, palm reading, hand writing analysis, etc. For more information, please click:

<http://www.springsgreetingcards.com/>

As mentioned in a previous newsletter, we worked not too long ago with our very own personal Feng Shui consultant. It was quite an interesting experience. If you want to learn more about the "art" of Fung Shui, the above website is certainly a good, fun place to start.

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

To see the many books I've reviewed and generally enjoyed, go to Blaine's Best (on the left) and then letter "O" . . . check the second paragraph there, and you'll be taken to my reviews that have been posted at amazon.com's website.

If you like any of my reviews and/or find them helpful, please indicate that is the case by clicking the "Yes" option . . . doing so will enable me to move into amazon's list of "Top 500" reviewers . . . currently, I'm #511 based on 1,734 favorable comments on my 440 reviews.

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8. Computer tip

To delete a whole bunch of files or e-mail at once, you can usually click on any file (as you usually do) . . . then, go to the very bottom of the files or e-mails you wish to delete . . . if you hold down the Shift key when you select the last item, all the items above it will be highlighted . . . if you then press your Delete key, everything you highlighted will be deleted.

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9. Prison vs. work

In prison you spend the majority of your time in an 8' X 10' cell. At work you spend most of your time in a 6' X 8' cubicle.

In prison you get three meals a day. At work you only get a break for one meal and you have to pay for that one.

In prison you get time off for good behavior. At work you get rewarded for good behavior with more work.

In prison a guard opens and closes all the doors for you. At work you must carry around a security card, unlock and open all the doors yourself.

In prison you can watch TV and play games. At work you get fired for watching TV and playing games.

In prison you get your own toilet. At work you have to share.

In prison they allow your family and friends to visit. At work you cannot even speak to your family and friends.

In prison all expenses are paid by taxpayers, with no work required. At work you get to pay all the expenses to go to work and then they deduct taxes from your salary to pay for the prisoners.

In prison you spend most of your life looking through bars from the inside wanting to get out. At work you spend most of your time wanting to get out and inside the bars.

In prison you can join many programs which you can leave at any time. At work there are some programs you can never get out of.

In prison there are wardens who are often sadistic. At work we have managers.

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10. A quote I like

The most wasted day of all is that on which we have not laughed--Sebastine Chamfort (1741-1794), French playwright

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11. Thought for the day

Chemistry (defined)

Often when I try to define chemistry, I fall back on a story from my own life. Early one morning I was reading my favorite newspaper comic strip, "Calvin and Hobbes," drawn and written by Bill Waterson. I was about to write a book FINDING THE LOVE OF YOUR LIFE, and I was grappling with how to describe what it means to fall in love. That's when I found a particularly insightful edition of "Calvin and Hobbes."

If you were never privileged to see the strip before Bill Waterson retired, you should understand that Calvin is a little boy, and Hobbes is a stuffed tiger that comes alive when Calvin is alone with it. Hobbes has a personality all his own.

In the strip that caught my eye, Calvin looks at Hobbes and asks,

"What is it like to fall in love?"

Hobbes stops walking, looks into space, strokes his chin, and says, "Well, say the object of your affection walks by."

"Yeah?" says Calvin, looking up at his friend expectantly.

"First, your heart falls into your stomach and splashes your innards," Hobbes says, swinging his hand around to demonstrate someone who is sweating profusely, and wiping his forehead. "This condensation shorts the circuits to your brain, and you get all woozy. When your brain burns out altogether, your mouth disengages, and you babble like a cretin until she leaves."

"That's love?" Calvin asks, obviously shocked.

"Medically speaking," Hobbes intones, clearly taken with his description.

Calvin concludes, "That happened to me once, and I figured it was cooties!"

From a psychological standpoint, Waterson got it pretty accurate. First, your heart falls into your stomach and splashes your innards. That is chemistry! When you see that person and something inside you just goes crazy, that is chemistry.

SOURCE:

FALLING IN LOVE FOR ALL THE RIGHT REASONS (see also Section 4C) by Dr. Neil Clark Warren

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #456

6.20.2005

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1. Reflections

A. This past Tuesday marked my 56th birthday; can you believe that? . . . I know, you still can't believe that I'm a day older than 55. Me, either!

Cynthia outdid herself, cooking one of her many specialties: orange chicken . . . it was soooo good . . . our friends Edina and Tunc then joined us for dessert; we had a delicious apple/cookie ice cream cake from MaggieMoo's.

Yet perhaps the high spot of the evening was a visit from a 7-foot banana from Monkey Business Inc. (908.233.0724) . . . she surprised all of us--well, make that, everybody but Cynthia--with both her singing and dancing . . . it was a lot of fun, even though kept on her peel the whole time.

B. The best news of the week for me was that my father was released from his nursing home, which means he is now back home (where he belongs) on a permanent basis . . . he continues to amaze me with both his recovery and attitude, and he is back again getting around on his prosthesis almost as if he never fallen a few months ago.

On Friday, Cynthia and I joined my parents and their friends Al and Phyllis to celebrate the occasion . . . we ate at Millie's (516.365.4344) in Manhasset, NY . . . the food there, as always, was superb . . . Millie, ever the gracious host, was so happy to see my father again that she treated our whole table to dessert . . . I shared a blueberry cobbler with Cynthia; we both felt it was about the best such dish we've ever had.

C. The week also marked the end of another year of meetings of the Foundation Board at Bucks County

Community, a group on which I'm honored to serve.

At Wednesday's meeting, we heard an informative presentation from Sue Kubik--executive director of the Foundation Board at Northampton Community College (Bethlehem, PA) . . . she gave us insight on how Northampton conducted its successful fundraising campaign, something so crucial for Bucks to replicate as it begins building its new Lower Bucks County campus.

Two ideas, in particular, caught my attention--not only for the College to use, but for any other organization:

Sue said when you ask for money, the top gifts are best. Seek them out. She gave an example of her school, where they had hoped for a certain generous gift. And they wound up getting even more.

She also urged us to let the volunteers plan the celebration at the end of the campaign. They'll feel more involved this way and will do a better job with it than staff people.

The meeting concluded with Ray Perisho, our chair, receiving a well-deserved plaque for his years of service . . . he'll be a hard person to replace, but I'm confident that we will be in good hands with Bill Brady as our next chair.

On Thursday, the Foundation had another activity; i.e., the kickoff luncheon for the new campus . . . it was held at the actual site, and many local politicians attended and wished the College well in its latest venture.

**** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD ****

This week, it goes to Mike Denny (215.699.1106)--owner of Denny's Textbook Service in Haverford, PA.

This is a small, one-person business that Mike has successfully run for many years . . . he services Bucks and many other local institutions of higher learning.

I've always been impressed with his friendliness and industriousness, and I always look forward to seeing him whenever he is on campus.

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2. FYI

Cynthia and I are developing our own sign language to deal with various situations . . . for example, when either of us are on the phone and the other person wants to add something, we hold up our index finger indicating that we have something to add . . . we find this works much better than just trying to cut in.

When we are rushing forward--often times too quickly--with a decision, we now use a give each other a "T" signal; i.e., to indicate time-out. It has been successful in slowing us down.

We are still looking for a signal to indicate that one of us wants to leave, say a conversation or party--but we don't

want to make it too obvious . . . any suggestions?

By the way, we initially developed this system when my dad told Cynthia a joke that wasn't all that funny . . . (sorry 'bout that, dad) . . . I decided to hold up fingers (against my cheek), indicating an "L" for laughter . . . the only problem: we decided to NOT continue using this signal for fear that I might someday hold up my hand, by accident, and have Cynthia interpret it as the laughter signal say when the person was telling something serious; e.g., of a death or serious illness!

FYI, part 2

* Brenda in South Carolina:

I was really happy to see you recommend Al Franken's show. I listen to him on the radio every chance I get. I don't always get to read all of your missives, so if you've mentioned the following already, please don't be offended. I'm not necessarily saying they should be mentioned in BLAINESWORLD, just wanted to make sure you are aware of these two issues that are very important to me:

1. That NPR and PBS are being hijacked:

<http://www.freepress.net/>

2. The call by Rep. John Conyers to have the administration respond to the Downing Street memo:

<http://www.johnconyers.com/>

* Sue in Pennsylvania [commenting on the remarks by Tom Hopkins, mentioned in last week's newsletter]:

I also just heard a good thing to say when someone asks you how you are. Even when you don't feel well, say better and better. It's a good affirmation.

* Barbara in Pennsylvania:

Your closing should not have been completed until AFTER you'd had an opportunity for a "clean" walk-thru (that means a house totally empty of the former owners and all of their belongings). I question the competency of an attorney (and, in his defense, he may not be a real estate lawyer) who does not make the stipulation at closing that the purchase is contingent on the buyer walk-thru and approval. The attorney should also have held an amount in escrow sufficient to cover the cost of repairing any damages you find (holes in walls, etc.), cleaning up after the former owner (if necessary) or rent if they are there beyond a specified date.

MY TWO CENTS:

Much of what Barbara writes, as usual, is on target . . . in our case, Cynthia and I did use a competent real estate attorney and fortunately had money set aside for additional costs . . . the problem was perhaps that we were and are too trusting, but we have at least learned from our mistake!

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3. Clear thinking3

"It's time to see how clearly you can think," the teacher said to his class. "Now, listen carefully, and think about what I'm saying. I'm thinking of a person who has the same mother and father as I have. But this person is not my brother and not my sister. Who is it?"

The kids in the class furrowed their brows, scratched their heads, and otherwise showed how hard they were thinking. But no one came up with the right answer.

When everyone in the class had given up, the teacher announced, "The person is me."

Little Jeffrey beamed at learning the answer. "That's a good one," he said to himself. "I'll have to try that on Mom and Dad."

At dinner that night, little Jeffrey repeated the riddle to his parents. "I'm thinking of a person who has the same mother and father as I have," he said. "But this person isn't my brother and isn't my sister. Who is it?"

His parents furrowed their brows, scratched their heads, and otherwise pretended that they were thinking hard. Then they both said, "I give up. Who is it?"

"It's my teacher!" Jeffrey said.

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4. Reviews ...

A. Cynthia and I really enjoyed THE SISTERHOOD OF THE TRAVELING PANTS, the movie based on the best-selling young adult book by Anne Brashares . . . it is the touching tale of four best friends who spend their first summer apart from one another and to keep in touch, they share a magical pair of jeans that fits each of them . . . though it might well be labeled a "chick flick," methinks that guys will like it too--particularly if they have daughters or granddaughters . . . rated PG.

B. COACH CARTER is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #435 follows:

A. If you want to be inspired, catch COACH CARTER . . . is the true story of a controversial high school basketball coach who benched his undefeated team due to their collective poor academic record in 1999 . . . Samuel L. Jackson is excellent in the title role, and I also liked the work of each of the members of his team . . . they're not famous actors, at least at this point in time in their careers, but they were all believable as both teenagers and athletes . . . even if you're not a sports fan, methinks you'll like this film . . . rated PG-13.

Shortly after viewing COACH CARTER, I read an article about him in the BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES (Sunday, January 22, p.1D) . . . his following quote at the end made me appreciate the Coach Carters of the world:

What I want the whole world to take from this movie is that respect, self-discipline and being kind will never, ever go out of style. Period.

C. Unfortunately, none of the local papers carry a column, "Looking at Language," by Richard Lederer . . . it is something that I'd definitely want to read--especially after enjoying his very funny book, THE REVENGE OF ANGUISHED ENGLISH.

In it, he takes actual misuses of the English language and presents them in a series of short chapters that had me laughing from the very first page . . . I never realized that there were so many fluffs and flubs, goofs and gaffes, blunders, botches, boo-boos, and bloopers that are actually run as the gospel, seemingly on a daily basis.

They have been issued by students, run in church bulletins, appeared on frozen food packages, and run in newspapers as headlines.

The tough part in writing this review was to choose just a few examples that I could share, in that there were so many . . . among them:

* On the JOEY BISHOP SHOW, Joey asked Sen. Barry Goldwater if he would like to be on the show twice a week. The senator answered, "I'd much rather watch you in bed with my wife."

* Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her mother, "Why is the bride dressed in white?"

"Because white is the color of happiness, and today is the happiest day of her life."

The child thought about this for a moment, then said, "So why is the groom wearing black?"

* [from the Excuses Hall of Fame]

My son is under the doctor's care. Please execute him.

Please excuse Mary for being absent. She was sick, and I had her shot.

Please excuse Jimmy for being. It was his father's fault.

Please excuse Tom for being absent yesterday. He had diarrhea, and his boots leak.

Maryann was absent December 11-16 because she had a fever, sore throat, headache, and upset stomach. Her sister was also sick--fever and sore throat--and her brother had a low-grade fever and ached all over. I wasn't the best either--sore throat and fever. There must be the flu going around school. Her father even got hot last night.

[court Q-and-A]

Q: Where do you live?

A: 2442 Oseawotamire Street

Q: How do you spell that street?

A: S-T-R-E-E-T

* In one edition of today's food section, an inaccurate number of jalapeno peppers was given for Jeanette Crowley's southwestern chicken salad recipe. The Recipe should call for 2, not 21, jalapeno peppers.

* Lost dog-mixed breed, shaggy, left front leg amputated, missing top of right ear, partially blind, tail was broken and healed crooked, some teeth gone, scars on head and back, has been castrated. Answers to name of Lucky

* Spoken by a Los Angeles radio DJ shortly after the 1990 earthquake: The telephone company is urging people to please not use the telephone unless it is absolutely necessary in order to keep the lines open for emergency personnel. We'll be right back after this break to give away

a pair of Phil Collins concert tickets to caller number 95.

I'm still laughing at these so much that I'm now going to get hold of Lederer's first book on the same topic, ANGUISHED ENGLISH.

D. Heard and loved SANDY KOUFAX: A LEFTY'S LEGACY by Jane Leavy . . . it is the biography of Koufax, arguably the greatest left-hander who ever pitched.

But that's not why the book meant so much to me . . . it also reminded me of my childhood days when I followed Koufax so closely . . . in fact, I was even at one World Series game that was described in much detail (when he outpitched Whitey Ford and Frank Howard hit the hardest line drive I've ever seen).

I also enjoyed being reminded about how Koufax made headlines by refusing to pitch on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar.

Leavy obviously did much research in putting this book together . . . I liked how she quotes so many of Koufax' contemporaries, including:

Willie Stargell: To hit Koufax was like trying to drink coffee with a fork.

Earl Battey: I accused him of being black. I told him he was too cool to be white.

Koufax, when asked what his best pitch was: Strike one.

Mickey Mantle [looking at a third strike in the 1963 World Series]: How the f*ck are you supposed to hit that sh*t?

The narration by Robert Pinsky, former Poet Laureate of the United States, added to my enjoyment of SANDY KOUFAX . . . he was assisted by the author, Leavy, who gave broke up parts of the book by a thrilling account of the September 9, 1965 perfect game Koufax pitched against the Chicago Cubs.

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5. VCR alert

A. CYBER SEDUCTION: HIS SECRET LIFE is a made-for-cable drama about a successful high-school sophomore whose personal life suffers after he develops a serious addiction to the Internet . . . Thursday at 9 p.m. on Lifetime.

B. DECLINING BY DEGREES: HIGHER EDUCATION AT RISK examines the problems faced on college campuses in the US . . . Thursday at 9 p.m. on PBS Channel 12 (Philadelphia) . . . PBS times and dates vary, so check your local listings for a station near you.

C. THE GIRL IN THE CAFE stars Bill Nighy, a character actor who was so fine in LOVE ACTUALLY . . . it is the story of

a shy civil servant who meets a young woman (the soulful Kelly Macondald) over tea, then takes her to the superpower summit in Reykjavik, where she gently disrupts more than his life . . . according to TV GUIDE, "Nighy pulls it off, and so does this movie" . . . Saturday at 8 p.m. on HBO.

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6. Survey

Did you know that on the question of girls' legs, 19% of men said they liked fat legs, 27% said they liked slender legs and the rest said they liked something in between.

SOURCE:

The Internet, so therefore, it must be true!

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7. Websites

A. The goal of the following new website is to help improve the quality of care provided by hospitals. It provides unbiased information regarding the quality of hospital health care. For more information, please click:

<http://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov/>

At this website, you will find hospital information, quality measures, patient tools, and a database to search and check out a specific hospital.

B. This website offers some great information about theater throughout the country. It has all the latest information about shows, discount tickets, theaters, open and close dates, prices, etc.

It's a great place to check out what is playing in children's theater, comedy shows, dance theater, opera, drama, and even puppet theater. For more information, please click:

<http://www.theatermania.com>

You can also sign up for a free membership and get the inside scoop to all things theater. By becoming a member, you will also be offered discounts and special offers. In addition, you will get a chance to win two free tickets to a hit show.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

On the left, you'll see "Radio Show" . . . go to that link if you want to see a history of my radio career . . . you can also hear one of my shows.

As you may have read in a past issue, a recent management change at WWFM has resulted in my show being taken off the air . . . but, hopefully, I'll resurface soon again . . . on another station and/or even with my own cable show.

Please do keep me in mind if you have any media contacts for me to pursue with respect to the above possibilities.

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8. Computer tip

Last week, I mentioned that you can save ink and time using the "black ink only" option on many printers . . . here's something else that works on both my laser printer and Cynthia's Lexmark 615 (an inkjet mode): see if there's a way you can type in "draft mode only" . . . if you can, this should be more than sufficient for most of your printing needs--and you'll save still more money . . . and get your results much quicker!

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9. Journey

A priest was preparing a dying man for his 'long day's journey into night.' Whispering firmly, the priest says, "Denounce the devil! Let him know how little you think of his evil."

The dying man says nothing.

The priest repeats his order again.

Still, the dying man says nothing.

The priest asks, "Why do you refuse to denounce the devil and his evil?"

The dying man replies, "Until I know exactly where I'm headed, I don't think it's such a good idea to aggravate anybody just yet."

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10. A quote I like

How old would you be if you didn't know how old you are?--Satchel Paige (1906-1982), American baseball player and when he was 42, he became the oldest player to make his major league debut

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11. Thought for the day

Sneakers
by Bob Perks

I always admire people who exercise. In particular, older folks who make exercise a daily routine. At 75, Jack was truly an inspiration.

There was a pond in the middle of this beautiful park. Some may argue that it is a lake. I have no idea what qualifies water to be either, but this was big enough and small enough to walk around several times

as a part of an exercise program.

Jack ran.

I wasn't there to break records. In fact, I was just out for a stroll. But Jack zipped by me at least four times in the time it took me to complete my walk around once.

At the end, I sat on a bench where I started. I was watching the children tease the ducks. They would chase them and then pretend to have some food for them. I felt sorry and was about to scold them, until a woman walked up with a bag full of feed and old bread. The kids ran away screaming because the ducks, pigeons and sparrows flocked to where they were standing, when the woman threw the food their way. One kid yelled, "Alfred Hitchcock, The Birds!"

That did it. I was laughing right at the time Jack sat down next to me, as he completed his last lap and was slowly unwinding.

"How do you do it?" I asked as I shook my head.

Jack smiled and whispered his reply to me as he leaned toward where I was sitting.

"Don't tell anyone. My secret is . . ."

I actually leaned in to hear this. I thought he had the secret to youth.

He continued whispering. "My secret is . . . I do this . . . one step at a time."

Then he started laughing.

Feeling the fool, I pretended to go along with the joke realizing then that my question was stupid.

"My name is Bob," I said as I offered my hand to him.

"Call me Jack," he said and shook my hand with a very firm grip.

"Jack, seriously. You appear to be a little older than I am and look in great shape. Have you always been this healthy?" I asked, cautiously thinking about my wording.

"I'm 75 and proud of it!" he said. "As for my health, about five years ago they told me my heart was in bad shape. My choice was to sit back and let life take its course or for me to plan it. I took charge," he said as he changed his running shoes.

Continuing he said, "The fact is, I should have done that long ago. I would probably be in even better shape."

"What advice can you give a soon to be 51 year old man with extremely high cholesterol?" I asked.

He looked me straight in the eye as he placed his hand on my shoulders and said, "Sneakers."

"I should have the best sneakers to run in?" I asked.

"No. Always remember to tie your sneakers before you take off. I didn't the first time I started running. I fell on my face and chipped the bone in my right knee. I couldn't start again for weeks," he said laughing.

Did I mention this young 75 year old also had a great sense of humor?

"Seriously, Bob. The key to setting any goals in your life is to be prepared. Check everything before you start chasing after your dreams. I know so many people who are miserable today because they started running after their dreams, always in pursuit of them. Instead, they needed to become their dreams. Why are we always chasing things? They chased them and fell flat on their face because they weren't prepared."

Still trying to get some valuable information on staying healthy, I started to ask, "So, the key to living longer and being happy with your life is . . ." he interrupted me.

"Don't forget to tie your sneakers!" he said. "There you have it: The secret to success!"

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

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bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #455

6.13.2005

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1. Reflections

A. I love to learn . . . and had the opportunity to do so at the Get Motivated! 2005 seminar in Philadelphia on Tuesday . . . it was a real treat to see Tom Hopkins, a sales trainer I had long admired from his readings and cassette tapes . . . he taught me this one great response to give when asked how's business (life or virtually anything else): UNBELIEVABLE! . . . the fact that this can be interpreted many different ways is what makes it so valuable.

Hopkins also discussed the tie-down question . . . for example, when speaking to a child, say something to this effect: "It was a nice day, wasn't it?" . . . it gets the child to think positively.

He further urged those in attendance to have fun . . . rather than ask for a signature (a no-no in selling), try: "Let me make you famous for just a minute and get your autograph."

One speaker I did not like was Phil Town . . . he presented, in essence, a 60-minute informational . . . I was amazed that so many folks in attendance then signed-up for his \$995 training package . . . to me, it was little more than information on how to become a day trader . . . what's worse he used figures mostly from 2000 or 2001 in his presentation, and very few people seemed to notice this.

B. Cynthia and I had the opportunity to learn together via a Feng Shui consultation we had that dealt with our new Belle Meade, NJ home on Saturday . . . Deanna Trust spent nearly the whole day with us, and I must say that she knows her stuff--though that doesn't necessarily mean we will implement every suggestion she made.

However, I did like this bit of advice that we got out of it:
When we pause, we find true treasures in small and ordinary places.

In addition, we're in the process of developing a statement that we want to create in both our lives and for our house . . . it is still in the draft mode, but will most probably be along these lines:
We create love, joy and ease with each other and with others.

If you'd like to get in touch with Deanna, please call 973.366.3570 . . . or for more information, please click:

<http://www.trustfengshui.com>

C. As indicated last week, Cynthia and I also closed on the above home . . . we were ably assisted by our attorney, Danny Lime (908.725.9130), whose office is in Branchburg, NJ . . . he was competent, friendly and helpful . . . our only problem was not his fault; i.e., we tried to be nice to the people we bought the house from, but they somewhat took advantage of us . . . it took nearly a week for the previous owners to get all their stuff out and even now, we still are in need of having to clean up after them.

During the week, we somehow managed to find time to choose our wedding bands . . . we again went to the jeweler who sold us Cynthia's engagement ring: Richard Wasserman of Richard Wasserman Jewelers (212.302.4266) in New York City . . . he's extremely professional and best of all, he has a convenient Millburn, NJ location where he met us by appointment.

And on Friday, we went with friends and had a blast at the 17th annual Tyler Tasting Party at Bucks County Community College . . . what a great event this is . . . you get to walk around and sample food from many area restaurants . . . naturally, we stopped by at the booths of several of my favorite establishments--including Dolce Carini (the grilled tuna was delicious), Il Sol (the make-your-own pasta was superb), Applebee's (featuring a mouth watering, low-calorie cheesecake), and Zebra-Striped Whale (offering tasty chocolate-covered pretzels).

KUDOS to Glenn and Barbara Hains, co-chairs for the event, for their role in making it as successful as it was.

We'll be back next year at the 18th annual Tyler Tasting party on June 9 . . . hopefully, you'll join be able to join us!

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

This week, it goes to Sue Russeck--the realtor who did a fine job in helping me sell my Washington Crossing, PA house at a fair price in a time framework that met my needs.

Sue is with RE/MAX, out of Southampton, PA . . . she can be reached at 215.396.4614, and I'd strongly recommend her if you are looking for a real estate pro who knows the Bucks County housing market . . . in addition, she is excellent on returning calls and e-mails.

I'm particularly appreciative of how she guided me through the selling process every step of the way.

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2. FYI

A long time ago, my mother told me this one bit of dieting advice that her friend followed . . . the friend had been very heavy, but did not want to give up eating the foods she enjoyed . . . so she just decided to keep eating what she wanted to eat, but exactly half of what she had been eating . . . she eventually lost a great deal of weight and kept it off.

Cynthia and I do a version of this; i.e., with respect to desserts, we'll often split one order . . . or when it comes to ice cream, get a kid's size portion.

FYI, part 2

* A talented friend of mine--Janet in Pennsylvania--does freelance art work . . . she also has developed and maintained websites for others . . . to see for yourself, please click:
<http://www.jz-art.com>

* Terri in Pennsylvania has a home in Ocean City, NJ for rent . . . she notes, "We still have August 13 open at a rate of \$1,700, less 10% if to anyone mentioning BLAINESWORLD. There are also great fall and winter rates." Please inquire by e-mailing tersiv@yahoo.com

* I loved this one bit of advice from the folks who ran the Get Motivated! 2005 seminar (see Section 1A) . . . in an e-mail, I was advised to "Bring a positive attitude of expectancy!"

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3. Proper attire

Proper attire is required in the cafeteria at the University of Maine. To enforce that rule, the management posted this notice: "Shoes are required to eat in this cafeteria."

Next to it, a student added, "Socks can eat wherever they want."

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4. Reviews ...

A. Don't believe some good reviews you may have seen for MR. AND MRS. SMITH . . . it is not worth your time or money . . . the romantic action thriller starring Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie about a married couple who hide the secret that they are both paid assassins starts off OK, then collapses with far too many violent fight scenes that don't even appear real . . . rated PG-13.

B. HITCH is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #438 follows:

Loved HITCH, the romantic comedy that proves Will Smith can do it ALL on screen: science fiction, biography (ALI) and now this type film too . . . it is the story of a New York "date doctor"

who, for a fee, helps countless men get the women of their dreams . . . I laughed out loud, at many parts, but also felt for his clients--especially Kevin James, spectacular as a meek accountant who is smitten with a gorgeous celebrity (the fetching Amber Valletta) . . . this is the perfect date movie to see that you'll enjoy even if by yourself . . . it is also one that guys will like . . . rated PG-13.

C. HE'S JUST NOT THAT INTO YOU by Greg Behrendt and Liz Tuccillo is not just for women . . . though subtitled THE NO-EXCUSES TRUTH TO UNDERSTANDING GUYS, men will find a lot of useful advice here too.

And both sexes will come to a better understanding as to how their interpersonal communication can be improved.

I liked the approach that was used; i.e., the authors responded to a series of letters . . . in doing so, they gave practical suggestions that not only make sense . . . they also work.

In addition, I found myself agreeing with many of the poll statistics that were cited; e.g., 100% of men polled said they've never been too busy to call a woman they were really into. As one fine man said, "A man has got to have his priorities."

Also valuable was the accompanying workbook that was at the end of each chapter . . . one of the best assignments was this one:

If you're in a relationship that you suspect is not good for you, but you're not sure, do this simple exercise:

Take out a tape recorder. Tell the story of your relationship into it. Play it out loud. Imagine that your best friend in the whole world is telling you the story instead of you. Would you want better for her?

If it's impossible for you to think you deserve better, try to at least believe one of your friends who thinks you deserve better . . . just long enough to get you out of the relationship.

D. Heard Sandra Brown's latest thriller, WHITE HOT . . . it is about a woman who returns to her hometown after she has learned of her brother's suicide . . . naturally, with any Brown novel, there's a romantic subplot that actually helps enhance the story . . . though things became a bit convoluted toward the end (with a few too many twists and turns to my liking), I did enjoy WHITE HOT . . . and find it amazing that Brown--unlike far too many others authors--manages to come up with what feels like a different story in almost every book she writes.

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5. VCR alert

A. THE CLOSER stars Kyra Sedgwick as a gifted detective in a crime drama from the creative team of TIP/TUCK . . . Mondays at 9 p.m. on TNT.

B. The premise of pairing a dancer with a star might sound goofy, but it somehow works . . . DANCING WITH THE STARS is on Wednesday nights at 9 p.m. on ABC.

C. THE AL FRANKEN SHOW airs weeknights at 11:30 p.m. on Sundance . . . if you're a liberal, methinks you'll enjoy; if not, watch anyway to see what the "other side" is thinking.

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6. The network

President Bush calls in the head of the CIA and asks, "How come the Jews know everything before we do?"

The CIA chief says, "The Jews have this expression: 'Vustitzuch?' The President says, "Hell, what's that mean?"

"Well, Mr. President," replies the CIA chief, "It's a Yiddish expression which roughly translates to, 'What's happening?' They just ask each other, and they know everything."

The President decides to personally go undercover to determine if this is true. He gets dressed up as an Orthodox Jew (black hat, beard, long black coat) and is secretly flown in an unmarked plane to New York, picked up in an unmarked car, and dropped off in Brooklyn's most Jewish neighborhood.

Soon a little old man comes shuffling along. The President stops him and whispers, "Vustitzuch?"

The old guy whispers back: "Bush is in Brooklyn."

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7. Websites

A. If you enjoy words and language, the following website is for you. It is called the [Word Detective on the Web](#), and is an online version of The Word Detective, a newspaper column answering readers' questions about words and language. The website also has information about the meanings of sayings and phrases and does so in a humorous way.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.word-detective.com/>

While I was at the website, I decided to look up a phrase that a friend of mine has used a few times: 'bad hair day.' I was curious about where the phrase originated. Here is what I learned:

"Bad hair days" when your hair misbehaves are no fun and may actually have serious psychological effects on the victim. A study conducted in 2000 at Yale University found that a day when a person's hair asserts itself in a lumpy, frumpy, flippy, flat or frizzy fashion can cause debilitating feelings of low self-esteem and vulnerability. Surprisingly, researchers found that men are more likely than women to

be thrown for a loop by bad hair. Perhaps not so surprisingly, the study was underwritten by a shampoo company.

Tracing the exact origin of "bad hair day" hasn't been easy. William Safire, in a column on this topic in 1993, traced the phrase to a 1991 comment by comedian Gary Shandling (known for asking "Is my hair all right?" as part of his stand-up routine). In 1995, TV personality Jane Pauley claimed on a number of occasions to have coined the phrase sometime back in the 1970s.

B. If you're a TV junkie, then the following website is for you:
<http://www.tv.com>

It has everything you've always wanted to know on all shows--and then some . . . best of all there are summaries for many shows that you may have missed!

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click:
<http://www.blainesworld.net>

As you hopefully know by now, you should ALWAYS feel free to mention this newsletter to your friends, relatives, etc. . . . should they want to subscribe (AT NO COST), all they have to do is go to my homepage . . . then click on "Special Offer" at the bottom . . . it's that simple!

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8. Computer tip

Most printers give you the option to choose between printing in color or black-and-white . . . however, if you look, you can most often choose not to print pictures in color (or something to that effect) . . . if you print them in black-and-white, as Cynthia can with her Lexmark Z615, you will save both time and money.

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9. Answering machine messages, part 2 of 2

(concluded from last week)

"Hi, this is George. I'm sorry I can't answer the phone right now. Leave a message, and then wait by your phone until I call you back."

If you are a burglar, then we're probably at home cleaning our weapons right now and can't come to the phone. Otherwise, we probably aren't home and it's safe to leave us a message."

"You're growing tired. Your eyelids are getting heavy. You feel very, sleepy now. You are gradually losing your willpower and your ability to resist suggestions. When you hear the tone you will feel helplessly compelled to leave your name, number, and a message."

"Hello. I am David's answering machine. What are you?"

"Heaven, God speaking . . . "

"Greetings, you have reached the Sixth Sense Detective Agency. We know who you are and what you want, so at the sound of the tone, please hang up."

"You have reached the CPX-2000 Voice Blackmail System. Your voice patterns are now being digitally encoded and stored for later use. Once this is done, our computers will be able to use the sound of YOUR voice for literally thousands of illegal and immoral purposes. There is no charge for this initial consultation. However our staff of professional extortionists will contact you in the near future to further explain the benefits of our service, and to arrange for your schedule of payment. Remember to speak clearly at the sound of the tone. Thank you."

"You've reached our company's answering machine. If you'd like to get Sales, Press 1. If you'd like to get Billing, press 2. If you'd like to get a Directory, press 3. And if you'd like to hear a duck quack, press 4." [If you pressed 4, you actually heard the sound of a duck quack!]

And one I used to use--and am thinking of reinstating:
Hi, I'm either on the phone or under my desk. Please leave a message after the tone.

***** MR. CURIOUS HERE *****

Your reaction to that last message; e.g., should I go with it again?
Also, are there any other messages that you've heard AND liked?

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10. A quote I like

If all my friends were to jump off a bridge, I wouldn't jump with them, I'd be at the bottom to catch them. Everyone hears what you say. Friends listen to what you say. Best friends listen to what you don't say. We all take different paths in life, but no matter where we go, we take a little of each other everywhere.--Tim McGraw, country singer

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11. Thought for the day

Voting rights

A girl asked her new seven-year-old neighbor, "What church do you go to?"

"I don't go to church," her playmate said. "I go to a temple. I'm Jewish."

"What's that?" asked the first little girl.

"You know there are Protestants, Catholics, and Jews," the girl explained. "But they are all just different ways of voting for God."

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PS. Please join me in waving your flags in honor of Flag Day (on Tuesday), at which time I hope you'll continue praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great rest of the week!

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New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD (with a special REQUEST FOR HELP)

Issue #454

6.6.2005

In this issue:

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1. Reflections

A. The special REQUEST FOR HELP:

Cynthia and I, getting ready for our upcoming move, are in need of assistance with the following two items:

* Name of a (local?) moving company that any reader might recommend, particularly if you've used the firm within the last few years . . . we'll be moving from my place in Washington Crossing, PA, then stopping off for a few items at Cynthia's house in Hillsborough, NJ, and winding up at our new home in Belle Meade, NJ . . . please get us any suggestions you may have within the next few days.

* Also, I've personally had good luck with Comcast Cable . . . but since I can't get it in Belle Meade, I'm wondering whether to go with the service there--Patriot Media--or combine a satellite dish (Dish Network) with a DSL line; e.g., with Verizon? . . . I've never used a DSL line, so I'm curious to hear anybody's opinion as to how the DSL line compares with cable . . . and your experiences with Patriot Media, Dish Network or Verizon . . . many thanks!

B. GOOD NEWS DEPARTMENT!

We closed on our new home and, also, got and accepted an offer for my house . . . details to follow, most likely next week . . . as you can imagine, it has been a hectic past few days . . . actually, make that weeks.

I'm MUCH OBLIGED to all who have helped us in the process with their ideas, suggestions, etc. . . . much has been learned as a result, and in return, I'll continue to share much of this information.

C. One party a week is usually great; two is even better . . . this past Wednesday, I joined a bunch of friends at a surprise celebration of Jean Ryersbach's retirement from Bucks County Community

College . . . it was held at Siam Cuisine (215.579.9399), a Thai restaurant in Newtown, PA . . . I tried coconut soup for the first and perhaps last time . . . it didn't quite hit it for me, though I'm a big coconut fan . . . my chicken and vegetable dish with sweet and sour sauce was quite tasty . . . the decor is pleasant, and the service is friendly . . . I'll be back.

On Sunday, Cynthia and I attended a luncheon/party in honor of her niece Rachel's graduation from a combined master's program from both Columbia University and the Jewish Theological Seminary . . . it was held at Village Crown (212.674.2061), a Kosher Moroccan restaurant in New York City . . . we did what we often do: split two different dishes . . . Cynthia's steak was excellent, as was my chicken . . . best of all was having family and friends together on the joyous occasion.

And during the weekend, I also had the pleasure of moderating a faculty-student panel at the National Institute on the Assessment of Experiential Learning--held at the Doral Center in Princeton, NJ . . . we discussed reactions to the prior learning process, and I was blessed to have so many fine panelists: (Faculty) Jean Ryersbach, Bucks; Philip Cantor, Thomas Edison; and Terry Hoffman, University of Maryland University College; and (Students) Millicent Davis, Thomas Edison; and Gaylord Swaby, Bucks . . . Stephanie Fenwick, AZUSA Pacific University, offered a particularly unique perspective . . . she had been a student who had earned credits via prior learning and now she's involved with the program from the administrative end at the same school.

Of particular help to me in putting the session together was Margaret LaPage from Edison, along with Maureen Keller and Maxine Lentz from the same school . . . I think it went well, in large part because of the team effort by all involved.

**** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD ****

This week, it goes to Alex Reilly--mortgage consultant with Trident Mortgage . . . he helped me get my original mortgage for my Washington Crossing home, then a few years later, helped me refinance at a greatly reduced rate.

So when it was time to get a mortgage for our Belle Meade home, Alex immediately came to mind--and he again delivered, making it somewhat painless for us to get all the paperwork done in a relatively short period of time.

Alex returned all our e-mails and phone calls in a prompt fashion, plus he's just a real nice guy . . . he's knowledgeable, too, and I wouldn't hesitate to recommend him to anybody needing anything involving a mortgage.

Your best bet to reach him is via his pager: 215.736.7592 . . . naturally, feel free to mention my name.

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2. FYI

Mary White, our NJ realtor, shared with Cynthia and I a great idea that has become a tradition for her family . . . when she was married, she was told to pack two suitcases--one for a warm-weather trip, the other for a cold-weather trip . . . she was not told where

her honeymoon was going to be, just that it would to a special location . . . so when her son just got married, Mary and her husband did the same thing; i.e., they kept the location a secret until the newlywed couple got to the airport . . . their gift was the honeymoon, all expenses paid.

Thinking out loud here: Cynthia and I already have our honeymoon planned; i.e., a trip to Paris, followed by a Mediterranean cruise . . . but that said, if any reader(s) want to pay for this, who would we be to say NO?

FYI, part 2

* Sue in Pennsylvania:

Try this experiment, if you like. It's a law of attraction process that I've been reading about.

Get a box.

Write on the box, "Whatever is contained in this box--IS!!!"

And then every day, write 15 times on a piece of paper something you want in your life; e.g., "I want to host another radio show."

Place the paper in the box.

Believe that it will work, then envision and feel it happening.

And finally, let me know when your new radio show first airs!

* Pat in Pennsylvania:

[commenting on getting directions from Google]

If you click on the word "Satellite" at the right on this website, you get a satellite picture of your location! Cool! Thanks!!!

* Denise in New Jersey:

[wondering aloud where I put all the papers from my previous office] LOL. Where the hell did she put all that stuff??????

[then she added in a follow-up e-mail]

That's the ticket. I can not believe how much paper a home office generates. I got sick of boxes of year end crap we have to save for tax purposes. I read where you can put them in those space bags . . . suck out the air . . . and voila, it takes up such less space. 4 box loads turned into teeny packages!

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3. It's a fact

A Sunday school teacher of young children asked the students to learn one fact about Jesus by the following Sunday. The following week she asked each child in turn what he or she had learned.

Susie said, "He was born in a manger."

Bobby said, "He threw the money changers out of the temple."

Little Mark said, "He has a red pickup truck but he doesn't know how to drive it."

Curious, the teacher asked, "And where did you learn that, Mark?"

"From my Daddy," said Mark. "Yesterday we were driving down the highway, and this red pickup truck pulled out in front of us and Daddy yelled at him, 'Jesus Christ! Why don't you learn how to drive?'"

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4. Reviews ...

A. Very much liked CINDERELLA MAN, the true story of James J. Braddock--an impoverished prizefighter who captured the hearts of America during the Great Depression with a comeback that took him to a championship fight . . . Russell Crowe and Renée Zellweger were both fine as, respectively, Braddock and his wife Mae . . . but as good as they were, I was blown away by the work of Craig Bierko as Max Bear, the heavyweight champion who killed two men in the ring . . . Paul Giamatti, as usual, scored in a supporting role as Braddock's trainer . . . and another of my favorite character actors, Bruce McGill, was terrific as a fight promoter . . . the boxing scenes were quite realistic, though methinks they're perhaps too bloody for some viewers . . . rated PG-13.

B. THE SEA INSIDE is now out in DVD format. . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #441 follows:

Loved THE SEA INSIDE, the true story about a 55-year old Spaniard, Ramon Sampedro, who broke his neck as a young man and then petitioned the courts for permission to be euthanized . . . don't be put off by the topic; the film is life-affirming . . . you'll laugh at spots, cry at others and think long past the ending about its message . . . the performance of Javier Bardem in the lead role is simply magnificent . . . though only 35 in real life, he plays his character's age as well as anybody I've ever seen . . . what made his performance even more amazing was the fact that much of it was in bed, so you only get to see his expressive face . . . I also was moved by the shots of the countryside when Ramon dreams he can fly . . . rated PG-13.

C. You've probably been to a doctor who starts talking to you, but never really listens to what you have to say . . . if that be the case, then you'll probably find the doctor wanting . . . and you should listen to your feelings because you've engaged in a practice known as "thin-slicing," wherein you take what matters most from an overwhelming number of variables.

Malcolm Gladwell (author of THE TIPPING POINT, a previous favorite of mind about how we understand the world around us) explains the aforementioned concept in BLINK, a dandy little book with a subtitle that says it all: THE POWER OF THINKING WITHOUT THINKING.

He looks at how choices that seem to be made in an instant--in the blink of an eye--aren't always as simple as they seem . . . yet some people seem to be able to make them successfully; e.g., the tennis coach who knows when a player will double-fault before the racket even makes contact . . . by the same token, Gladwell examines why "blink" theory has led to such great failures as New Coke.

I especially enjoyed reading about the psychologist who has learned to predict whether a marriage will last, based on a few minuets of

observing a couple . . . the key: If Gottman observes one or both partners in a marriage showing contempt toward the other, he considers it the single most important sign that the marriage is in trouble.

There were several other memorable passages; among them: [analyzing people involved in speed dating] Kailynn stood to the side, by the bar that ran across one wall of the room. "If you are enjoying the connection, time goes quickly. If you aren't, it's the longest six minutes of your life," she said as she watched the couples nervously chatter. "Sometimes strange things happen. I'll never forget, back in November, there was a guy from Queens who showed up with a dozen red roses, and he gave one to every girl he spoke to. He had a suit on." She gave a half smile. "He was ready to go."

[comparing sales of cars] The results were stunning. The white men received initial offers from the salesmen that were \$725 above the dealer's invoice (that is, what the dealer paid for the car from the manufacturer). White women got initial offers of \$935 above invoice. Black women were quoted a price, on average, of \$1,195 above invoice. And black men? Their initial offer was \$1,687 above invoice. Even after forty minutes of bargaining, the black men could get the price, on average, down to only \$1,551 above invoice. After lengthy negotiations, Ayres's black men still ended up with a price that was nearly \$800 higher than Ayres's white men were offered without having to say a word.

[explaining why there are more women now in orchestra] The fact that there are now women playing for symphony orchestras is not a trivial change. It matters because it has opened up a world of possibility for a group that had been locked out of opportunity. It also matters because by fixing the first impression at the heart of the audition--by judging purely on the basis of ability--orchestras now hire better musicians, and better musicians mean better music. And how did we get better music? Not by rethinking the entire classical music enterprise or building new concert halls or pumping in millions of new dollars, but by paying attention to the tiniest detail, the first two seconds of the audition.

D. Heard the Nightingale-Conant CD program, **THE FIVE ESSENTIAL PEOPLE SKILLS** by the business leaders and trainers from Dale Carnegie Training . . . I found it to be a most helpful update to Carnegie's classic, **HOW TO WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE** (one of my all-time favorite books on personal development).

The key: Learning to apply appropriate assertiveness to all your interactions.

Lots of practical examples are given, many of which I was able to relate to . . . I took away such ideas as the following:

When listening, say, "I understand how you feel."

Ask questions, rather than give direct orders.

Don't ever end a discussion on a negative note.

Remember my name, and you indicate my importance to you.

You can make more friends in a month by trying to get

interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.

In negotiations, spend more time listening rather than talking. And use the word "and" instead of "but."

This fine program is available for purchase or rental . . . if you want to get it, please click:

<http://www.achievement.com/>

Above is the tape rental club I belong to; i.e., the Achievement Tape Library . . . this a great way to hear CDs and/or audio cassette tapes, view videos, etc.--all for a fraction of what it would cost to buy them . . . call the head of the firm (Paul Arroyo) directly at 1.800.735.3660 and mention my name . . . that way, you'll be sure to pay even higher prices . . . NOT.

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5. VCR alert

A. Jimmy Fallon hosts the MOVIE AWARDS, MTV's 14th annual offbeat awards program . . . featured are such categories as Best Frightened Performance, Best Fight and Best Kiss . . . Thursday at 8:30 p.m. on MTV.

B. INTO THE WEST is a six-part epic about westward expansion and culture class . . . Steven Spielberg served as executive producer . . . it took 180 days to shoot the series, and there are 248 credited actors and 15,000 extras . . . Episode One airs on Friday at 8 p.m. on TNT; repeated on both Saturday and Sunday.

C. SUPER TROUPERS--30 YEARS OF ABBA captures the reunion of the Swedish group . . . Saturday at 9 p.m. on PBS Channel 12 in Philadelphia . . . PBS times and dates vary, so check your local listing.

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6. The boss

For thirty years, Johnson had arrived at work at 9 a.m. on the dot. He had never missed a day and was never late.

Consequently, when on one particular day 9 A.M. passed without Johnson's arrival, it caused a sensation. All work ceased, and the boss himself, looking at his watch and muttering, came out into the corridor.

Finally, precisely at ten, Johnson showed up, clothes dusty and torn, his face scratched and bruised, his glasses bent. He limped painfully to the time clock, punched in, and said, aware that all eyes were upon him, "I tripped and rolled down two flights of stairs in the subway. Nearly killed myself."

And the boss said, "And to roll down two flights of stairs took you a whole hour?"

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7. Websites

A. The following website is definitely worthy of a bookmark. It is a search engine that you will wish you had in the past. It's a place to find the best prices on books, movies, music, video games, and computers and electronics. All you do is enter what you are looking for, and the search engine scans the Internet and lists all the places where you can buy the item--including eBay stores. You'll quick get price, shipping charges and availability. For more information, please click:

<http://www.campusi.com/>

There's also a link for finding the best deals on credit cards, as well as information about interest rates and fees.

B.. Art comes in many different shapes and sizes. It often amazes me the number of different ways. You may not find this art in any museum, though it is enjoyable nonetheless. At least I thought so.

To view some unique art, please click:

<http://www.americade.info/melons1.htm>

To fully experience the website, be sure to turn your sound card on. The Asian music is very soothing. Enjoy!

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

If you want to see some of the books I've reviewed previously (and typically liked), go to "Blaine's Best" on the left, then "Websites" . . . at letter "O," click on the second paragraph.

You'll see some 435 of my past reviews that I've posted at the amazon.com website . . . as always, if you find any of them helpful and if given the opportunity, please click the "Yes" button indicating that fact.

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8. Computer tip

Google has recently started offering something called My Search History . . . this allows users to see a list of their searches by date and/or by topic of a previous search . . . you can even use this if you log in from a different computer.

For more information, please click:

<https://www.google.com/searchhistory/login>

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9. Answering machine messages, part 1 of 2

Actual answering machine answers recorded and verified by the world famous International Institute of Answering Machines:

A is for academics,
B is for beer.
One of those reasons is
Why we're not here.
So leave a message.

Hi. This is John: If you are the phone company, I already sent the money. If you are my parents, please send money. If you are my financial aid institution, you didn't lend me enough money. If you are my friends, you owe me money. If you are a female, don't worry, I have plenty of money.

(Narrator's voice:) There Dale sits, reading a magazine. Suddenly the telephone rings! The bathroom explodes into a veritable maelstrom of toilet paper, with Dale in the middle of it, his arms wind milling at incredible speeds! Will he make it in time? Alas no, his valiant effort is in vain. The bell hath sounded. Thou must leave a message.

"Hi. Now you say something."

"Hi! John's answering machine is broken. This is his refrigerator. Please speak very slowly, and I'll stick your message to myself with one of these magnets."

"Hello, this is Sally's microwave. Her answering machine just eloped with her tape deck, so I'm stuck taking her calls. If you'd like anything cooked while you leave your message, just hold it up to the phone."

"Hello, you are talking to a machine. I am capable of receiving messages. My owners do not need siding, windows or a hot tub. Their carpets are always clean. They give to charity through their office and do not need any pictures taken. They believe the stock market is a random crapshoot, and the entire insurance industry is one huge scam perpetrated by Mafioso accountants. If you're still with me, leave your name and number and they will get back to you."

"Hi. I am probably home, I'm just avoiding someone I don't like. Leave me a message, and if I don't call back, it's you."

"This is not an answering machine: this is a telepathic thought recording device. After the tone, think about your name, your reason for calling, and a number where you can be reached, and my owner will think about returning your call."

(to be concluded next week)

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10. A quote I like

There is no limit to what you can accomplish if you don't care who gets the credit.--sign on desk of Ronald Reagan, 40th President of the United States (1981-1989)

11. Thought for the day

The story of Sam

Sam was a poor kid who grew up in the heartland of America during the time of the Great Depression. Times were tough and the kid worked hard to help his parents make ends meet. He would get up early in the morning to milk the cows and sell the milk to his 10 - 12 customers for 10 cents a gallon--a lot of money in those days. He also went door to door selling magazine subscriptions when he was barely eight years old.

Sam had one good thing going for him--a sharp streak of ambition. His mother always told him that he should try to be the best he could at whatever he did. So Sam always pursued everything that interested him with true passion.

Even as a kid growing up in Missouri, Sam was big on setting bold goals. He was so ambitious that when he became a Boy Scout he took a bet with all the other scouts in his unit that he would be the first amongst them to reach the rank of Eagle Scout. Getting an Eagle Scout badge was no easy task and required a young scout to show extreme bravery. Most Eagle Scouts were years older than Sam.

Sam won the bet when as a 14-year-old, he saved a man from drowning in a river. Little Sam went on to become the youngest Eagle Scout in the state of Missouri at that time.

In high school Sam was elected President of the Student Body and was active in a lot of other clubs too. Despite being only 5'9, Sam joined the basketball team and was delighted when it won the State Championship. Sam also became a quarterback on the football team--which went undefeated too.

Sam's ambition and positive mental attitude stayed with him as he graduated from high school. By the time Sam got into college he was even entertaining thoughts of someday becoming President of the United States. Thinking big just came naturally to him.

Closer at hand, he decided he should try to be President of the University student body first. So he ran for every office that came along and by the time he graduated college he had been elected president of the senior men's honor society, an officer in his fraternity, president of his senior class and president of the Bible class. He was also captain and president of Scabbard and Blade, the elite military organization of ROTC.

While doing all this he also ran his own newspaper business and was making \$4,000 to \$6,000 a year--which was at the end of the Depression Era fairly serious money. "[Sam] was a little scatterbrained at times," said the circulation manager of one of the newspapers Sam delivered while in College, "he would have so many things going on, he'd almost forget one. But boy, when he focused on something, that was it."

Sam graduated from college with a business degree and took a job at a J. C. Penney store as a management trainee for \$75 a month.

But Sam wasn't satisfied being a management trainee and soon started looking for other opportunities. At the age of 27, with a loan from his father-in-law he bought a little discount store in Newport, Arkansas.

Despite initial poor sales and heavy competition from larger stores across the street, Sam set a goal "I wanted my little Newport variety store to be the best, most profitable variety store in Arkansas within 5 years."

Sam worked hard for five years and hit his goal. He soon had the largest variety store in Arkansas. But he didn't have much time to enjoy his success.

Soon his world came crashing down.

Sam's lease expired and the owner of his building refused to renew the lease. He knew Sam had nowhere else to go and decided he wanted to take over the store to pass on to his son.

"I felt sick to the stomach," said Sam, "I could not believe this was happening to me. It really was like a nightmare."

But Sam wasn't the type of man to resign so easily.

He and his wife moved to a different town. There, in Bentonville, Arkansas, he opened a new store. He remembered overhearing some people comment on his new venture, "Well we'll give this guy sixty days, maybe ninety. He won't last that long."

Well, Sam lasted more than 90 days. And his new store became a success. Soon he began expanding his business and opening other stores throughout the state.

In 1962 at the age of 44 he opened his most ambitious store yet. He called it Wal-Mart.

The rest is history.

In 1985 FORBES magazine called Sam Walton the richest man in America. The kid who had to walk door-to-door selling milk and newspapers had founded what today is the largest company in the world. Wal-Mart made millionaires out of thousands of stockholders, provided jobs for millions of Americans and helped increase the quality of life in many developing countries by reducing the cost of goods.

In 1992, Sam Walton received the Presidential Medal of Honor--the highest civilian award that can be bestowed on an American citizen.

From childhood till the time he died in 1992, Sam Walton had been successful in everything he undertook. It's hard to place a finger on what qualities make people like Sam Walton successful in so many different endeavors. But in his autobiography he talks about why he believes he was so lucky.

"I don't know what causes a person to be ambitious," Sam later said, "but it is a fact that I have been over blessed with drive and ambition from the time I hit the ground."

He added, "I expect to win. I go into tough challenges always planning

to come out victorious. It never occurred to me that I might lose, it was almost as if I had a right to win. Thinking like that often seems to turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy."

Author Unknown

(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

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bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #453

5.30.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Some readers skim part of each issue and miss some "good stuff" . . . methinks that might be the case with the last section of BLAINESWORLD.

As an example: There's been an offer for FREE TICKETS to a motivational seminar on June 7 . . . if you're anywhere near the Philadelphia area, you won't want to miss it . . . and you still have the opportunity to attend (see Section 12B).

That's also been the area where I have mentioned guests on my upcoming radio show.

***** REMINDER *****

PULSE OF THE NETWORK will be off the air as of the end of May after some 250 shows over the last five years . . . the station has new management and is moving in some different directions with respect to programming.

THANKS to all who listened, as well as to those who suggested guests--or were, in fact, guests themselves.

I'm still interested in doing a similar-type radio show for another station . . . or even a cable TV version . . . so if you have any media contacts/suggestions, please do share them with me.

B. I'm glad to report that The Bucks County Community College SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise) team just returned from competition and was ranked eighth in the nation. Special congratulations to the team members and their advisers: Joan Weiss, Betty Kulick, Rob Ladd, and Mitch Aglow.

Joan, ending her 15th year as SIFE Adviser, received the Double

Eagle Award--the highest award that was given at this competition. This award recognized Joan's many achievements over the years.

Other news on the Bucks front: Patricia Moore, a member of the Communications Department, recently announced her retirement . . . it will be the College's loss, in that she's a magnificent teacher . . . but fortunately, she will be returning in the fall to teach on a part-time basis.

And elsewhere . . . WELCOME ABOARD to Kelly Connolly, the newest massage therapist to join the staff of Dr. Wendy Attadgie (1.215.355.9337)--my favorite chiropractor. . . Kelly has already given me two healthful massages, and it is my hope that she'll be giving me many more . . . hey, it's a tough life . . . but somebody has to live it, and it may as well be yours truly!

C. This past Wednesday, I attended the spring 2005 concert of the Mercer County Symphonic Band . . . I especially enjoyed it because three BCCC colleagues were involved: Marta Kaufmann and Betsy Sell were both in the flute section, and Lou Woodruff was the conductor . . . the latter individual made each song come alive with a witty running commentary.

Perhaps the high spot of the evening was the violin performance by Christopher Kovalchik . . . his rendition of "Theme from Schindler's List" was so moving that it had the audience in tears.

Cynthia and I had a most enjoyable Friday evening, attending the retirement dinner of Betty Tsai--my longtime Bucks colleague and friend . . . she's another person who will be missed, not only by me, but by the thousands of students and faculty members she has assisted as one of the College's many devoted librarians.

The gala event was at a place called Golden City (215.822.0299) in Colmar, PA, and it's a place we probably won't ever forget . . . the restaurant featured a 10-course dinner, including such specialties as roasted Peking Duck and a delicious sirloin steak (Chinese-style) . . . in addition, there were many other items that we had never tried before--but we did at least sample them . . . I do recall a platter of assorted cold cuts, as well as a "house special" soup that had some fish and vegetables in it . . . needless to say, we did not leave the place hungry!

On Saturday, we went shopping and purchased a kitchen table and chairs at a place called Wesco (973.887.0517) in East Hanover, NJ . . . they have as large an assortment of dining room and kitchen tables as I've ever seen, and the prices seem quite reasonable . . . our friend and "mistress of style," Edina, was gracious enough to join us and greatly aided us in our selection process.

Today, Monday, we visited our new home and spent a large part of the day deciding what furniture will go in what rooms and determining what we still need to purchase . . . the place is going to look great.

We were blessed to have been joined by another of our favorite people, Annemarie Eggink (see also the second part of Section 2) . . . she's helping us with many of the details of our move and has already proven herself invaluable!

***** DON'T FORGET *****

The offer remains; i.e., \$500 reward if you find me a buyer for my Washington Crossing, PA townhouse.

If you'd like to find out more about the property, please click:

<http://realestate.aol.realtor.com/Prop/1046787028&gate=aolrealestate>

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:

The sale house for the house has just been reduced \$5,000 . . . so subtract that amount from the price you see listed above.

**** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD ****

This week, it goes to Jean Ryersbach--coordinator for student services at Bucks CCC who will be retiring at the end of June . . . or as she does a much better job of describing it, "transitioning" to her next career.

I'm not quite what she will be doing next, but I do know that whatever it is, she will be a big success at it . . . Jean has been THE PERSON to go to whenever I had a student in need of advice about transferring to another college or getting credit for life-learning experience . . . she would not only provide accurate information, but she'd do so in an enthusiastic, efficient manner that made the recipient actually feel better about himself or herself.

Jean and I also had the chance to share many lovely walks in nearby Tyler State Park . . . our conversations ranged from discussions about the College to the meaning of life--and just about every topic in-between . . . she always got me thinking that there were and are two at least two sides (if not a lot more) to every issue.

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2. FYI

How rock, paper, scissors settled auction house feud

When Maspro Denkoh Corp. decided last spring to sell its corporate collection of Impressionist paintings at auction, the Japanese television equipment manufacturer contacted the world's top two art auctioneers and asked a lot of questions.

Maspro's president, Takashi Hashiyama, wanted to know how Christie's International and Sotheby's Holdings would market the centerpiece of the collection--a dazzling Cezanne landscape expected to fetch up to \$16 million--and what prices each would give to lesser works by Picasso and van Gogh. . . .

So [when he received nearly identical proposals] Mr. Hashiyama informed Christie's and Sotheby's that they would play a game of Rock, Paper, Scissors to break the tie, a method he had used many times in the past to determine important business deals. "It probably looks strange to others," he says. "But I believe this is the best way to decide between two things which are equally good." Indeed, the game in Japan is something of a cultural institution, and is often used to make arbitrary decisions.

Mr. Hashiyama explained that the unlucky team wouldn't get in trouble with its corporate bosses, and therefore he wouldn't have a loser bearing a grudge against him. . . .

Mr. Hashiyama told the auctioneers about his decision on a Thursday, announcing the game would be played in Maspro's Tokyo office the following Monday. In the interim, Christie's experts "did research into the psychology behind the game," says a company spokeswoman. "Our client was serious about his decision so we weren't flippant about it in the slightest."

Executives at Christie's found a trove of information about the game, whose origins are believed to date back to 18th-century Japan, according to Douglas Walker, managing director of the World Rock Paper Scissors Society. The Toronto-based group recently published a 208-page book titled "The Official Rock Paper Scissors Strategy Guide." Paper is considered the most friendly and subtle "throw," while scissors is typical of an aggressive and clever player, the book says. Rock, meanwhile, is a weapon to fall back on for protection.

Mr. Hashiyama tweaked the rules of the game. Instead of making symbols with their hands, as is traditional, he required that the presidents of the Japanese units of both companies write down their choice, in Japanese, on a piece of paper.

While the art specialists sweated out the result in their tailored suits, a Maspro employee took the ballots to a superior for verification. Mr. Hashiyama was not present. The employee returned with the ballots. Christie's had picked scissors. Sotheby's picked paper. Per the game's rules, which automatically determine a winner--paper covers rock, rock smashes scissors, scissors cut paper--Christie's scissors triumphed over Sotheby's paper.

Christie's declined to say why it ultimately picked scissors. A Sotheby's spokesman said, "Sotheby's never comments on collections it is not offering for sale."

SOURCE:

Adapted from an article with the above headline by Brooks Barnes and Mihio Inada in THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, 4.29.05, p. B1

FYI, part 2

* Annemarie Eggink, my favorite personal organizer who is helping coordinate our move (see also Section 1C), recently sent me this information about the wisdom of buying a security safe/file:

Here is a link to one that Staples sells and is a reasonably good size for your needs:

<http://www.staples.com/Catalog/Browse/Sku.asp?PageType=1&Sku=913899>

Other office supply stores sell the same one.

It is a Sentry 2180 Fire Safe Security File. It is the most basic model in that size.

Things you want to consider besides size are how long it will stand up in a fire (this one is 1/2 hour) and the warranty. This one has a 3-year limited warranty where the next one higher has a lifetime after fire replacement warranty. Since the item is under \$100 the replacement is less of a concern for most people. Remember this is not a safety deposit box and will not protect the items against theft. At less than 40 lbs.. it can easily be picked up by anyone.

Some of the items that you do not need regular access to can also be kept in a safety deposit box. In the case of documents, you would rather keep in a safety deposit box, you may wish to keep a copy of them in the fire box for immediate access to the information.

Now, what to put in it. The best rule of thumb is to think about, "What would I need if I could only grab one thing if I had to leave my house in a rush?"

This might include, but not be limited to:
Will, Living Trust and similar documents
Birth Certificates
Adoption Papers
Social Security Card (do not keep this in your wallet)
Vehicle and/or Property Titles
Passport
An up-to-date photocopy of wallet contents
Account Numbers and Contact information for bank accounts and credit cards not kept in your wallet
A copy of your address list (paper or computer disc)
Computer Back-up Disc/Tape
Copies of keys (especially auto)
Up-to-date list of medications
Use your discretion to include what YOU feel you need.

That should help get you on your way with this. Let me know if you need anything else.

Regards, Annemarie (Eggink)
<http://www.orderandefficiency.com/>

MY TWO CENTS:
The "before" and "after" pictures on Annemarie's website are of my former home office BEFORE I discovered Annemarie!

* Ron in Pennsylvania, reacting to a real estate tip in last week's issue, shared this experience he just went through:

Last week, I quickly cut some fresh rhododendrons before a showing. Top heavy, the vase turned over--water and schmutz everywhere. In addition, a huge spider appeared from the arrangement to add a macabre bit of punctuation to the event.

* Carol in New Jersey, president of the NJ State Council of the Million Dollar March, asked me to remind readers about her organization's website designed to prevent gun violence:
<http://www.millionmommarch.org/>

In addition, she had nice things to say about the FREE TICKETS offer (see Section 12A):

My request is "in the mail." Thank you so much for offering these free tickets over the years. I've been fortunate to attend some of the events, and they have been very rewarding.

And I'm very appreciative of her nice comments about my radio show: As a guest and a listener, I will certainly miss your show. I hope that you find another venue soon. I'll put out my feelers at the local cable stations. You'd be a great asset!

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3. Accountant wanted

Fresh out of business school, a young man answered a want ad for an accountant. Now he was being interviewed by a very nervous man who ran a small business that he had started himself.

"I need someone with an accounting degree," the man said. "But mainly, I'm looking for someone to do my worrying for me."

"Excuse me?" the accountant said.

"I worry about a lot of things," the man said. "But I don't want to have to worry about money. Your job will be to take all the money worries off my back."

"I see," the accountant said. "And how much does the job pay?"

"I'll start you at eighty thousand."

"Eighty thousand dollars!" the accountant exclaimed. "How can such a small business afford a sum like that?"

"Well, that," the owner said, "is your first worry."
replace this text with heading 3

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4. Reviews ...

A. Enjoyed MAD HOT BALLROOM, a heartwarming documentary about a group of New York City fifth graders learning to dance tango, foxtrot, swing, rumba, and meringue . . . they actually become--as you are watching--the description of one of their teachers: "little ladies and gentlemen" . . . I was amazed that such a program even exists, but it not only exists--it actually flourishes . . . the end result is a 10-week competition designed to find the school that has produced the best dancers in the city . . . some of the dance scenes are hilarious; others are touching . . . I was also moved by the bits of dialogue, in which you got to both meet and know many of the children . . . rated PG, but don't be misled by the rating . . . adults should see this film, with or without children.

B. I liked the all-new update of ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13, a 1976 action thriller of the same name that is now out in both DVD and VHS formats . . . it is the story of Precinct 13, one of Detroit's oldest precinct houses, on a New Year's Eve with only a few hours left until it closes for good . . . complications naturally ensue, and before you know it, there are bad guys galore and a quite a bit of violence . . . Ethan Hawke is fine as a good cop wrestling with bad memories, as is Laurence Fishbourne as a formidable crime lord . . . only Gabriel Byrne, usually an actor whose work I admire, seemed a bit over-the-top as the head of the organized crime and racketeering unit . . . rated R.

C. You've just got to love a book by a guy who describes himself as "a passionate simpleton and an outspoken gadfly against corporate stupidity" . . . Bill Jensen, author of a marvelous book--WHAT IS YOUR LIFE'S WORK?--also adds that his personal life fantasy is "to bicycle around the globe via breweries."

Jensen has captured the intimate exchanges between mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, and others to help determine what really matters at work and in life . . . he then shows you how you can pay this information forward; i.e., by starting a similar conversation with a loved one.

I was moved by many of the observations that I read . . . however, this one in particular caught my attention: "My daughter was limp with pain . . . and I'm worried about deadlines. What was I thinking?!?!"

The book contained several other memorable passages; among them:
* The kids you didn't like from high school are still around, and many of them work in advertising. There are also some really wonderfully talented people. You will have to work with all of them, so try to have an open mind. Find something to like about everyone and hold on to that. Hitler liked dogs. Perhaps young Stalin had a pony. Lucrezia Borgia was good at chemistry. Dig deep; you can do it.

* Countless numbers of coworkers have told me that I had the best job in the company (I have held nine different positions and have heard this through all of them). Why is this? Because I enjoyed every position I held and made it mine. I made it something I loved to do. The coworkers saw my smiling face, my laughs, and my positive attitude. They didn't see me working until three in the morning to make a deadline, or pulling a week of all-nighters. They saw someone who loved what he did.

* So . . . comes my veritas. To endure, an intelligent, aware, passionate teacher, you must:

Know yourself and how you fit into the system--square pegs can find square holes.

Choose your issues, where you can preserve your integrity.

Keep reading, learning, doing, even when others don't.

Love passionately what you do with children.

Learn to do new methods subversively.

Document everything, especially your programs.

Be your own cheering section--external sources are very unreliable.

Seek mental help if you feel yourself burning out. It is no longer a firing offense (as it was 20 years ago) to have mental health needs.

Use your union to protect you when your superior's ignorance threatens you harm.

D. Heard DOUBLE PLAY by Robert B. Parker . . . it is not the typical

mystery set in modern Boston that the author is famous for . . . rather, it is a tale of good guys and bad guys set in New York in the 1940s, and there's a fair amount of romance thrown in too.

But what made it so interesting for me was the fact that Parker also brought Jackie Robinson into the story . . . the color barrier-breaking baseball player is guarded by the book's main character, Joseph Burke . . . their exchanges advance the plot in a believable fashion . . . in fact, it almost felt like I was listening to bits and pieces of an actual conversation between Robinson and Burke.

My interest was maintained until the very end of DOUBLE PLAY . . . Robert Forster's excellent job of narration helped add to my enjoyment.

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5. VCR alert

A. EAGLES FAREWELL I TOUR has the rockers performing a concert of classics, plus two new songs . . . Wednesday at 8 p.m. on NBC.

B. FAITH OF MY FATHER tells the story of Sen. John McCain's 1,968 days as a prisoner of war . . . Wednesday at 10 p.m. on A&E; repeated on Thursday at 2 a.m. and Saturday at 1 p.m.

C. THE COMEBACK stars Lisa Kudrow in a comedy about a fading sitcom queen trying to jump-start her career with a reality show . . . premieres Sunday at 9:30 p.m. on HBO.

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6. Young Kenny

A hillbilly, young Kenny, moved to Texas and bought a donkey from a farmer for \$100.00. The farmer agreed to deliver the donkey the next day. The next day he drove up and said, "Sorry son, but I have some bad news, the donkey died."

Kenny replied, "Well, OK, just give me my money back."

The farmer said, "Can't do that. I went and spent it already."

Kenny said, "Ok, then, just bring me the dead donkey."

The farmer asked, "What ya gonna do with him?"

Kenny, "I'm going to raffle him off."

The farmer said, "You can't raffle off a dead donkey!"

Kenny said, "Sure I can. Watch me. I just won't tell anybody he's dead."

A month later, the farmer met up with Kenny and asked, "What happened with that dead donkey?"

Kenny said, "I raffled him off. I sold 500 tickets at two dollars a piece and made a profit of \$998.00."

The farmer said, "Didn't anyone complain?"

Kenny said, "Just the guy who won. So I gave him his two dollars back."

Kenny grew up and eventually became the chairman of Enron.

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7. Websites

A. Pat Hannigan, a longtime friend, has made his photos available for both display and purchase at the following website:

<http://www.printroom.com/pro/patrickhannigan>

I mention this for two reasons: 1) Pat has some really neat stuff that you can view; and 2) If you're a professional or serious amateur photographer, you will want to check out this FREE service that Pat has told me is quite good:

<http://www.printroom.com>

B. Looking for good deals or ways to save money? If so, be sure to check out the following website that offers coupons for products and services in your area. It is very easy to navigate. All you do is type-in your zip code and a page will open with deals and savings that can be found in your geographical area. To learn more, please click:

<http://www.hotcoupons.com/>

Just some of the categories include food, auto repair, home improvement, cleaning services, retail, and professional services.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

THANKS to Dan Becker, my webmaster, who has done a great job putting past issues back on the website . . . just click above, then Newsletter, Past issues, and you'll be taken to an area where you can see the past month's issues . . . more will be added.

Best of all, if you go to any past issue, you'll be able to "jump" from one section to the next--much like I plan to do with future current issues of BLAINESWORLD.

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8. Computer tip

My Windows XP system still crashes too often--at least in my opinion . . . sometimes this happens at the most inopportune moments; e.g., when I'm finishing a section in BLAINESWORLD . . . and I love it (being just a tad bit sarcastic here) when I get an error message to the following effect: Your system may no longer be functioning; stuff you're working on may not be saved.

Had I known about the crash, I would have saved the stuff!

That said, I still can sometimes recover what I'm working on if I had copied or cut it into memory . . . as long as I have not had to reboot the computer, I can just restart a particular program and paste what I was working on back into the document that had been open.

But I have even less problems when I remember to save, save, save my documents after I complete every section . . . such as right NOW.

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9. Home buying

As you probably know by now, I am in the fun process of moving to a different home (in Belle Meade, NJ). To spare others from dashed hopes, shattered dreams and tired feet, here is a guide to familiar real-estate ad phrases:

BRILLIANT CONCEPT:

Do you really need a two-story live oak in your 30-foot sky dome?
See "Makes Dramatic Statement."

CHARMING:

Tiny. Snow White might fit, but five of the dwarfs would have to find their own place. See "Cute," "Enchanting" and "Good Starter Home."

COMPLETELY UPDATED:

Avocado dishwasher and harvest gold carpeting or vice versa.

DARING DESIGN:

Still a warehouse.

HI-TECH/CONTEMPORARY:

Lots of steel shelving with little holes--the kind your dad used to store tools on in the basement.

MUCH POTENTIAL:

Grim. Steer clear unless you have a lot of money and believe your blind dates really did have nice personalities. See "Ready to Rehab" and "Fixer Upper."

MUST SEE TO BELIEVE:

An absolutely accurate statement.

ONE-OF-A-KIND:

Ugly as sin.

SOPHISTICATED:

Black walls and no windows. See "Architect's Delight."

UNIQUE CITY HOME:

Used to be a warehouse.

UPPER BRACKET:

If you have to ask . . .

YOU'LL LOVE IT:

No, you won't.

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10. A quote I like

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.--Anne Frank (1929-1945), a German-Jewish teenager who was forced to go into hiding during the Holocaust, whose diary has been translated into 67 languages and is one of the most widely read books in the world

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11. Thought for the day

At the memorial service for actor Jerry Orbach, his wife Elaine shared this poem he had written for her:

Arise my love and greet the day,
That shines so bright about you.
When I come home we'll laugh and play,
And I can say, "I love you!"

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12. Advance planning department

A. Heres' a special opportunity being offered by Michael Gelb, a longtime freind and BLAINESWORLD subscriber:

Weekend seminar, "How to Think Like Leonardo: A Creative and Spiritual Renaissance" . . . this coming June 3-5 at the Omega Institute in Rhinebeck, NY.

This program will focus on the practical application of the ideas and methods described in Gelb's two fantastic books, HOW TO THINK LIKE LEONARDO DA VINCI and DA VINCI DECODED: DISCOVERING THE SPIRITUAL SECRETS OF LEONARDO'S SEVEN PRINCIPLES.

It promises to be a highly-engaging, transformational and fun experience!

For more information and to register, please click:

<http://www.eomega.org/>

NOTE:

Cynthia and I won't be able to make Michael's program, but we will be attending another session: CROSSING THE CHASM FROM THEATER TO LIFE: A FORUM IN IMPROVISATION, led by actor Alan Arkin (twice nominated for an Oscar for THE HEART IS A LONELY HUNTER and THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING! THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING!) . . . it had been scheduled for June 17-19, but because Arkin had a film commitment that weekend, it has been rescheduled to September 2-4 . . . it would be sooooo neat if you could join us . . . further information can be obtained via the aforementioned website.

B. I still have a limited number of FREE TICKETS for the "Get Motivated Business Seminar" on Tuesday, June 7, at the Wachovia Spectrum

in Philadelphia from 8 a.m-5 p.m. . . . you'll get to hear Zig Ziglar on Motivation, Andy Reid on Teamwork, Rick Belluzzo--legendary Microsoft chairman--on Business Skills, Jerry Lewis on Humor, Gen. Tommy Franks on Decision-Making, Tom Hopkins on Sales, and Rudolph Giuliani on Leadership . . . I don't know about you, but I'm even getting psyched just typing those names!

I can guarantee a ticket, at no charge, to the first 15 readers who respond . . . if you'd like a second ticket, let me know, and I'll see what I can do . . . send your request, along with a postpaid return envelope, to me, Blaine Greenfield; address: 52 Sentinel Road, Washington Crossing, PA 18977 . . . include a note indicating how many tickets you are requesting . . . and please put "MOTIVATION SEMINAR" in the left, lower bottom half of the envelope you're sending me.

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PS. I just realized (it being Memorial Day when I type this) that I've been asking you to please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq for over two years . . . and isn't that a revolting development; i.e., that soldiers are still over there on our behalf? . . . regardless of your political beliefs, please keep these soldiers in your thoughts and prayers . . . as you make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #451

5.16.2005

In this issue:

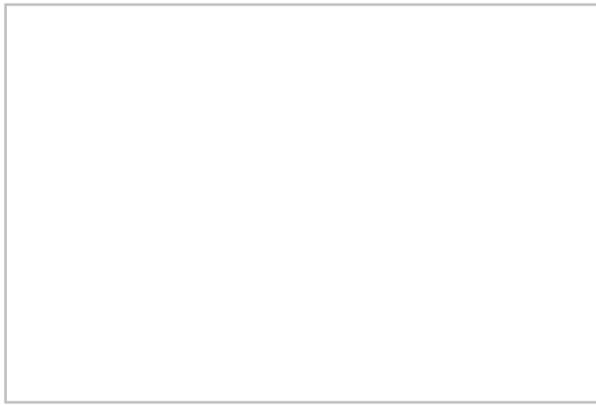
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1. Reflections

A. Last week, I mentioned a whole bunch of faculty members who were retiring from Bucks County Community College . . . I neglected to mention these other staffers, many of whom have been helpful to me over the years: John Schweizer, Lou Hoelzle, Patricia Jones, Judy Hibbs, Franklin Krider, Kathleen Marden, Madeline Huffnagle, Wayne Page, Margaret Wallace, Patricia Kolesar, Jane Braun, and George Springer . . . oh, and last but certainly not least, my longtime friend/reader/walking companion: Jean Ryersbach . . . they will ALL be missed!

Last week also marked the end of my spring classes at the College . . . my Tuesday night Marketing students really came through with a fine job on their marketing strategies for the Coalition for Peace Action . . . I'd like to take the opportunity to give special recognition to Henry D'Silva and Bill Bogdan, representatives from the Bucks County chapter of the Coalition, who were the individuals who volunteered their time to make the project possible.

B. Cynthia and I are excited to have purchased our new home in Montgomery, NJ . . . it backs against a wooded area, and we close on it in June . . . more details to follow, but in the meantime, here's a picture:



***** DON'T FORGET ***

The offer remains; i.e., \$500 if you find me a buyer for my Washington Crossing, PA townhouse.

If you'd like to find out more about the property, please click:

<http://realestate.aol.realtor.com/Prop/1046787028&gate=aolrealestate>

PLEASE:

If you are interested in a tour, contact me directly . . . if I sell it to you on my own, I can even give you a better price than you would get if you purchased it through a realtor.

C. Risa, my daughter, was in for a whirlwind visit this past weekend . . . we picked her up on the airport on Friday and had a nice dinner at Dolce Carini (215.579.2972) in Newtown, PA . . . rather than order individual meals, we all split three delicious entrees: chicken parmesan, lasagna and ribs . . . from there, we went to the Zebra-Striped Whale (215.860.4122), a new ice cream parlor in Newtown, PA . . . the ice cream--mixed-in with whatever ingredient you chose on a cold slab--was quite good, but what made the experience so memorable was the establishment's decor . . . the store part is in the front, and there are seats and couches in a back room that is most tastefully decorated.

On Saturday, we stopped off at McCaffrey's Supermarket (215.493.9619) in Yardley, PA, to get my dad a balloon for his 86th birthday . . . I mention the store because it was the first time we had been there since its reopening, and it won't be the last . . . the personnel are extremely friendly, the aisles are wide and best of all, they sold us a birthday balloon that features an opera-style rendition of the tune every time you tap it . . . everybody got a kick out of it; however, I do admit that we could have done without having to listen every time we drove over a bump en route to our visit.

On Sunday, Cynthia and I were joined by her sister, brother-in-law and mother for a trip to New York . . . we loved DIRTY ROTTEN SCOUNDRELS, the musical, starring John Lithgow and Norbert Leo Butz--both of whom were magnificent . . . from there, we went to dinner at Heritage Grill (973.983.9600) in Denville, NJ . . . I ordered and liked the pan-fried filet of sole; Cynthia said her vegetable lasagna was quite good . . . we shared a cranberry apple cobbler with ice cream for a dessert that was outstanding.

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

This week, it goes to Tammy Lawlor (516.296.1000)--my parent's lawyer who is with the firm of Miller & Milone in Garden City, NY . . . she has been sooooo helpful in getting my dad the coverage

that he needed to be able to stay in his nursing home . . . the process is not as easy as you would think it should be and, frankly, I would have been lost without Tammy's assistance . . . she has helped cut through the red tape and, in doing so, has made me more aware of the fact that all of us with older family members need to be more on top of things.

If you're in a similar situation, and if you haven't already done so, make sure you contact an attorney specializing in elder law . . . if you're from the Long Island/New York area, you won't go wrong with Tammy!

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2. FYI

NOTE:

What follows was adapted from THE BEST TIME TO DO EVERYTHING (see also Section 4C) by Michael Kaplan . . . though the subject may not be appealing, please read it thoroughly since the advice can be applied to just about any situation.

Best time to hire a landscaper

According to Roger Cook, landscaping guru of THIS OLD HOUSE, you should abide by what he calls the "two-week rule": "If you have a job to do and haven't managed to complete it in two weeks, call a professional because, odds are, you'll never get around to doing it yourself.

There's a good reason for this, according to Cook: "Usually, the unappealing jobs involve moving a lot of material, maybe for a raised flower bed or walkway. Most homeowners get stuck doing it with a wheelbarrow. It physically kills them and takes the fun out of gardening. Contract a landscaper to do the heavy lifting and get the grade right. Let them do the hard work. Then you do the planting. That's the rewarding part.

Cook also is a big believer in having a master plan for your garden; i.e., a specific schedule outlining what you'll plant when. You should consult with a landscaper to do this, "Otherwise, you're planting the wrong thing in the wrong places at the wrong times, and it can lead you to tear up a lot of flowers."

FYI, part 2

* THANKS to everybody who took notice of the fact that I just passed a milestone of sorts; i.e., issue #450 . . . who would have thought back in 1996 that I'd still be putting this missive together some nine years later? Amazingly, my intent remains roughly the same . . . I want to continue bringing you some jokes, hopefully not toooo risqué; websites; reviews, etc. . . also, what's works best is for this to be a means for us to share, so kindly feel free to send along your reactions and/or contributions.

* Joyce in Pennsylvania:

[commenting on 50 fun things to do in a mall]

Spoken like a man who isn't in the retail/restaurant business. Are you TRYING to make us insane?

* Mary in Pennsylvania:

I am enclosing a self-addressed stamped envelope in hopes that two tickets may be available to the motivation seminar mentioned in your newsletter. I thoroughly enjoy reading it each week. The superman joke was great by the way. I hope you don't stop when you get married!

MY TWO CENTS:

Currently, I have no plans to stop BLAINESWORLD when I get married . . . as for the tickets that Mary is referring to, others should see below (Section 12) if they're interested in attending as well.

* Andrea in Pennsylvania:

My mother has been forwarding your newsletter to me for a while, so I thought I would subscribe for myself. My mother was one of your students at BCCC and whenever I am getting frustrated with my technical job that has become more sales and marketing, she always has some advice she received from you!

MY FOUR CENTS, given the two above:

Awwwww . . . much obliged for the nice words . . . furthermore, Andrea, you should now feel free--along with all other readers--to forward future issues to any of your friends, relatives or colleagues . . . and encourage them to subscribe as well . . . you can't ever beat the price: FREE!

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3. True bravery

True bravery is arriving home, stinking drunk after a very late night out with the boys, being met at the door and assaulted with a broom by your wife and still having the guts to ask:

"Are you cleaning, or were you flying somewhere?"

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4. Reviews ...

A. Enjoyed MONSTER-IN-LAW, the comedy about a woman (Jennifer Lopez) looking for Mr. Right . . . the only problem is that when she finds him, she must also deal with his mother (Jane Fonda) . . . its certainly nothing profound; in fact, parts are downright stupid . . . yet I liked seeing Fonda's return to screen after a 15-year absence, and both Lopez and Wanda Sykes were on target with their performances . . . the ending was particularly sweet . . . rated PG-13.

B. KINSEY will be out in both DVD and VHS formats on Tuesday . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #428 follows:

Thought KINSEY was interesting, though it didn't really grab me until the end . . . in addition, it told me little about the man that I hadn't read about in a longish biography (ALFRED KINSEY: A PUBLIC/PRIVATE LIFE by James H. Jones) that I had previously enjoyed . . . yet if you're in the majority of those who hadn't known too much about Kinsey, methinks you'll want to see

this film--if just for the marvelous acting performances of Liam Neeson and Laura Linney as, respectively, Kinsey and his long-suffering wife . . . make sure you stay for the credits at the end . . . rated R.

C. Some books grab you by the title . . . that was certainly the case with THE BEST TIME TO DO EVERYTHING (see also Section 2) by Michael Kaplan, a journalist who is the gambling columnist for CIGAR AFICIONADO.

The subtitle caught my attention, too: EXPERT ADVICE ON HOW TO LIVE COOLER, SMARTER, FASTER, BETTER . . . being interested in all those possibilities, I read this book's 170 too-brief pages in one sitting.

Some of what I learned wasn't all that practical; OK, OK, not practical at all--such as how to stage a coup . . . I also wasn't very interested in such other topics as the best time to deliver a baby, get punched in the face or sweat a perp.

However, I found much of the other advice both interesting and helpful (either now or in the future) . . . for example, as a result of reading Kaplan's work, I now know the best time to downsize, pick up a lunch or dinner tab and thank your parents.

This latter bit of advice rally struck a chord . . . according to Mary Marcadante, author of MY MOTHER, MY FRIEND: THE TEN MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO TALK ABOUT WITH YOUR MOTHER and one of the many experts interviewed in the book: "There are no times soon enough to tell our parents how grateful we are for their raising us. . . . I told my parents [recently] that I am glad to be alive, and I thanked them for the gift of life. I pointed out a few details--like the fact that my father used to take me to skip stones--and they helped my parents to recall some great memories. It's the sort of thing that rejuvenates you and them."

Among just a few of the many other tidbits that I found useful were the following:

Auto prices are always somewhat negotiable, but at the end of every month, salesmen become downright flexible. It's when they focus more on volume and less on commissions from individual car sales. "We have monthly quotas that we try to hit," says Fred Altman, one of America's most successful Dodge salesmen (he works out of Christopher's Dodge World in Golden, Colorado, which consistently ranks among the country's top dealerships). "Everything in the car business is on a monthly schedule. Sell enough cars in a given month and you get a higher commission percentage the next month, as well as a better work schedule. As the thirtieth and thirty-first approach, I am definitely more aggressive in closing sales."

[Best time to be photographed]

"Not early in the morning-which is what a lot of people think," says Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, who photographs for the Vanity Fair and has shot portraits of the biggest names in pop music, art, and business. "You've been sleeping on one side of you face or the other. So it's puffy. You want to start with hair and makeup at ten-thirty or eleven and get on the set by noon. That's what you'd do if you were Paris Hilton or Babe Paley. By the way, you don't want to be photographed late in the afternoon, either-when you're tired and it shows on your

face and in your eyes."

[Best time to start a road trip]

"About six in the morning," suggests Ken Smith, a co-author of *ROADSIDE AMERICA* and a serious enough driver that he put 25,000 miles on his automobile's odometer while researching the book. "At that hour, your system is alert, there's not much traffic, and you can put two hundred miles under your belt before breakfast. Then you sit down in a diner and enjoy your pancakes while everyone else is stuck in traffic."

D. Zig Ziglar (see also Section 12C) has always been one of my favorite authors/motivational speakers . . . in fact, he wrote the first positive thinking book I ever read--the classic *SEE YOU AT THE TOP*.

I read that book in college and have devoured just about everything Ziglar has produced--with the possible exception of *COURTSHIP AFTER MARRIAGE* . . . for some reason, I had missed that one when it came out back in 1990 . . . yet hearing it now for the first time, I found it to be amazingly up-to-date with its advice . . . and especially relevant for me, given the fact that I'll be getting married in less than two months and do believe *ROMANCE CAN LAST A LIFETIME* (the program's subtitle).

I loved listening to the tape program, in that it reminded me of how much I like hearing Ziglar . . . he's corny, but also funny and oh so real . . . my only regret is that I did not have a copy of the book with the same title because there were so many things that I would have wanted to underline and review--over and over.

For instance, he urges listeners to make an effort every day to please your mate . . . this can be done by asking at the start of each day: What can I do to make your life easier, better and more fun?

In addition, I came away with many other ideas, including (to cite just a few):

Women should be just as kind to their mates as they are to their hairdressers. Men should be just as kind to their mates as they are to strangers who ask for directions.

Accept the fact that it's now who is right, but it's what is right. And what is important.

You change your partner by changing you.

Confrontation involving condemnation seldom brings about any change.

The important question in marriage is what am I putting into it, not what am I getting out of it.

In marriage, we both need to be on the same side . . . it is not my bank account, but our bank account.

Marriage is not a 50-50 proposition. It is a 100-100 proposition. You give your mate 100% of your love and affection, and you'll get the same.

Always welcome your mate home. When you do, treat your mate

as if he or she had a tough day.

Swap jobs for one week. In general, don't keep score on who does what

A beautiful marriage is build up on a long series of little things you do for your mate for no reason on Earth but for the best reason of all: You love your mate.

And this final one that REALLY made a lot of sense to me:
Fight while holding hands!

This fine program is available for purchase or rental . . . if you want to get it, please click:

<http://www.achievement.com/>

Above is the tape rental club I belong to; i.e., the Achievement Tape Library . . . this a great way to hear CDs and/or audio cassette tapes, view videos, etc.--all for a fraction of what it would cost to buy them . . . call the head of the firm (Paul Arroyo) directly at 1.800.735.3660 and mention my name . . . that way, you'll be sure to pay even higher prices . . . NOT.

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5. VCR alert

A. Big and Rich, Gretchen Wilson, and Reba McEntire are among the performers slated to perform at the 40th ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC AWARDS . . . Tuesday at 8 p.m. on CBS.

B. DR. PHIL PRIMETIME SPECIAL: ESCAPING ADDICTION has Dr. Phil helping two real desperate housewives: one hooked on pills, another on addiction . . . Friday at 8 p.m. on CBS.

C. THE MUPPETS' WIZARD OF OZ features Miss Piggy playing multiple roles here: all four witches . . . Friday at 8 p.m. on ABC.

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6. Checkup

David wasn't feeling well, and so he went to the doctor to get himself checked.

After a thorough examination, the doctor said, "Well David, based on my examination, the best thing for you is to cut out all sweets and fatty foods, give up alcohol, and stop smoking."

"I see," said David. "Well, to be honest with you Doc, I don't deserve the best. What's the second best?"

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7. Websites

A. Unfortunately, we've all had good and bad experiences with companies, products or services. The following website

is a place to go to voice a complaint about your experience. It is also a leading source of consumer advice where you can read the reviews of other consumers. It's also a great place to learn, interact and voice your opinions.

You can search for comments by company or category. Some categories include phone companies, auto dealers, computers, restaurants, banks, stores, hotels, airlines, hospitals, and insurance companies. You can search by company and/or product rankings to help you avoid future consumer problems.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.my3cents.com/>

If you need help resolving a complaint, you'll find that, too. There's a database of company contact information and tips for writing complaint letters.

Membership is free, and enables you to start publishing your own reviews. It also allows you to send and receive feedback from other users and companies.

B. I suspect, and I could be wrong here--but I wouldn't be surprised to find out the fact that many women have dated a "Charlie Harper type" at some point in their life. Charlie Harper is the infamous character on TWO AND A HALF MEN, played by Charlie Sheen. His character is pretty much of a womanizer, to say the least. The following website was put together in his "honor." For your amusement ladies (and anyone who enjoys the show), please click:

<http://www.charlieharpersucks.com/>

The real Charlie Sheen does not post responses to the message board . . . nevertheless, many of the messages are quite amusing. There is also some funny vindictive humor, along with a witty Top 10 list of reasons for dating Charlie Harper.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

If you want to see some of the books I've reviewed previously (and typically liked), go to "Blaine's Best" on the left, then "Websites" . . . at letter "O," click on the second paragraph.

You'll see over 425 of my past reviews that I've posted at the amazon.com website . . . as always, if you find any of them helpful and if given the opportunity, please click the "Yes" button indicating that fact.

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8. Computer tip

Though I have addressed the topic in the past, I feel compelled to again discuss the use of subject lines in e-mails.

If you want me and/or anybody else to read what you are sending, please make sure the subject line clearly indicates what it is; e.g., in the case of this week's newsletter, you'll see

BLAINESWORLD #451 . . . subscribers, of course, will know what follows . . . now if that was not the case, I might put something along these lines in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD, my online newsletter. See below. Best, Blaine

My thinking is that I've described it in more detail, then told folks whom it was from.

By the same token, if I wanted to inform you of significant news, I might use this in the subject line:
My new house purchase. (IMPORTANT.) Thought you'd like to see, Blaine

Or if I wanted a response, this might be a possibility:
Upcoming meeting agenda; whatcha think? Please advise, Blaine

I mention this because, regretfully, I missed responding to news about the funeral of a friend's mother . . . I'm very sorry, Lynnea; however, to my defense, her subject line was as follows:
To my friends, thought you'd like to know . . .

My initial reaction was that this was still another virus-type warning or something to that effect.

I get a lot of e-mail . . . make that, a REAL LOT OF E-MAIL . . . and I try to respond to it just as much as I can . . . however, please don't stand on ceremony . . . if I ever miss sending you a response that you wanted, please resend your initial note . . . also, hit me over the head in your subject line with what you want; for instance:
Blaine, please respond to this question (QUICKLY). Thanks, your name

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9. Tourism

A Latin American tour guide was addressing a small group of senior citizens and telling them about the country they were visiting. When he asked if they had any questions, one person inquired, "What is the number one sport in this country?"

"Bullfighting," the guide replied.

The same person asked "Isn't that revolting?"

"No," replied the tour guide. "That's number two!"

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10. A quote I like

At the height of laughter, the universe is flung into a kaleidoscope of new possibilities.--Dr. Jean Houston, scholar and researcher in human capacities, as well as codirector of the Foundation for Mind Research

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11. Thought for the day

Hello day
by Bob Perks

"Hello! I just wanted to tell you that you do an incredible job keeping this place clean," I told the maintenance man in the mall food court. I think I shocked him.

He looked up and pausing for a moment said, "Well, thank you. I really appreciate that." I believe he did.

I've done this all of my life. I go out of my way to make a comment to someone or to break an awkward silence in a moment that finds us speechless. I compliment people for their work who are normally taken for granted, overlooked, bypassed, ignored, or unappreciated.

Yesterday, I challenged myself to speak to as many strangers as I could in a short period of time. I complimented them, I chitchatted or I simply said "Hello!" And I said, "Thanks, my friend." I picked that up from Bill Cosby's son who was killed a few years back in California. Bill said that his son always greeted people that way.

So, I've created what I call "Hello Day."

This idea came about because of the story I had written recently, "I Wish You Enough." My focus was on how difficult it is for me to say "Goodbye." The response to that story was simply amazing. Some people wrote to me to share regrets over lost opportunities to tell someone goodbye. Some wrote to thank me for making them more aware. Some adopted the idea and promised to start using the phrase, "I wish you enough," whenever they said so long.

I am asked many times how I get to meet so many wonderful people. It's simply because I say "Hello" first.

The final line in the piece I wrote says, "I wish enough 'Hello's' to get you through the final 'Goodbye.'"

So my "Hello Day" was created to make the final goodbye easier knowing that so many people have touched my life.

My first day at the mall was a success. After telling the maintenance man he was doing a great job, I walked over to the lady who served me my slice of pizza and told her how incredible it was. Her face lit up and her smile was worth the cost of lunch. I'd pay to see it again.

I then walked over to the newsstand. Buying a pack of gum, I scrambled to find something to say. Looking down, I saw a counter display for an herbal energy bar that said, "The herbal bar that works."

I asked if I could purchase the kind that doesn't work. He smiled and said, "You know some advertising guru is driving a Mercedes because he gets paid to come up with witty lines like that. You and I have to work for a living."

We both laughed. I said, "Thanks, my friend." Then walked away. I watched the man for a moment and that smile stayed with him even though the next four people never said a word to him.

So here's my challenge to you. Pick one day a week and declare it your "Hello Day." See how many people you can say hello to, make a

comment to, compliment, or enlighten. When you get comfortable enough with the idea, challenge yourself to speak to as many people as you can in the shortest period of time.

You'll look like the mayor of the town. You'll shine like a star. And you'll feel like a million.

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12. Advance planning department

A. PULSE OF THE NETWORK, my public affairs radio show, next airs on Saturday, May 21, at 8:30 p.m. on WWFM--the classical network . . . my guest will be Sunny Lawrence, program director for an organization called HOPE (Helping Other People Evolve) . . . we'll be discussing the marvelous work done by that organization in helping recently widowed men and woman of all ages.

Should you want to find out more about HOPE, please call 888.920.2201.

To listen to the show locally, check out:

WWFM

89.1 FM: Trenton, NJ

The show is also broadcast throughout New Jersey, Pennsylvania and as far away as Colorado . . . for a complete list of stations and/or further information, please click:

<http://www.wwfm.org>

You can now listen via Internet, too . . . even if you're not in the above listening areas, the station has made it possible to listen from ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD! . . . just go the above site, then click "Enter Here" . . . neat, huh?

***** REMINDER *****

PULSE OF THE NETWORK will be off the air as of the end of May after some 250 shows over the last five years . . . the station has new management and is moving in some different directions with respect to programming.

THANKS to all who listened, as well as to those who suggested guests--or were, in fact, guests themselves.

I'm still interested in doing a similar-type radio show for another station . . . or even a cable TV version . . . so if you have any media contacts/suggestions, please do share them with me.

B. If you're "into" film, then you will want to attend a panel of film critics that I'm moderating at the Algonquin Film Festival this coming Saturday at 10 a.m. in Warrington, PA . . . among those slated to participate: Pete Croatto (filmcritic.com), Elise Nakhnikan and Bob Brown (TIME OFF) and Dan Buskirk (PHILADELPHIA WEEKLY), discussing what they are looking for in films they review.

there's NO CHARGE if you just want to attend the panel . . . send me an e-mail for more information, if interested.

Should you want to attend anything else at what promises to be an excellent festival (featuring independent film), please click the

following link for more information:
<http://www.algonquinfest.org>

C. I have some FREE TICKETS for the "Get Motivated Business Seminar" on Tuesday, June 7, at the Wachovia Spectrum in Philadelphia from 8 a.m-5 p.m. . . . you'll get to hear Zig Ziglar (see also Section 4D) on Motivation, Andy Reid on Teamwork, Rick Belluzzo--legendary Microsoft chairman--on Business Skills, Jerry Lewis on Humor, Gen. Tommy Franks on Decision-Making, Tom Hopkins on Sales, and Rudolph Giuliani on Leadership . . . I don't know about you, but I'm even getting psyched just typing those names!

I can guarantee a ticket, at no charge, to the first 15 readers who respond . . . if you'd like a second ticket, let me know, and I'll see what I can do . . . send your request, along with a postpaid return envelope, to me, Blaine Greenfield; address: 52 Sentinel Road, Washington Crossing, PA 18977 . . . include a note indicating how many tickets you are requesting . . . and please put "MOTIVATION SEMINAR" in the left, lower bottom half of the envelope you're sending me.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And new readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

Issue #452

05.23.2005

In this issue:

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1. Reflections

A. This past Wednesday was my last day as administrator for the Dispute Settlement Board (Trevose, PA) for Demars & Associates . . . I've enjoyed doing this part-time work--in the auto arbitration field--over the last several years and am sad that the fine folks at Demars lost the contract to a competitor.

In particular, I'll miss working with the talented individuals who made up the Board: Enid Bellows, Don Harrison, Brian Pontarelli, Tony Spisto, Pete Watson, and Courtney Yelle . . . and I would be remiss not to add Candy Martin and then Jessica Burgos at Demars who never failed to make my job easier.

B. Cynthia's niece, Rachel, graduated from the Jewish Theological Seminary on Thursday with a combined master's degree from that school and Columbia University (in social work) . . . we spent an enjoyable day being with her and her family at first the graduation and then a delicious dinner at Ruby Foo's (212.724.6700) in New York City . . . the food was superb, and all eight of us had fun sampling each other's dishes . . . if you go to this elegant Asian restaurant, make sure you leave room for dessert . . . there's a surprising array of choices, each one being better than the next!

My only regret in attending Rachel's graduation was the fact that I missed the one at Bucks County Community College . . . I think it was only the second one I've missed in my nearly 30 years at the school.

Also, I missed the Honors Convocation that preceded this event . . . too bad because I wanted to see the awards being presented to three colleagues I had the pleasure of nominating:

Marianne Kepler--Alumni Association Distinguished Service Alumna

Award;

Tom O'Keefe--Alumni Association Excellence in Teaching Award; and

Barry Sysler--Alumni Association Professional Achievement Award.

In addition, I was pleased to hear that Edward Croftcheck (a former student and reader of BLAINESWORLD) received the Alumni Association Completion Award.

C. On Friday, we had our new home in Montgomery, NJ, inspected . . . we were impressed with what fine shape it seems to be in, along with the great job done by the inspector: Jim Anthony (732.469.0263) with C& D Associates in Middlesex, NJ . . . he patiently answered all our questions and afterwards, submitted a most comprehensive report of his findings.

I'd certainly recommend Jim to anybody else in need of a home inspection . . . furthermore, his excellent website is worth checking out for a very useful listing of tips on home care . . . to see for yourself, please click:

<http://www.yourinspection.com>

**** DON'T FORGET ***

The offer remains; i.e., \$500 if you find me a buyer for my Washington Crossing, PA townhouse.

If you'd like to find out more about the property, please click:

<http://realestate.aol.realtor.com/Prop/1046787028&gate=aolrealestate>

On Saturday, I had an enjoyable time moderating a panel of film critics at the Algonquin Film Festival in Warrington, PA . . . it was fun discussing movies with those who really know something about the subject . . . my panelists who so graciously gave of their time included Pete Croatto (filmcritic.com; see also Section 7B), Elise Nakhnikan and Bob Brown (TIME OFF), and Dan Buskirk (PHILADELPHIA WEEKLY).

One comment Pete made gave me food for thought; e.g., with respect to reviews I do for this newsletter . . . he said he writes "as if he is speaking to a friend," telling the friend what he likes and dislikes . . . I like that!

**** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD ****

This week, it goes to Mary White (908.781.1000)--the agent with Weichert Realtors in Bedminster, NJ, who guided us every step of the way in the purchase of our home in Montgomery, NJ . . . she listened to what we wanted, then helped us get it.

She has also been great on follow-up, and we appreciate how she has been available to us via phone, e-mail and in person . . . though we don't anticipate to be moving again in the near future, if and when we did, we would certainly make it a point to use Mary White . . . we'd encourage you to do likewise, especially if looking for anything in the North Central Jersey area.

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2. FYI

A. Cynthia continues to amaze me . . . recently, on a day when I was teaching, she took the time to shop for a new refrigerator . . . she not only got us what appears to be a great Maytag unit, but she also got it a price that methinks I couldn't have even beat.

She had done her research at two other stores . . . then when she went to Uneeda Discount Appliances (908.725.3400) in Raritan, NJ, she met with a salesperson who gave her what seemed to be a good price--especially in comparison to what she had heard elsewhere.

But she said she had to first check with me, so she called and then went back and asked for the salesperson's "best price" . . . he came back with a figure substantially lower than what he had originally quoted.

As the paperwork was being completed, he then quoted a \$25 delivery fee . . . this seemed negotiable since the store wouldn't be picking up an old refrigerator (something that is ordinarily done) . . . so Cynthia was back on the phone with me, and by the time she returned, she managed to get another \$40 off the final purchase price.

My beautiful bride-to-be is not ordinarily a fan of negotiating for a best price . . . however, as you can see, she can do it with the best of them . . . and you can, too, if you just keep asking something along these lines: "Is that the best you can do?"

NOTE:

Cynthia recommends the store as one you should definitely check out when buying any sort of appliance . . . she has gone there before and been pleased with both the wide selection and prices, as well as the fact that the salespeople have always been helpful and not overly pushy.

FYI, part 2

* Steve in New Jersey:

An old realtor's trick: We were always told to cook some cinnamon in the oven when someone comes to look at your home. Good luck.

* Marie in Indiana, author of MY PERFECT SON HAS CEREBRAL PALSY (reviewed in BLAINESWORLD #431):

Some of you have seen this link about the Kennedy Family at magicneering.com. This is a new "Good News" cable channel scheduled to be global on 95 million stations. Programming starting in June.

It is about family and living life, founded by Author, Mark Eberra. For more information, please click:

<http://magicneering.com/kennedys.html>

At the bottom, there's a form; kindly click it and send. It will help my son Jimmy, who has been nominated to be a Magic Kid. Feel free to forward it to others, too, so they can vote. Thank you.

* Walter in New Jersey:

The Center for Conscious Living is delighted to present a life-transforming

evening with Alan Cohen, one of America's most popular inspirational authors, profound visionary teacher and wonderful, radiant Light. In this transformational heart-centered seminar, Alan shares his insights on dynamic intuitive living, relationships, manifesting abundance, and creating health and well-being.

This workshop, "The Heart Always Knows," gently leads us to accept our own magnificence. Many lives have been touched and changed by this program; expect the same for your self during this very special evening.

Alan Cohen is the author of over 20 popular inspirational books.

This joyful event takes place on Thursday, May 26, 2005 at 7:30 p.m. at the Regency Palace, Ramada Inn, 555 Fellowship Rd., Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054. Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased at the door or in advance by calling 856-722-5683 (LOVE).

Walter went on to tell me that:

This guy is not only a terrific speaker but also an incredible writer. Please include this in your next newsletter. It could be a life-altering experience for your readers. It will be his only NJ appearance this year.

* Laura in New Jersey:

On Friday, June 11, I will be participating in the "Relay for life" as a cancer survivor. It takes place at the Manville High School. I attended last year, and it is quite an awesome event--especially when thousands of luminaries are lit to honor and in memory for loved ones who survived and those who didn't.

I would love to have your support both in person (if possible) or by purchasing a luminary or sending a cash donation, if you are able. You can do a credit card donation through the following link:

<https://www.kintera.org/faf/donorReg/donorPledge.asp?ievent=79673&lis=1&kntae79673=8574022574B7442984264C98F5B4B3FE&suplid=81762025>

And if you cannot do anything else, pray for a beautiful evening and also for all of those who have and have not survived cancer.

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3. Q-and-A

Q: How do you know that a man is about to say something smart?

A: It will always start with, "She said . . ."

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4. Reviews ...

A. I'm a big fan of Will Ferrell, but KICKING AND SCREAMING just didn't do very much for me . . . it's a comedy about little league soccer that had some laughs, but not nearly enough . . . a subplot of sorts involving Ferrell's abuse of coffee did little to advance the story . . . my biggest disappointment: the ending could have been saved by some touchy-feely moments with all folks learning something, but that just wasn't the case . . . Robert Duvall and Mike Ditka were mildly amusing as, respectively, Ferrell's

father and assistant coach . . . rated PG.

B. THE AVIATOR is now out in DVD . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #437 follows:

THE AVIATOR is an engaging, somewhat overlong biopic of Howard Hughes . . . for those who only know of him as an eccentric recluse, you'll find his background in both motion pictures and aviation of interest . . . Leonardo DiCaprio was fine as Hughes; however, I thought Cate Blanchett was brilliant as Katharine Hepburn . . . in addition, I liked the work of Alan Alda as the crooked Senator Owen Brewster . . . and Robert Richardson's photography was outstanding, including one stunning air crash that just about took my breath away . . . rated PG-13.

C. A reader suggested that I might enjoy MATZO BALLS FOR BREAKFAST AND OTHER MEMORIES OF GROWING UP JEWISH by Alan King, the great comedian who conceived and developed the book in the period before he died in 2004.

She was wrong, I loved MATZO BALLS (almost as much as the actual food product).

It is a series of essays written by famous people--many of them entertainers--about what being Jewish is all about . . . they range from Neil Sedaka writing about not becoming a cantor to Melissa Manchester describing how she came to find her way to the father . . . in a final section, Rick Moranis, Barbara Walters and Billy Crystal recall the Alan King they knew so well and laughed with so often.

And don't feel you have to be Jewish to enjoy this material . . . regardless of your religion, it will move you at times . . . and make you smile, at others, as a result of gentle humor such as this tale from Barry Louis Polisar (a four-time Parent's Choice Award winner for his books and music for children):

My grandmother used to tell me a story that her father, Louis, used to tell about God giving the Jewish people religion. "It's really not such a hard religion," God said. "Here, I'll write it down for you. You try it for a while, and if it doesn't suit you, bring it back." So the Jewish people tried it and found it was not too hard. For days, caravan upon caravan stretched across the desert carrying Haftorahs, mezuzahs, yarmulkes, prayer shawls, commentaries, and prayer books. God looked out at the caravans that stretched to the horizon and said, "What's all this? All I wrote down for you were ten simple commandments."

Uri Geller contributed his favorite Alan King joke:
Mrs. Cohen is yelling at the lifeguard who just pulled her husband out of the ocean. He tells her he is going to give artificial respiration. She yells back, "You'll ever give my Benny real respiration or nothing!"

There are also a series of wonderful quotes throughout the book, including these I particularly liked:

The most remarkable thing about my mother is that for thirty years she served the family nothing but leftovers. The original meal has never been found.--Calvin Trillin

If only God would give me some clear sign! Like making a large deposit in my name at a Swiss bank.--Woody Allen

I once wanted to become an atheist but I gave up--they have no holidays.--Henny Youngman

D. Heard GREEN RIVER, RUNNING READ, the true crime story of America's deadliest serial murderer, by Ann Rule . . . the author, long one of my favorites, had to wait 20 years to write the book until law enforcement authorities captured the Green River killer (named for where the first victims were found).

What's incredible is that he ever was taken into custody . . . a seemingly ordinary man, Gary Ridgeway comes across as a quiet next-door neighbor who managed to hold down a steady job and have a wife and child--and somehow found the time to murder some 48 young women.

This is definitely not a book for everyone, given its subject matter . . . yet that said, it is extremely well-researched and quick reading . . . you'll get a feel for the murdered women, many of them young prostitutes, as well as for why the investigation took so long to complete . . . you'll also appreciate Michelle Pawk's detached narration.

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5. VCR alert

A. Who is the smartest guy in America? Legendary JEOPARDY! champion Ken Jennings competes against tournament finalists Brad Rutter and Jerome Vered for a grand prize of \$2 million . . . the competition ends on Wednesday at 7 p.m. on ABC; check local listings for the station and time near you.

B. Wednesday also is the day when the nation learns if Bo or Carrie is our next AMERICAN IDOL . . . 8 p.m. on Fox.

C. EMPIRE FALLS is a miniseries about life in a Maine town . . . there's a stellar cast, including Ed Harris, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Helen Hunt, Paul Newman, Robin Wright Penn, Aidan Quinn, and Joanne Woodward . . . Part 1 is on Saturday at 9 p.m. on HBO; Part 2 airs on Sunday at the same time.

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6. Indignation

Late one night a mugger wearing a ski mask jumped into a path of a well-dressed man and stuck a gun in his ribs.

"Give me your money," he demanded.

Indignant, the affluent man replied, "You can't do this--I am a United States congressman!"

"In that case," replied the mugger, "give me MY money."

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7. Websites

A. If you have a child, grandchild, niece or neighbor over the age of 13, I urge you to have them take the following scenario-based quiz:
<http://www.teenpregnancy.org/national/quiz/default.asp?bhcp=1>

Its purpose is to focus the attention of teens on the importance of avoiding early pregnancy and parenthood.

The quiz was part of the recent 4th annual National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, sponsored by the nonprofit, nonpartisan National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy and National Day founding partners TEEN PEOPLE magazine and teenpeople.com.

B. Pete Croatto (see also Section 1C) is a senior film critic for this website that is a MUST for any movie fan:
<http://www.filmcritic.com>

You'll find Pete's reviews there, as well as such other useful information as the "50 most quotable movie lines of all time," "Lessons from the Movies, 2004" and interviews with Daniel Day Lewis and Andy Garcia.

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click:
<http://www.blaineworld.net>

As you hopefully know by now, you should ALWAYS feel free to mention this newsletter to your friends, relatives, etc. . . . should they want to subscribe (AT NO COST), all they have to do is go to my homepage . . . then click on "Special Offer" at the bottom . . . it's that simple!

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8. Computer tip

Google now offers directions, but with a twist that you may well find most useful . . . to learn more, please click:
<http://www.google.com>

Then in the bar where you type your search request, type-in a specific street address and town . . . you'll be directed to what amounts to be an aerial view of your whatever property you are requesting . . . this is particularly useful if you're contemplating a move and want to see what is nearby (water, golf courses, etc.).

You are next prompted to give another location; e.g., where you might want directions to or from . . . and you even have the option to request "reverse directions."

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9. Misbehaving

"I promise. That bird is so well behaved, you can take it anywhere," the pet-store owner assured the woman.

Delighted, she took her parrot to church. Things were great until, halfway through the sermon, the bird blurted, "It's damn cold in here!" Embarrassed, the woman ran out and went to the pet store.

"This 'good bird' swore in church today," she told the shop owner.

"I'm sorry. It sometimes does that in new environments," he explained. "Next time, grab it feet and swing it over your head a few times. That should stop it."

The next week the woman and her parrot were in church when the bird yelled, "It's damn cold in here!"

Quickly the woman grabbed the bird and swung it above her head six times. Then she put the bird back on her shoulder and sat down.

"Damn," the bird said. "It's windy too."

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10. A quote I like

Please make sure you are volunteering for the right reasons, for personal growth and gratification. After all, the spirit of giving should be at its strongest when there is nothing to be gained.--Peter Hughes, coach of the Pennsbury High School (Fairless Hills, PA) soccer team, in an e-mail sent to members of his team about an upcoming community event in which they were going to participate

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11. Thought for the day

Little things mean a lot
by Ellie Braun-Haley

Is it possible to alter the actions of school children?

To take the focus from bullying and that of reporting inconsequential tales of fault finding?

Well one young woman thought so and she worked a year to achieve this goal. Laurie Braun, a concerned and caring mother--a woman with a lot of imagination and the determination to make a difference--became the igniting force behind an avalanche of kindness in a Canadian elementary school.

Laurie wanted to help the students to focus on positive actions and words. After gaining the approval of the principal, Laurie developed and operated a program that would do just that. She set about to inspire and motivate hundreds of children to file reports on one another for their kind gestures no matter how small the deed.

"The interesting thing about it all," says Laurie, "is that it truly was the little things that they all began noticing." She picked up two reports at random and read them.

"When I was by myself, Jeffrey sat on the swing with me."

"I slipped and cut myself on the ice and Sara sat with me."

These and other similar reports handed in by the school children eventually soared from the hundreds, to well over the thousand mark.

"The children revealed a lot about what their concerns are during these early school years. I saw a noticeable pattern regarding the reports," says Laurie. "They (the children) spoke a lot about their appreciation for being included, their appreciation for having someone to play with and their relief and appreciation when another student comforted them after a spill."

The response was magnificent and participation of the students increased weekly. Subsequently, the load of volunteer work for this one parent, increased leaps and bounds. Students had filed sixty reports of kindness, in one week alone.

"It became a challenge," said Laurie, "to fit everything on the bulletin board and to keep it sparkling and colorful. I think the kids loved the glitter of the displays the most!"

Ms. Braun devoted well over a hundred and seventy hours working both at home and at the school to prepare materials and build weekly displays to keep the children interested.

The elementary school took on a conspicuous change. Kids were sharing lunches and opening doors for one another. Kindness thrived! Even the crossing guard at the cross walk was reported for her acts of kindness.

"The wonderful thing about this," commented Laurie, "was that the report was put in by a youngster who was so shy he had never even spoken to the crossing guard, although the guard had spoken words of encouragement to this one particular youngster many times."

A child who held the reputation of being arrogant was suddenly helping another clean out her desk. One lonely child reported on a classmate, "When I needed a friend to play with, she was there."

The reports went up weekly, but not just as ordinary reports. Over the weekend, the innovative and artistically inclined Laurie, chose a theme so that every single report was set on special paper, highlighted with sparkling glitter. One week she placed the names of the youngsters on lightning bolts and another week every report was done on teddy bears and yet another time on little T-shirts, all hanging on a clothesline.

The bulletin board itself was always eye-catching and crowds gathered so that soon parents, teachers and other staff were also gathering around to take in the theme and designs for the new week.

When the school year drew to a close, Laurie took each and every "good deed" report filled in by the students and teachers and attached them to one long continuous roll of paper. Once posted, this was to be the final reminder to all, that little things do make a difference.

She chose a time when only teachers were at the school and she and her young daughter literally wrapped the school walls with over a thousand kindness reports.

What was it that motivated this woman? She says, "It all came about

because I could see some of the younger children in the elementary school were worried over bullying. Others concentrated too much energy on reporting the wrong choices of others. I was looking for something to counteract this when I came up with the idea of reporting one another on acts of kindness. I sincerely believed, and still do, that an act of kindness should receive ten times the attention given to a deed that came about because of wrong choices. I wanted my program to encourage both students and adults to focus on the positive, on what is appreciated, not what is annoying or hurtful."

The program also had some unforeseen side benefits. The reports often indicated when problems were at hand and Ms. Braun was able to alert the school authorities.

"I noticed one week that many of the reports spoke of various individuals being helped up after falling on the ice. I contacted the school and they were able to alleviate the ice problem."

On the final day for that school year, Laurie asked the principal if the children could leave their classrooms and walk about to view this huge accumulated list of their good deeds and thoughtfulness. The students were told that any reports which featured their name could be taken home as souvenirs. Laurie watched as the excited students gathered around the reports, first reading them, then commenting and remembering and finally reaching to retrieve the reports to take them home as mementos.

"I watched those youngsters that day and felt so proud of their accomplishments. I thought, look at the huge amount of kindness you all gave to one another. You all noticed even the smallest of gestures, and you have made such a difference in the lives of one another."

Choked with emotion, Laurie felt the tears and an overwhelming warmth of pleasure for the success of her quest.

Is it possible to alter the actions of school children? To take the focus from bullying and fault-finding?

One woman proved that "yes" anything is possible when you follow your instincts and your dreams.

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12. Advance planning department

A. PULSE OF THE NETWORK, my public affairs radio show, airs for a FINAL TIME on Saturday, May 28, at 8:30 p.m. on WWFM--the classical network . . . my guest will be Dr. Emil Matarese, head of the excellent stroke unit at St. Mary's Hospital (Langhorne, PA) . . . he will be speaking on "Stroke Awareness."

For more information about the stroke unit or to schedule an appointment with Dr. Matarese, your best bet is try his home number: 215.741.9555.

To listen to the show locally, check out:
WWFM
89.1 FM: Trenton, NJ

The show is also broadcast throughout New Jersey, Pennsylvania

and as far away as Colorado . . . for a complete list of stations and/or further information, please click:

<http://www.wwfm.org>

You can now listen via Internet, too . . . even if you're not in the above listening areas, the station has made it possible to listen from ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD! . . . just go the above site, then click "Enter Here" . . . neat, huh?

***** REMINDER *****

PULSE OF THE NETWORK will be off the air as of the end of May after some 250 shows over the last five years . . . the station has new management and is moving in some different directions with respect to programming.

THANKS to all who listened, as well as to those who suggested guests--or were, in fact, guests themselves.

I'm still interested in doing a similar-type radio show for another station . . . or even a cable TV version . . . so if you have any media contacts/suggestions, please do share them with me.

B. I still have some FREE TICKETS for the "Get Motivated Business Seminar" on Tuesday, June 7, at the Wachovia Spectrum in Philadelphia from 8 a.m-5 p.m. . . . you'll get to hear Zig Ziglar on Motivation, Andy Reid on Teamwork, Rick Belluzzo--legendary Microsoft chairman--on Business Skills, Jerry Lewis on Humor, Gen. Tommy Franks on Decision-Making, Tom Hopkins on Sales, and Rudolph Giuliani on Leadership . . . I don't know about you, but I'm even getting psyched just typing those names!

I can guarantee a ticket, at no charge, to the first 15 readers who respond . . . if you'd like a second ticket, let me know, and I'll see what I can do . . . send your request, along with a postpaid return envelope, to me, Blaine Greenfield; address: 52 Sentinel Road, Washington Crossing, PA 18977 . . . include a note indicating how many tickets you are requesting . . . and please put "MOTIVATION SEMINAR" in the left, lower bottom half of the envelope you're sending me.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me

e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention
this missive to your friends.

Blaine Greenfield
19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
Phone : 828.633.1049

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #450

5.9.2005

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1. Reflections

A. As the end of the semester winds down at Bucks County Community College, I got to attend two great parties . . . one was for Gary Winderman, a longtime colleague who always helped brighten my day with both his enthusiasm and smile . . . a bunch of folks surprised him with a luncheon, at which time he was almost--a first for him--at a loss for words.

The second was our end-of-year Union party, at which time we recognized not only the retirement of Gary, but many of my other colleagues who have retired within the last 12 months:

Art Dept: Robert Dodge, Diane Lindenheim, Gerald Nowak, Helen Weisz, Jack Gevins, Helen Holcombe, Catherine Jansen, and Alan Goldstein

Behavioral Science: John Rosella and George Capuzzi

Business: William Rech and Lee Neumann

Counseling Services: Gary Winderman

Lang & Lit: Katherine Rankin-Bartholomeu and Eugene Howard

Library: Betty Tsai

Science & Technology: Maxine Plummer

Social Science: Myles Kelleher, Lyle Rosenberger and Harry Johnson

Phys Ed: Lou Pacchioli

Methinks that ALL these fine folks will be missed!

I'll personally also miss Earle Meyers, who stepped down as the Union's First Vice President . . . he did an absolutely super job over the last several years . . . fortunately, he has agreed to stay on as a member of the Negotiating Team.

And SPECIAL THANKS to Joe Siano, owner/chef of Il Sol (215.968.588)

in Newtown, PA . . . we have had our party there for the last several years, and the food is always excellent . . . however, Joe seemed to outdo himself this year . . . his fresh pasta bar had everybody going back for seconds!

B. Cynthia and I had fun at the graduation party of one of her cousin's children . . . we were then particularly fortunate to celebrate Mother's Day with both our mothers and respective families all together at a delicious brunch at Portofino Grille Italian (212.832.4141) in NYC.

From there, we went with my mother to visit my dad . . . his comment about Cynthia's engagement ring says much about his remarkable spirits; he noted: "So next year, maybe you'll be able to get a real diamond!"

C. Don't forget: The offer remains; i.e., \$500 if you find me a buyer for my Washington Crossing, PA townhouse.

If you'd like to find out more about the property, please click:

<http://realestate.aol.realtor.com/Prop/1046787028&gate=aolrealestate>

NOTE:

If you are interested in a tour, please contact me directly . . . if I sell it to you on my own, I can even give you a better price than you would get if you purchased it through your realtor.

In addition, please keep your eyes out on the Montgomery, NJ area--or anything surrounding it . . . that is the area that Cynthia and I would like to live in . . . we've located one 55-plus community (can you believe that I qualify?) that is particularly appealing . . . its name is Cherry Valley, and it is off Great Road . . . we even made an offer for one house, only to lose out in what became a mini-bidding war.

That area is still our first choice . . . however, right now there don't seem to be any other properties available, so we are currently bidding for another property off Route 206 and also in Montgomery Township.

What we're seeking:

- * An area no more than an hour from my work (Newtown, PA) or Cynthia's work (Somerset, NJ).
- * Townhouse/condo with maintenance included would be ideal.
- * 3 bedrooms/2.5 baths.
- * Basement would be nice, though not absolutely essential.
- * 2 car garage.
- * MUST be in a nice, quiet area. The less traffic, the better.
- * Occupancy around August 1.
- * If house was in a 55-plus community, that would be fine. Make that better than fine if there was also a pool and clubhouse.

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

This week, it goes to Jennifer Toscano--a social worker at Grace Plaza (516.466.3001) in Great Neck, NY, the nursing home where my dad is staying . . . she has been most helpful to him since his arrival there and, recently, went out of her way to help ensure that he will be able to stay there for the duration of his recuperation.

In general, I've been impressed with Grace Plaza anytime I've visited . . . virtually the entire staff is friendly, and they treat both residents and their visitors with respect, kindness and compassion.

2. FYI

In MIDLIFE MELTDOWN, Janet Maccaro (see also Section 4C) recommends the need for a formal assay--another term for blood work--each year . . . as she notes, "The results of your assay will help your healthcare provider determine a hormone-balancing protocol tailored to your specific needs. This yearly assay will serve as a guide to insure that balance is achieved and maintained.

"This assay should determine your levels of:

DHEA sulfate

Progesterone

E1,E2,E3 (estradiol, estrone, and estriol)

T3

T4 (thyroid panel)

TSH

Testosterone

FSH

LH

"Men should also have a PSA (prostate specific antigen) test done yearly. Women should receive PAP and pelvic exams yearly and, after age fifty, annual mammograms."

FYI, part 2

* Megan in New Jersey:

Just a quick note . . . Lauren Milner chose to make the grand opening of her Cold Stone, which was April 9, to benefit the Sunshine Foundation. She did an absolutely fantastic job; in fact, she came in the top ten most successful of all Cold Stone grand openings and was able to donate \$3,000 to the Foundation. She's great, and I'm glad to see that you agree!

Also, The Sunshine Foundation is holding our 3rd Annual Walk for Dreams on Saturday, June 4, 2005 at Shady Brook Farm, Yardley. Registration runs from 9-10 a.m. with the Walk beginning at 10. It's a leisurely 5K route, and walkers will receive entertainment from Sunny 104.5, a T-shirt, goodie bags filled with fun giveaways, refreshments, and prizes for those raising the most in sponsorship. Registration is \$10 and can be done through our website at:

www.sunshinefoundation.org

Or you can register on the day of the event. All proceeds will go towards granting dreams for the seriously ill children on our waiting list, which currently has close to 400 children.

* Your truly (i.e., Blaine in Pennsylvania--soon to be back in New Jersey):

I have some FREE TICKETS for the "Get Motivated Business Seminar" on Tuesday, June 7, at the Wachovia Spectrum in Philadelphia from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. . . . you'll get to hear Zig Ziglar on Motivation, Andy Reid on Teamwork, Rick Belluzzo (legendary Microsoft chairman) on Business Skills, Jerry Lewis on Humor, Gen. Tommy Franks on Decision-Making, Tom Hopkins on Sales, and Rudolph Giuliani on Leadership . . . I don't know about you, but I'm even getting psyched just typing those names!

I can guarantee a ticket, at no charge, to the first 15 readers who respond . . . if you'd like a second ticket, let me know, and I'll see what I can do . . . send your request, along with a postpaid return envelope, to me, Blaine Greenfield; address: 52 Sentinel Road, Washington Crossing, PA 18977 . . . include a note indicating how many tickets you are requesting . . . and please put "MOTIVATION SEMINAR" in the left, lower bottom half of the envelope you're sending me.

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3. Special bar

This guy goes up to a bar located at the top of the Empire State Building in New York. It looks like a nice place, and he takes a seat at the bar.

"This is a nice place. I've never been here before," he says to the guy next to him.

"Oh, really?" the other replies. "It is a nice place. It's also a very special bar."

"Why is that?" the first guy asks.

"Well, do you see that painting on the far wall? That's an original Van Gogh, and this stool I'm sitting on was on the Titanic."

"Gee, that's amazing!" says the first guy.

"Not only that, but you see that window over there, fourth from the right? Well, the wind does strange things outside that window. If you jump out you'll fall about 50 feet before the wind catches you, and you're pushed back up."

"No way! That's impossible," the guy scoffs.

"Not at all. Take a look," the other man replies, and with that he walks over to the window and opens it. He climbs over the sill and falls out. He drops 10 . . . 20 . . . 30 . . . 40 . . . 50 feet, comes to a stop, and whoosh--he comes right back up and sails back through the window. "See? It's fun. You should try it," he says.

"Try it? I don't even believe I saw it!" the first man shouts.

"It's easy. Watch, I'll do it again." And with that, he falls out the window again. He drops 10 . . . 20 . . . 30 . . . 40 . . . 50 feet, comes to a stop, and whoosh--he comes right back up and sails back through the window. "Give it a try. It's a blast," he says.

"Well, what the heck, I'll give it a try," the first man says, and proceeds to fall out the window. He falls 10 . . . 20 . . . 30 . . . 40 . . . 50 . . . 60 . . . 70 . . . 80 . . . 90 . . . 100 feet and splat--he ends up as road pizza on the sidewalk.

After watching this, the second guy casually closes the window, heads back to the bar and orders a drink. The bartender arrives with the drink and says, "You know, Superman, you're a real jerk when you're drunk."

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4. Reviews ...

A. Had fun seeing KUNG FU HUSTLE, a combination kung fu/comedy/gangster film that is unlike anything I've ever seen before . . . set in 1930s Hong Kong, it is about a would-be bad guy who gets caught up in the middle of a war between the Axe gang and the inhabitants of Pig Sty Alley . . . parts of it had me laughing out loud . . . the cinematography and music were both outstanding . . . toward the end, the fight scenes became a bit much for me--but they were never boring . . . rated R for scenes of stylized violence, but appropriate for mature teenagers.

B. IN GOOD COMPANY is now out in both DVD and VHS formats . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #434 follows:

Very much enjoyed IN GOOD COMPANY, a feel-good romantic comedy about a 50-something advertising executive who must learn to work with a new boss, roughly half his age . . . Dennis Quaid is perfect in the former role, as is Topher Grace in the latter one . . . I also liked the way the advertising profession is portrayed, and the fact that a sales representative (Quaid) can sell a product that he truly believes in . . . the accompanying musical score added to my enjoyment, as did the ending that intentionally did not wrap up every loose end . . . rated PG-13.

C. There's a lot of good information in MIDLIFE MELTDOWN (see also Section 2) by Janet Maccaro, a book designed especially for anybody born between 1946 and 1964 . . . since I fall in that category, I decided to read the book per the recommendation of a friend.

Section One helps the reader understand midlife meltdown, then Section Two provided help for specific conditions of midlife meltdown . . . these range from aging to periodontal health and include such other topics as menopause, natural prostate protection, weight management, arthritis, brain health, and some 20 others.

Each chapter is short, as well as very easy to understand . . . my only criticism is that Maccaro suggests a lot of supplements to take . . . if you were to take all of them, you'd be both broke and bloated (as a result of all the water you'd be drinking to just swallow all the pills and capsules).

There were several memorable passages; among them:

* What is a meltdown? Quite simply, a meltdown occurs during midlife when internal stress and external pressures become so intense that life offers little or no joy. Physical symptoms such as overwhelming fatigue and lethargy are a constant battle, enthusiasm of things once cherished is diminished, hope is dashed, uncertainty is plentiful, and a freefall occurs as our "safety net" of invincible youth gives way.

* Midlife can be a turning point for those who will use it as such. It is the time of life to take inventory of your life. It is the time to pay attention to the whispers that have been alerting you of the imbalances in your professional, personal, and family life as well as your physical, emotional, and even your financial health. It is a time to put your hands back on the wheel in terms of your life's course. It is a time to reflect on the past and what you have learned from it. It is the time to get rid of any baggage you are still toting on this earthly journey that may be weighing you down, such as debt, unforgiveness,

anger, and personal relationships that take all your energy and rob you of being all you were meant to be.

* It has been shown that during midlife, many marriages fail because one or both spouses fail to meet the other's emotional needs. That is understandable, given the huge amount of stress and responsibility that often occurs during midlife. Couples may neglect to schedule time with one another. Their relationship is not a high priority. It is often replaced by activities of lesser importance, such as career, home maintenance, and financial worries.

Your marriage can be a "lifetime love affair." Protect it by setting time aside each week to give each other undivided attention and appreciation. Pray together, stay together, go the distance together. Happily married couples fare better at midlife than singles because of the important emotional connection and shared interests. When you meet each other's emotional needs, you become each other's source of happiness. You truly become one. That is the way God intended marriage to be!

D. *BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE*, read and written by Aron Ralston, is the thrilling true tale of a hiker who had to amputate his arm in order to survive . . . while that may sound gruesome to many, Alston makes it sound almost matter-of-fact as the result of his firsthand account that still amazes me now several days after having heard it . . . I also liked the description of the manhunt that his friends and relatives undertook in an attempt to find him . . . the fact that he has since resumed mountain climbing--and the description of his battle to regain his health--make this book truly inspirational for those having to face uphill struggles of their own.

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5. VCR alert

A. *CONFESSIONS OF AN AMERICAN BRIDE*, according to TV GUIDE, is a "frothy TV movie" [that is] "a cutesy confection made with surprising intelligence" . . . Thursday at 9 p.m. on Lifetime.

B. *ELVIS, BY THE PRESLEY* has Priscilla and Lisa Marie sharing reminiscences of him . . . Friday at 8 p.m. on CBS.

C. *TRACY ULLMAN: LIVE & EXPOSED* is an autobiographical revue . . . Saturday at 9:30 p.m. on HBO.

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6. Interoffice correspondence

To: All employees over 30 years of age

From: Management

Re: Retirement plan

As a result of our recent merger and acquisition activities, we are forced to cut down on the number of personnel.

Under the plan, older employees will be asked to go on early retirement, thus permitting the retention of the younger people who represent the future of our company.

Therefore, a program to phase out the older personnel by the end of the current fiscal year will be placed into effect immediately. This program will be known as RAPE (Retire Aged Personnel Early).

Employees who are RAPED will be given the opportunity to look for other jobs outside the company. Provided they are being RAPED, they can request a review of their employment records before actual retirement takes place. This phase of operations is called SCREW (Survey of Capabilities of Retired Early Workers). All employees who have been RAPED or SCREWED may file an appeal with upper management; this phase is called SHAFT (Study of Higher Authority Following Termination). Under the terms of the new policy, an employee may be RAPED once, SCREWED twice, but may be SHAFTEED as many times as the company deems appropriate.

If an employee follows the above procedures, he or she will be entitled to HERPES (Half Earnings for Retired Personnel's Early Severance) or CLAP (Combined Lump Sum Assistance Payment), unless they already have AIDS (Additional Income from Dependent or Spouse). As HERPES and CLAP are considered benefit plans, any employee receiving HERPES or the CLAP will no longer be RAPED or SCREWED by the company.

Management wishes to assure the younger employees who remain on board that the company will continue its policy to ensure that the employees are well trained through our SH*T program (Special High Intensity Training). The company takes pride in the amount of SH*T our employees receive. We have given our employees more SH*T than any other company in the area. If any employee feels he or she does not receive enough SH*T on the job, see your immediate supervisor. Your supervisor is especially trained to make sure you receive all the SH*T you can handle.

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7. Websites

A. More volunteers are always needed. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer or just learning about what is available, please check out the following websites. All you do is enter your zip code, interests and availability, and you will be provided with a good much.

To learn more, please click:

<http://www.volunteermatch.org/>

and/or:

<http://national.unitedway.org/>

If you are a senior citizen looking to volunteer, the following website connects older people with volunteer assignments. Foster Grandparent programs are one example. For more information, please click:

<https://www.joinseniorservice.org/>

B. The famous violinist, Itzhak Perlman, was quoted as saying, "You know, sometimes it is the artist's task to find out how much music you can still make with what you have left." I can't argue with that quote. If you are not familiar with Perlman, he was stricken with polio and still managed to become one of the greatest violinists ever.

To learn more about this remarkable man, please click:

<http://www.wtv-zone.com/Mary/PLAYINGAVIOLIN.HTML>

I found this website to be very inspirational, and I hope you do to. When viewing, make sure you turn your sound card on for some extraordinary classical music.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

THANKS to Dan Becker, my webmaster, who has done a great job putting past issues back on the website . . . just click above, then Newsletter, Past issues, and you'll be taken to an area where you can see the past month's issues . . . more will be added.

Best of all, if you go to any past issue, you'll be able to "jump" from one section to the next--much like I plan to do with future current issues of BLAINESWORLD.

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8. Computer tip

Arlene in Pennsylvania wrote me a few weeks ago: I have been receiving and enjoying your e-mails since last year. I wanted to ask about a character that frequently appears in your e-mails. It looks like a capital A with a line or lines above it. It does not correspond to any part of the keyboard. I think that it only appears with users of AOL. What causes it? Are you typing quickly?

MY RESPONSE:

I do tend to be a quick typist, though not a very akkkkkurate one . . . yet that said, the above error is not due to my typing.

From what I've been able to track down, this seems to only happen when I send BLAINESWORLD to readers with e-mail accounts at yahoo.com (and possibly hotmail.com too) . . . I'm curious: Does this happen all the time? Also, if others get/see such errors--please let me know.

I know this same type thing sometimes happens at Bucks when folks post notices on the school's listserv . . . to prevent it, I typically type and send my message directly from Outlook.

In the meantime, I'm still working on the possibility of using something other than AOL to mail out my weekly newsletters . . . when and if that happens, there would no longer be a problem with reading any part of this missive.

As always, I welcome any other ideas as to how I can make BLAINESWORLD even more readable for all readers.

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9. 50 fun things to do in a mall, part 2 of 2

(continued from last week)

26. Sneak up on saleswomen at the perfume counter and spray them with your own bottle of Eau de Swanke.

27. Rummage through the jelly bean bin at the candy store, insisting that you lost a contact lens.

28. Ask a saleswoman whether a particular shade of panties matches the color of your beard.

29. In the changing rooms, announce in a singsong voice, "I see London, I see France . . ."

30. Leave on the plastic string connecting a new pair of shoes, and wander around the mall taking two-inch steps.

31. Play the tuba for change.

32. Ask the Hamond organ dealer if he can play "Jesus Built My Hotrod."

33. Record belches on electronic sampling keyboards, and perform gastric versions of Jingle Bells for admiring onlookers.

34. Ask the pharmacist at the drugstore which leading cold remedy will "give you a really wicked buzz."

35. Ask the personnel at Peer 1 Imports whether they have "any giant crap made out of straw."

36. "Toast" plastic gag hot dogs in front of the fake fireplace display.

37. Collect stacks of paint brochures and hand them out as religious tracts.

38. Ask the information desk for a stroller and someone to push you around in it.

39. Change every TV in the electronics department to a station showing "Saved by the Bell." Chant the dialogue in a robotic voice, and scream if anyone tries to switch channels on one of the sets.

40. Hang out in the waterbed section of the furniture department wearing a Navy uniform. Occasionally run around in circles yelling "scratch one flattop!"

41. Hand a stack of pants back to the changing room attendant and scornfully announce that none of them are "leakproof."

42. "Play" the demo modes of video games at the arcade. Make lots of explosion noises.

43. Stand transfixed in front of a mirror bobbing your head up and down.

44. Pay for all your purchases with two-dollar bills to provoke arguments over whether they're real.
45. If it's Christmas, ask the mall Santa to sit on your lap.
46. Answer any unattended service phones that ring in department stores and say "Domino's."
47. Try on flea collars at the pet store while occasionally pausing to scratch yourself.
48. At the stylist, ask to have the hair on your back permed.
49. Show people your driver's license and demand to know "whether they've seen this man."
50. Buy a jawbreaker from the candy store. Return fifteen minutes later, fish it out of your mouth, and demand to know why it hasn't turned blue yet.

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10. A quote I like

God could not be everywhere and therefore he made mothers.--Jewish proverb

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11. Thought for the day

May you find serenity and tranquility
in a world you may not always
understand.

May the pain you have known
and the conflict you have experienced
give you the strength to walk through life
facing each new situation
with optimism and courage.

Always know that there are those
whose love and understanding will always
be there, even when you feel most alone.

May you discover enough goodness in others
to believe in a world of peace.
May a kind word, a reassuring touch,
a warm smile be yours every day of your life,
and may you give these gifts as well as receive them.

Remember the sunshine when the storm seems unending.

Teach love to those who know hate, and let that love
embrace you as you go into the world.

May the teaching of those you admire
become part of you, so that you may

call upon them.

Remember, those whose lives you have touched
and who have touched yours are always a part of you,
even if the encounters were less than
you would have wished.

May you not become too concerned
with material matters, but instead place
immeasurable value on the goodness in your heart.

Find time in each day to see the beauty
and love in the world around you.

Realize that each person has limitless abilities,
but each of us is
different in our own way.

What you may feel you lack in one regard
may be more than compensated for
in another.

What you feel you lack in the present
may become one of your strengths in
the future.

May you see your future
as one filled with promise and possibility.

Learn to view everything
as a worthwhile experience.

May you find enough inner strength
to determine your own worth by yourself,
and not be dependent on another's judgments
of your accomplishments.

May you always feel loved.

Author Unknown
(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

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12. Advance planning department

A. PULSE OF THE NETWORK, my public affairs radio show,
next airs on Saturday, May 14, at 8:30 p.m. on WWFM--the
classical network . . . my guest will be Pam Maiolo, public
affairs manager for AAA . . . we'll be discussing the outstanding
work done by that organization.

Should you want to find out more, please click:
<http://www.aaa.com>

To listen to the show locally, check out:
WWFM
89.1 FM: Trenton, NJ

The show is also broadcast throughout New Jersey, Pennsylvania

and as far away as Colorado . . . for a complete list of stations and/or further information, please click:

<http://www.wwfm.org>

You can now listen via Internet, too . . . even if you're not in the above listening areas, the station has made it possible to listen from ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD! . . . just go the above site, then click "Enter Here" . . . neat, huh?

***** REMINDER *****

PULSE OF THE NETWORK will be off the air as of the end of May after some 250 shows over the last five years . . . the station has new management and is moving in some different directions with respect to programming.

THANKS to all who listened, as well as to those who suggested guests--or were, in fact, guests themselves.

I'm still interested in doing a similar-type radio show for another station . . . or even a cable TV version . . . so if you have any media contacts/suggestions, please do share them with me.

B. I'm teaching the second night of a two-part course on "eBay Basics" at Bucks CCC on Thursday from 6:30-9:30 . . . there's a registration fee and seats are limited . . . for more information, call 215.968.8409.

C. If you're "into" film, then you will want to attend a panel of film critics that I'm moderating at the Algonquin Film Festival on Saturday, May 21, at 10 a.m. in Warrington, PA . . . among those slated to participate: Pete Croatto (filmcritic.com), Elise Nakhnikan and Bob Brown (TIME OFF) and Dan Buskirk (PHILADELPHIA WEEKLY), discussing what they are looking for in films they review.

there's NO CHARGE if you just want to attend the panel . . . send me an e-mail for more information, if interested.

Should you want to attend anything else at what promises to be an excellent festival (featuring independent film), please click the following link for more information:

<http://www.algonquinfest.org>

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites;

reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me
e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention
this missive to your friends.

Blaine Greenfield
19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #449

5.2.2005

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1. Reflections

A. OK, OK . . . BLAINESWORLD is more than a bit late; it's very late . . . sorry 'bout that . . . my only excuse: last week was one of those weeks, though then again, most every week lately has been crazy.

Good crazy, too, for the most part . . . except for the fact that two friends and former colleagues of mine died . . . Art Landy, a longtime member of the Communications Department at Bucks County Community College, was also a most active member of our teacher's union and a onetime mentor of mine as I became active in that group . . . then, just a few days later, Warren Troust passed away . . . he was an equally longtime faculty member, having served with distinction as a librarian . . . he was responsible for the business collection, so my students often turned to him for help; so did I . . . both will be missed.

B. Now for the good news . . . though Cynthia and I have been engaged for a few weeks, I guess it is now truly "official" in that she has her engagement ring . . . we had a fun time purchasing it from Richard Wasserman Jewelers (212.302.4266) in New York City . . . we actually met with Richard, and enjoyed the experience in that he's extremely professional . . . because he's a wholesaler, his prices seem right, too . . . and he has a convenient location (973.467.1616)--at least for us--in Millburn, NJ . . . he'll meet customers there by appointment.

On Friday night, we met a whole bunch of friends for dinner at Ya Ya Noodles (609.921.8551) in Skillman, New Jersey . . . as always, the food there was excellent . . . we were at a corner table that featured a lazy Susan, so that made it even more enjoyable as everybody got to sample a bunch of dishes . . . the "official reason" for the evening was to mark the return from Germany of our friend Edina;

however, all decided that we'd instead use it to begin a tradition of our all getting together on a more regular basis just because we like each other's company so much.

On Saturday night, we went with other friends to Dominick's (215.493.1376) in Washington Crossing, PA . . . the place is nothing fancy, but the food is always good . . . Cynthia and I shared and liked a monstrous calzone; the other couple enjoyed their vegetable stromboli.

From there, we went to SWEET CHARITY at Mercer County Community College's Kelsey Theatre . . . we've seen several productions there, but this was the absolute best . . . Melissa Marschner was superb as Charity Hope Valentine, singing and/or dancing in virtually every scene . . . Joanna Woodruff was also outstanding as Helene, one of the Fandango Ballroom dancers . . . and the orchestra, conducted by Lou Woodruff, was fantastic . . . even though it's been several days since we saw the show, I still find myself humming many of the songs ("Big Spender," "If My Friends Could See Me Now," etc.).

C. Don't forget: The offer remains; i.e., \$500 if you find me a buyer for my Washington Crossing, PA townhouse.

If you'd like to find out more about the property, please click:
<http://realestate.aol.realtor.com/Prop/1046787028&gate=aolrealestate>

NOTE:

If you are interested in a tour, please contact me directly . . . if I sell it to you on my own, I can even give you a better price than you would get if you purchased it through your realtor.

Also, please keep your eyes out on the Montgomery, NJ area--or anything surrounding it . . . that is where Cynthia and I would like to live . . . we've located one 55-plus community (can you believe that I qualify?) there that is particularly appealing; however, right now, there don't seem to be any properties for sale in that development.

What we're seeking:

- * Townhouse/condo with maintenance included would be ideal.
- * 3 bedrooms/2.5 baths.
- * Basement would be nice, though not absolutely essential.
- * 2 car garage.
- * MUST be in a nice, quiet area. The less traffic, the better.
- * Occupancy around August 1.
- * If house was in a 55-plus community, that would be fine. Make that better than fine if there was also a pool and clubhouse.

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

This week, it goes to Lauren Millner--owner of the new Cold Stone Creamery (609.275.5004) in Lawrenceville, NJ . . . after we saw the aforementioned SWEET CHARITY, we were all in the mood for some ice cream . . . so I suggested we rush over to get some, hoping that the store would be open past 11 p.m.

When we got there, the door was locked . . . yet we banged anyway, and Lauren very graciously agreed to let us in . . . that's not the whole story, however . . . since the registers had already been shut for the evening, she did even not charge us.

The ice cream was delicious, and we'll return . . . furthermore, it was fun to give a tip and then hear all the crew members sing a song back in appreciation . . . this is something that takes place at every Cold Stone Creamery location.

One last comment about our experience: Our server, David Azer, was super . . . he had a winning smile and though the store was already closed, he was still extremely enthusiastic about helping us.

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2. FYI

I've typically purchased gas from name brand stations; e.g., Exxon, Mobil, etc. . . . but I'm going to be changing, in part because of the ever-rising prices . . . in addition, I've been reading a great deal about the topic in such publications as THE WALL STREET JOURNAL . . . and when I recently interviewed a guest (Pam Maiolo, public affairs manager for AAA) for my radio show, I become convinced that gas is gas . . . there's no real difference!

Pam said she makes it a point to buy the cheapest gas she can find.

So I'll be moving in that direction, too . . . furthermore, I already do use my AAA VISA card for all my gas purchases, and that saves me ANOTHER 5% . . . you even get a \$15 credit after your first transaction!

For more information on how to obtain this latter savings, please click: <http://www.aaamidatlantic.com/financial/creditcard.asp>

FYI, part 2

* Anita in New Jersey:

Congratulations on your engagement! Eric and I both wish you and Cynthia every happiness--good health, good friends, and good luck! Eric and I will be celebrating our 50th anniversary this summer, and we know something about what it takes to make a good marriage. We wish you what our kids told us they wanted for themselves: "What dad and you have."

* Hillary in New Jersey:

I laughed when I read about how you became engaged. We were just on a cruise with my brother, his girlfriend, my sister, and her husband. My brother planned it with the cruise director and asked Teri to marry him on the stage before a show one evening. He did it in front of almost 1,000 people. They videotaped it, and we watched it every morning on the TV in our stateroom.

* Carmie in Pennsylvania:

Yikes . . . July 10th! Wow, what's your hurry? Baby on the way?

CONGRATULATIONS!!!!!!

MY RESPONSE (to the two questions):

No hurry; we just felt the time was right. And besides, we had already booked our summer trip to Paris, followed by a cruise to several ports out of Nice . . . so making it a honeymoon just seemed like a fun thing to do.

As for the baby thing, methinks that Cynthia's three cats will keep us busy enough with caregiving issues . . . and there will still be plenty of time for . . . a dog? (NOT. Or at least not right away.)

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3. Rules for your cats and/or dogs

To pacify you, my dear pets, I have posted the following "rules" on our front door:

The dishes with the paw print are yours and contain your food. The other dishes are mine and contain my food. Please note, placing a paw print in the middle of my plate and food does not stake a claim for it becoming your food and dish, nor do I find that aesthetically pleasing in the slightest.

The stairway was not designed by NASCAR and is not a racetrack. Beating me to the bottom is not the object. Tripping me doesn't help because I fall faster than you can run.

I cannot buy anything bigger than a king-sized bed. I am very sorry about this. Do not think I will continue sleeping on the couch to ensure your comfort.

Dogs and cats can actually curl up in a ball when they sleep. It is not necessary to sleep perpendicular to each other stretched out to the fullest extent possible. I also know that sticking tails straight out and having tongues hanging out the other end to maximize space is nothing but sarcasm.

For the last time, there is not a secret exit from the bathroom. If by some miracle I beat you there and manage to get the door shut, it is not necessary to claw, whine, bark, meow, try to turn the knob or get your paw under the edge and try to pull the door open. I must exit through the same door I entered.

Also, I have been using the bathroom for years--canine or feline attendance is not mandatory.

The proper order is kiss me, then go smell the other dog or cat's butt. I cannot stress this enough!

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4. Reviews ...

A. I was mildly amused by GUESS WHO, a comedic take on the far superior 1967 drama GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER . . . this latest version has Ashton Kutcher, who's quite charming, coming home to meet his girlfriend's black parents . . . the father is played by Bernie Mac, a comedian who continues to impress me with his appearances in movies (I also liked his work in MR. 3000) . . . there are some funny moments in the film, but stretches of it were somewhat flat . . . rated PG-13.

B. THE CHORUS is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #439 follows:

Loved THE CHORUS, a French film about a mild-manner teacher of music (Clement Mathieu, superbly played by Gerard Jugnot) who becomes the supervisor at a boarding school for troubled boys . . . not only must he deal with the supposedly hard core delinquents, but making life even more difficult for him is the director of the school who believes that strong discipline is the only way to go . . . only when Mathieu introduces music do things begin to change . . . the accompanying music score is excellent . . . rated PG-13.

C. What do acne, PMS, menstrual cramps, insomnia, migraines, mood swings, hot flashes, depression, weight gain, and loss of sex drive have in common? They're all symptoms of hormone imbalance that can affect women from adolescence through menopause, according to Dr. Erika Schwartz in THE HORMONE SOLUTION--an excellent book that I recommend for both sexes.

I know it opened my eyes to many things; in particular, the fact that men can have many of these same symptoms . . . and actually go through something called andropause (or male menopause, if you want to think of it in those terms).

The good news is that that help is available; i.e., through the use of natural hormones derived from soy and yams . . . Dr. Schwartz stated prescribing these natural forms of estrogen and progesterone for herself and her patients, and the results have been nothing short of amazing.

THE HORMONE SOLUTION takes a complex issue that has only recently been addressed by the medical community and addresses it in a simple, understandable book that could well be used as a guide for many readers and/or their loved ones . . . in addition, it is a work that others may well want to discuss with their doctors.

There were several memorable passages; among them: What I had not realized before was that all these hormone imbalances are connected and could be treated successfully with natural hormone supplementation. The more women of different ages and different symptoms came to see me, the more convinced I became of the continuum of hormone changes we are subjected to at all ages. Natural hormone treatment was invariably successful and had none of the side effects associated with other types of medications. That was because natural hormones treated the root cause of the problems with substances closely resembling the missing or out-of-balance hormones our bodies make. There was no potentially harmful, synthetic substances in this hormone supplementation program.

Unfortunately, the medical profession has not been keen on addressing this obvious similarity to female menopause. Most doctors are men, and menopause does not have a pretty ring to it--it's about aging. And men are more afraid than women to address the inevitability of this process. Men pride themselves on the ability to father children into their eighties, so how could they be having the same problems as again women? (The truth, by the way, is that men who father children naturally in their eighties are as rare as women who give birth in their fifties.)

All scientists agree: Hormones are the common thread that makes up the fabric of our lives. They define us as men and women when we're young, they keep us healthy or make us sick, and yet the understanding we have of them is vague, contradictory, and inconsistent. . . . Unequivocally, the scientific community knows that hormone levels change every minute of the day, so why get hung up on one or two changes: menopause and puberty? A small step for science, a giant step for women. Once you make that connection, once you identify the continuum of hormone changes, menopause is a lot less scary, and its devastation just another mountain to scale.

D. I've heard about a bunch of RICH DAD books by Robert T. Kiyosaki, but to date, had never read any of them . . . so when I saw the cassette version of RICH DAD'S SUCCESS STORIES by Kiyosaki with Sharon L. Lechter, I started listening to it with some degree of interest.

Billed as "real life success stories from real life people who followed the rich dad lessons," I enjoyed hearing how a diverse range of folks took the lessons they learned and made money from them . . . one key seems to be that if you made up your mind what to do, carry it out right away (just don't sit on it and do nothing).

It got me thinking that if you can replace salary with passive income, that's certainly one thing to consider--seriously . . . for example, borrow money to buy assets . . . in other words, take out a mortgage on a house you want to rent out and have somebody else, the renter, buy it back.

Another idea I loved: Take advice from rich people, not salespeople!

There were many other noteworthy tidbits; among them: To keep watch on your investments, make sure you tour your properties every 3-4 months. Meet with the property managers. See what needs to be done, walk through all vacancies, review work that has to be done, and any other concerns involving the building.

Use a team of advisers to provide you with the information you need to make decisions and to act upon them.

Success equals 1 part knowledge or lessons learned, 1 part information or lessons learned by others and shared, and risk.

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5. VCR alert

A. SUGIHARA: A CONSPIRACY OF KINDNESS recalls diplomat Chiune Sugihara, a Japanese Oskar Schindler . . . he issued transit visas to 2,200 Jews while stationed in Lithuania in 1940 . . . Thursday at 10 p.m. on PBS Channel 12, Philadelphia, and Channel 12, New York City . . . PBS dates and times vary, so check local listings.

B. ELVIS is still another TV biopic about the King, but according to TV GUIDE, "it's better than most" . . .with "an uncanny title

performance by Irish actor Jonathan Rhys Meyers that goes beyond impersonation to capture Elvis' defiantly sexual style, and his desperation to escape poverty and to be taken seriously" . . . Sunday at 9 p.m. on CBS with a second part on Wednesday at 8 p.m.

C. I like watching TODAY every morning, but particularly in the warm weather on Fridays (or Tuesdays as noted) for the live concerts outside--weather permitting . . . among the upcoming shows, typically at 8:30 a.m. on NBC:

May 6, Neil Diamond
May 10, Dave Matthews Band (Tuesday)
May 13, Reba McEntire
May 20, Match Box Twenty's Rob Thomas
May 27, Bryan Adams & Def Leppard
June 3, Blackeyed Peas
June 10, Backstreet Boys
June 17, Hilary Duff
June 21, James Taylor (Tuesday)
July 1, Chicago and Earth, Wind & Fire

For more information on this entire series, please click:
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/7597326/>

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6. Flying blonde (BLONDE JOKE ALERT!)

A guy gets on a plane and finds himself seated next to a cute blonde. He immediately turns to her and makes his move.

"You know," he says, "I've heard that flights will go quicker if you strike up a conversation with your fellow passenger. So let's talk."

The blonde, who had just opened her book, closes it slowly and says to the guy, "What would you like to discuss?"

"Oh, I don't know," says the guy. "How about nuclear power?"

"OK," says the blonde. "That could be an interesting topic. But let me ask you a question first. A horse, a cow, and a deer all eat the same stuff--grass. Yet the deer excretes little pellets, the cow turns out a flat patty, and the horse produces muffins of dried poop. Why do you suppose that is?"

The guy is dumbfounded. Finally he replies, "I haven't the slightest idea."

"So tell me," says the blonde, "How is it that you feel qualified to discuss nuclear power when you don't know crap?"

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7. Websites

A. The following website is a NEW search engine for job listings. It offers something very different from the traditional job search engines. For example, in one simple search, the site gives job seekers free access to millions of employment opportunities from hundreds of websites. It includes all the job listings from over 500 websites, major job boards, the top 200 newspapers, hundreds of associations and company career pages. For more information, please click:

<http://www.indeed.com/>

This database includes many of the other job databases, such as Monster. It is fast becoming the one stop shop for job seekers. All you do is type in your job title and city, and the site searches for matches. There are also ways to modify your search to be more specific. For example you can even search for jobs only at General Electric in Philadelphia.

B. Dating myself, I must admit to being able to relate--at least somewhat--to this senior citizen version of the Elvis song, "Are You Lonesome Tonight?" Yet even if he was before your time, methinks you'll enjoy; please click:

<http://mywebpages.comcast.net/jwaller/elvis/>

Be sure to turn up your soundcard to hear the melody.

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

As you hopefully know by now, you should ALWAYS feel free to mention this newsletter to your friends, relatives, etc. . . . should they want to subscribe (AT NO COST), all they have to do is go to my homepage . . . then click on "Special Offer" at the bottom . . . it's that simple!

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8. Computer tip

When you send an e-mail and want a response, tell folks that in your subject line.

Here's an example of something that I send out to my fellow Union offers at Bucks County Community College:

Interesting news. Your thinking, please? Best, Blaine

The fact that I have a question mark tells all that I'd like them to reply.

Please do the same thing if you ever want and/or need me to reply to something that you write. If I see a question mark, it will tip me off that you'd like a response.

Or if it is something important that you are sending, you can always do something like the following:

Help me sell my house. (\$500 REWARD!) See above. Best, Blaine

Limiting the use of all capital letters helps get my attention. So does the exclamation and the use of a real name.

And the \$500 offer isn't bad either; in fact, see Section 1C for more details of that!

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9. 50 fun things to do in a mall, part 1 of 2

1. Ride mechanical horses with coins fished out of the reflecting pond.
2. Try pants on backwards at the Grap. Ask the salesperson if they make your butt look big.
3. Dial 900 numbers from demonstration phones in Radio Shlock.
4. Sneeze on the sample tray at Heckory Farms and helpfully volunteer to consume its now unwanted contents.
5. At the bottom of an escalator, scream "MY SHOELACES! AAAGH!"
6. Ask the sales personnel at the music store whether inflated CD prices are in pesos or rubles.
7. Teach pet store parrots new vocabulary that makes them unsalable.
8. Stomp on ketchup packets at Burger Queen . . .
9. but save a few to slurp on as snacks. Tell people that they're "astronaut food."
10. Follow patrons of D. Balton's around while reading aloud from DIANETICS.
11. Ask mall cops for stories of World War I.
12. Ask a salesman why a particular TV is labeled black and white and insist that it's a color set. When he disagrees, give him a strange look and say, "You mean you really can't see it?"
13. Construct a new porch deck in the tool department of Snears.
14. Wear pancake makeup and new clothes and pose as a fashion dummy in clothes departments, occasionally screaming without warning.
15. Test mattresses in your pajamas.
16. Ask the tobacconist if his hovercraft is full of eels.
17. If you're patient, stare intently into a surveillance camera for an hour while rocking from side to side.

18. Sprint up the down escalator.
19. Stare at static on a display TV and challenge other shoppers whether they, too, can see the "hidden picture."
20. Ask appliance personnel if they have any TVs that play only in Spanish.
21. Make unusual requests at the Piercing Pagoda.
22. Ask a salesperson in the hardware department how well a particular saw cuts through bone.
23. At the pet store, ask if they have bulk discounts on gerbils, and whether there's much meat on them.
24. Hula dance by the demonstration air conditioner.
25. Ask for red-tinted lenses at the optometrist.

(to be concluded next week)

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10. A quote I like

The talent of success is nothing more than doing what you can do well, and doing well whatever you do without thought of fame. If it comes at all it will come because it is deserved, not because it is sought after.--Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882), American poet, educator and linguist

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11. Thought for the day

Spoiled

When I was a kid, adults used to bore me to tears with their tedious diatribes about how hard things were when they were growing up; what with walking twenty-five miles to school every morning . . . uphill BOTH ways . . . through year 'round blizzards . . . carrying their younger siblings on their backs . . . to their one-room schoolhouse, where they maintained a Straight-A average despite their full-time, after-school job at the local textile mill . . . where they worked for 35 cents an hour just to help keep their family from starving to death.

And I remember promising myself that when I grew up, there was no way in hell I was going to lay a bunch of crap like that! On kids . . . about how hard I had it and how easy they've got it! But: Now that I'm over the ripe old age of thirty, I can't help but look around and notice the youth of today. You've got it so easy! I mean, compared to my childhood, you live in a damn Utopia! And I hate to say it, but you kids today you don't know how good you've got it!

I mean, when I was a kid we didn't have The Internet . . . we wanted to know something, we had to go to the damn library and look it up ourselves! In the card catalog! There was no e-mail! We had to

actually write somebody a letter . . . with a pen! Then you had to walk all the way across the street and put it in the mailbox, and it would take like a week to get there!

There were no MP3s or Napsters! You wanted to steal music, you had to go to the damn record store and shoplift it yourself! Or you had to wait around all day to tape it off the radio, and the DJ usually talked over the beginning and mess it all up!

You want to hear about hardship? You couldn't just download porn! You had to bribe some homeless dude to buy you a copy of HUSTLER at the 7-11! Those were your options!

We didn't have fancy sh*t like Call Waiting! If you were on the phone and somebody else called, they got a busy signal! And we didn't have fancy Caller ID Boxes either! When the phone rang, you had no idea who it was! It could be your boss, your mom, a collections agent, your drug dealer, you didn't know! You just had to pick it up and take your chances, mister!

We didn't have any fancy Sony Play station videogames with high-resolution 3-D graphics! We had the Atari 2600! With games like "Space Invaders" and "Asteroids" and the graphics sucked ass! Your guy was a little square! You had to use your imagination! And there were no multiple levels or screens; it was just one screen forever! And you could never win, the game just kept getting harder and faster until you died! . . . Just like LIFE!

When you went to the movie theater there no such thing as stadium seating! All the seats were the same height! If a tall guy sat in front! of you and you couldn't see, you were just screwed!

Sure, we had cable television, but back then that was only like 20 channels and there was no onscreen menu and no remote control! You had to use a little book called TV GUIDE to find out what was on! You were screwed when it came to channel surfing! You had to get off your ass and walk over to the TV to change the channel, and there was no Cartoon Network! You could only get cartoons on Saturday morning . . . d'ya hear what I'm saying? We had to wait ALL WEEK, you spoiled little bas*ards! We didn't have microwaves. If we wanted to heat something up, we had to use the stove . . . imagine that! If we wanted popcorn, we had to use that stupid jiffy pop and shake it over the stove like an idiot forever.

That's exactly what I'm talking about! You kids today have got it too easy. You're spoiled. You guys wouldn't have lasted five minutes back in 1980s!

Author Unknown
(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

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12. Advance planning department

A. PULSE OF THE NETWORK, my public affairs radio show, next airs on Saturday, May 7, at 8:30 p.m. on WWFM--the classical network . . . my guest will be Liz Frye, regional director with Experience Works . . . we'll be discussing "Senior Workforce Solutions."

To find out more about the outstanding work done by Liz and Experience Works, please click:

<http://experienceworks.org/>

To listen to the show locally, check out:

WWFM

89.1 FM: Trenton, NJ

The show is also broadcast throughout New Jersey, Pennsylvania and as far away as Colorado . . . for a complete list of stations and/or further information, please click:

<http://www.wwfm.org>

You can now listen via Internet, too . . . even if you're not in the above listening areas, the station has made it possible to listen from ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD! . . . just go the above site, then click "Enter Here" . . . neat, huh?

***** REMINDER *****

PULSE OF THE NETWORK will be off the air as of the end of May after some 250 shows over the last five years . . . the station has new management and is moving in some different directions with respect to programming.

THANKS to all who listened, as well as to those who suggested guests--or were, in fact, guests themselves.

I'm still interested in doing a similar-type radio show for another station . . . or even a cable TV version . . . so if you have any media contacts/suggestions, please do share them with me.

B. I'm teaching a two-part course on "eBay Basics" at Bucks CCC on Thursday, May 5 and Thursday, May 12 . . . both nights from 6:30-9:30 . . . there's a registration fee and seats are limited . . . for more information, call 215.968.8409.

C. If you're "into" film, then you will want to attend a panel of film critics that I'm moderating at the Algonquin Film Festival on Saturday, May 21, at 10 a.m. in Warrington, PA . . . among those slated to participate: Pete Croatto (filmcritic.com), Elise Nakhnikan and Bob Brown (TIME OFF) and Dan Buskirk (PHILADELPHIA WEEKLY), discussing what they are looking for in films they review.

there's NO CHARGE if you just want to attend the panel . . . send me an e-mail for more information, if interested.

Should you want to attend anything else at what promises to be an excellent festival (featuring independent film), please click the following link for more information:

<http://www.algonquinfest.org>

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PS. Please join me in celebrating Mother's Day this coming Sunday . . . I'm blessed to that my mother is alive and well; Cynthia's mom is too . . . also, don't forget to continue praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

Blaine Greenfield
19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
Phone : 828.633.1049

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD (complete with \$500 REWARD)

#448

4.25.2005

In this issue:

1. **Reflections**
 2. **FYI**
 3. **Sure thing**
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 5. **VCR alert**
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 7. **Websites**
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 10. **A quote I like**
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-

1. Reflections

A. What a week--my first full week being engaged to Cynthia . . . so much is happening to us, so fast, but we are managing to survive . . . no, make that flourish.

We have begun house hunting in the Somerset/Hunterdon County area--anywhere from Clinton to Basking Ridge and parallel to or above Route 202--in New Jersey . . . so if you do know of some townhouses for sale with 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, a finished basement (walkout ideal) and 2-car garage, please let me know about it IMMEDIATELY.

By the same token, let me share the following information with you about a:

***** \$500 REWARD *****

To anybody who finds me a buyer for my Washington Crossing, PA townhouse.

Here's the key information you need to know:

52 Sentinel Road (Heritage Hills section)

3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths

New deck

Unfinished basement

1-car garage

Fireplace

House is in model-like condition.

List price: \$404,900

For more information, please get in touch.

Thanks,
Blaine (Greenfield)

bginbc@aol.com
215.369.3453

I've truly loved living in Bucks County, and methinks that anybody fortunate enough to buy my house will feel the same . . . yet it is a bit far from Cynthia's place of work in Somerset County, NJ . . . also, when we move, we are looking to be a bit closer to her mother in West Orange and my folks in Floral Park, NY.

B. Cynthia and I then had some weekend . . . we had a nice meeting with Rabbi Rosenbaum, the official who will be officiating at our wedding on July 10 . . . from there, we met my mom for lunch, visited my dad at his nursing home and then joined some 30 family members for a lovely seder at the home of one of my cousins.

The next day, Cynthia hosted members of her family for the second night of Passover . . . she cooked a great meal: chicken in an orange-honey sauce, string beans and snow pea pods, and French fries that had her "special" seasoning . . . we also used the evening to celebrate her mother's birthday (I dare not tell you her age, especially since she will soon be my mother-in-law), and to mark the occasion we had a delicious ice cream cake from Maggie Moo's.

C. I'm blessed to have had a great week, too . . . on one day, I had a meeting scheduled with a colleague/friend . . . since it was beautiful outside, we decided that it would be a waste to stay inside . . . so we walked out, down the parking lot and right into the adjoining Tyler State Park--one of the most magnificent facilities of that type I have ever seen . . . with the trees starting to bloom, it was almost breathtaking to walk the path alongside the water.

On another day, I got to hear another colleague (Charles Burrage) present an informative talk at the Faculty Center . . . he was discussing the various "little" things we can do to keep in health, and it got me thinking that something that I do isn't all that strange . . . often when I'm at home and get a call, I'll pick up the phone and walk back and forth with it. . . I may not get a lot of exercise that way, yet such walking does beat sitting at least in my opinion.

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

This week, it goes to Janet Puente--benefits manager at Bucks County Community College . . . she has helped me immensely over the past several years with answers to my personal questions, as well as to those queries involving our teacher's union.

She seems to have the uncanny ability to respond to a request for information, almost before the e-mail is sent or the call is made. In the rare cases when she doesn't have an answer, she will tell you that . . . and then she'll get right back to you with what you need to know.

What's so amazing about Janet is that she just keeps helping, often long after employees have left the College . . . more than one retiree has told me that Janet is THE BEST . . . I agree!

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2. FYI

Donald Trump's latest book, TRUMP: THINK LIKE A BILLIONAIRE (see also Section 4C), had this one interesting idea for saving money:

You should also always feel comfortable bargaining for goods and services. I do it all the time, and I'm one of the richest men on earth. Even in high-end shops, I bargain. After all, the more you're paying for something, the more the seller should be able to shave off the price. I hate paying retail, and it makes me cringe when I see other people doing it. I've walked into stores and offered \$2,000 for a \$10,000 item. It can be embarrassing for me (especially since everyone knows that I'm Trump and that I'm wealthy), but you'd be amazed at the discounts you can get if you simply ask. You do have to be willing to walk away, but after you've walked away a few times, the price will come down. It's moronic to be proud to save money.

FYI, part 2

THANKS to all who wrote to congratulate Cynthia and I on our engagement . . . we really did appreciate hearing from so many folks.

* One e-mail, though, stood out from all the rest . . . it was from Al in New Jersey, who wrote:

Congratulations on your engagement. You should have Nachos and lots of joy together. Cynthia sounds like a great person from all you have written about her. Mazel tov!

MY TWO CENTS:

Cynthia truly is a great person. She's also very intelligent, as evidenced by the fact that she accepted my marriage proposal. And she likes Nachos almost as much as she likes nachas (a Yiddish term for joy or blessings).

* Sue in Pennsylvania urged me to "go for it" [my marriage, new home, etc.] since "you only live once."

MY TWO CENTS, AGAIN--OR MAYBE THIS MAKES IT FOUR CENTS:
Perhaps.

However, in reflecting on my life to date, it seems that I've already gone through several phases . . . and God only knows what the future holds (and she doesn't tell me).

I spent my childhood at home with my parents, then went to college . . . from there, it was to a long period of being married . . . then my bachelor phase . . . and now, smiling here, to my continued life with Cynthia.

Somebody once told me that I was like Rip Van Winkle; i.e., I've only started to come alive over the past years.

I see it more as my being a work in progress.

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3. Sure thing

At a White House party, a woman approached Calvin Coolidge,

famed for his silence, and said "Mr. President, I made a bet I can get more than three words out of you."

He replied: "You lose."

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4. Reviews

A. Saw HOSTAGE and liked the beginning of it about how Bruce Willis fails to prevent one kidnapping and winds up in a quiet town in his next career . . . even the next kidnapping held my interest, but when . . . no, I won't ruin the possible suspense for you and tell you what happens next . . . but I will tell you that the plotline became both predictable and contrived, and by the end of the film, I only cared about getting out of the theater to my own freedom . . . extremely violent . . . rated R.

B. OCEAN'S TWELVE is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #429 follows:

Saw OCEAN'S TWELVE and will summarize my reaction to it with two words: Miss it! . . . OCEAN'S ELEVEN was fun, in a way; this is a mess . . . it is a disjointed caper film with far too many characters popping in and out . . . I didn't care about any of them and, in fact, walked out before the ending . . . rated PG-13.

C. I've enjoyed all of Donald Trump's other books, and so when I saw his latest--TRUMP: THINK LIKE A BILLIONAIRE (see also Section 2)--written with Meredith McIver, I knew that this just had to be the title that was for me . . . I mean, who wouldn't be interested in not only the title, but by a subtitle that held even more promise: EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SUCCESS, REAL ESTATE AND LIFE.

Sadly, I was disappointed after this quick reading effort . . . it seems to have been thrown together without much thought except to present a whole bunch of ideas and write about them in short paragraphs that don't hold much substance.

To cite one example: Trump dangles the promise of the secret behind what he calls his Mar-a-Lago diet . . . save the \$21.95 purchase price since I'll give it here:

1. It [food] has to be served in a fantastic setting.
2. It has to look fantastic.
3. It has to look incredible.
4. It cannot make you gain weight.

I don't know about you, but the above tells me very little about what I would need to do if I wanted to follow the actual diet.

Yet with almost anything, if you dig long enough, you can find at least something of value . . . and that said, I did manage to walk away with these tidbits:

I can understand why some people would appreciate the convenience of ATM cards, but a lot of other tech devices are completely unnecessary and get in the way of human contact. If you have something important to

say, look the person in the eye and say it. And if you can't get there, pick up the phone and make sure they hear the sincerity in your voice. E-mail is for wimps.

Pay attention to words like "funky" and "charming," which you can translate as "unlivable" and "run-down." Ads that brag "newly renovated" usually mean that the landlord has simply slapped new knobs on the bathroom cabinets. Other phrases that should make you nervous include "old-world appeal" (read: "dilapidated"), "cozy" (read: "tiny"), and "freshly painted" (read: "There's nothing good to say about the apartment except that it has a fresh coat of paint"). Anything that sounds too good to be true is—especially when it comes to apartments.

Always get references from contractors. Ask the contractor to give you ten names of other jobs they have done within the last year. Jobs that they did four or five years ago are not good measures; the jobs need to be recent. And don't ask for just two names; ask for the full ten. It's easy to make two parties happy, but only a great contractor can make ten parties happy.

A final part of the book promised a look "Inside the Apprentice" . . . I'm not a real big fan of the show, so this material had little appeal to me . . . in addition, all it seemed to be was a sneak preview of the then-upcoming season.

D. Heard the cassette version of WHERE THE RIGHT WENT WRONG, written and read by Patrick J. Buchanan . . . though I don't ordinarily see myself as a conservative, I do like learning about all political viewpoints . . . and this book certainly opened my eyes to some things about our current foreign policy that even staunch Republicans find puzzling, such as (to quote the author): "In 2003, the US invaded a country that did not threaten us, and did not war with us, to disarm it of weapons we have since discovered it did not have." . . . I don't know about you, but that bothers me every time I hear of the death of even just one Iraqi or American citizen . . . Buchanan presents lots of other thought-provoking criticisms of Bush policies on terrorism, imperialism, the Middle East, free trade, and the deficit . . . I found that all interesting . . . yet Buchanan does not stop there . . . he also takes on liberals with his stand against immigration, affirmative action, abortion, and gay rights . . . you may not agree with all of WHERE THE RIGHT WENT WRONG; however, it will make definitely make you ponder about what is happening in the world.

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5. VCR alert

A. BLEEP: CENSORING HOLLYWOOD examines the industry of "sanitizers," companies that remove sex and violence from film . . . Tuesday at 10 p.m. on AMC; repeated on Wednesday at 1:30 a.m. and Sunday at 11:30 a.m.

B. Kenneth Branagh stars in WARM SPRINGS, a 2005 cable drama about FDR's struggle with polio before he became president . . . Saturday at 8 p.m. on HBO.

C. RIDING THE BUS WITH MY SISTER features Rosie O'Donnell and Andie MacDowell in a 2005 Hallmark Hall of Fame adaptation of Rachel Simon's memoir . . . TV GUIDE says O'Donnell delivers

"an affecting performance" as a mentally challenged woman who spends her days riding buses . . . Sunday at 9 p.m. on CBS.

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6. Vive le French!

The Palestinians, understandably, want a homeland of their own. So far, it doesn't seem chopping up Israel even smaller than it already is will be a satisfactory solution for either side.

So why not give France to the Palestinians?

The French have already stated that nothing is worth fighting for. France certainly has more room, better irrigation and soil than the West Bank or the Gaza Strip. The houses are nicer, and tourists will visit, helping the economy. Plus, there are no pesky Israeli troops there for the Palestinians to hassle with.

Heck, the French won't even fight back . . . and they may not even notice their country's gone. It's possibly the perfect solution!

But what about a name for this new "Franco-Palestine" territory? May I humbly suggest calling it Frankenstine?

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7. Websites

A. Sadly, more Americans will file for bankruptcy this year than will graduate from college. The goal of this website, created by the JumpStart coalition, is to educate young people before they end up with money problems.

The link below has more information and offers a free online quiz to test teens' knowledge about money. Many parents may learn from this site as well. To take the online quiz and to learn more, please click:

http://archive.parade.com/2005/0410/0410_intelligence.html

Here are a few tidbits I learned from the site:

The average American family has 6.3 bank credit cards, 2.2 debit cards and 6.4 retail credit cards per household.

46% of college students have a credit card in their own name and 37% carry a credit card balance from month to month.

Americans' consumer credit debt is in excess of \$2 trillion as of the end of 2004, of which \$791 billion is revolving consumer credit.

Information abstracted from Parade Magazine's website (see above).

B. You can now check out Boston, Manhattan and Washington, DC with a celebrity as your own personal tour guide; i.e., you cell phone celebrity talking tour guide. The following website offers a fun new way to explore the above mentioned cities. The tours are available 24/7. And maps can be downloaded at the website.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.talkingstreet.com/>

The audio tours are entertaining, easy to experience, full of great stories with expert commentary by Larry King, Steven Tyler, Sigourney Weaver or Jerry Stiller. The cost is just \$5.95, plus whatever phone charges you accrue with your cell phone carrier.

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

If you want to see some of the books I've reviewed previously (and typically liked), go to "Blaine's Best" on the left, then "Websites" . . . at letter "O," click on the second paragraph.

You'll see over 420 of my past reviews that I've posted at the amazon.com website . . . as always, if you find any of them helpful and if given the opportunity, please click the "Yes" button indicating that fact.

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8. Computer tip

If you have more than one printer (one for color and one for black-and-white stuff) or a fax, your computer might sometimes have trouble "deciding" which one to use for various jobs . . . there's a simple way for you to make the decision.

Go to start, then Control Printer, then Printers & Other Hardware, then View installed printers or fax printers . . . you'll see whatever printers or fax machines you have available for printing . . . go to the one you want to use as your default choice and click your right mouse to choose it as to "Set as Default Printer."

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9. Job training

New evening classes for men!
All men are welcome

NOTE:

Due to the complexity and level of difficulty, each course will accept a maximum of eight participants. Sign up early and get a discount on registration The course covers two day. Topics covered in this course include:

DAY ONE

How to fill ice cube trays
Step by step guide with slide presentation

Toilet rolls--do they grow on the holders?
Roundtable discussion

Differences between laundry basket & floor
Practicing with hamper (Pictures and graphics)

Dishes & silverware; do they levitate/fly to kitchen sink or dishwasher themselves?

Debate among a panel of experts

Loss of virility; losing the remote control to your significant other
Help line and support groups

Learning how to find things
Starting with looking in the right place instead of turning the house
upside down while screaming
Open forum

DAY TWO

Empty milk cartons; do they belong in the fridge or the bin?
Group discussion and role play

Health watch; bringing her flowers is not harmful to your health
PowerPoint presentation

Real men ask for directions when lost
Real life testimonial from the one man who did

Is it genetically impossible to sit quietly as she parallel parks?
Driving simulation

Living with adults; basic differences between your mother and partner
Online class and role playing

How to be the ideal shopping companion
Relaxation exercises, meditation and breathing techniques

Remembering important dates & calling when you're going to be late
Bring your calendar or PDA to class

Getting over it; learning how to live with being wrong all the time
Individual counselors available

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10. A quote I like

The only way to have a friend is to be one.—Ralph Waldo
Emerson (1803-1882), American author, poet and philosopher

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11. Thought for the day

Beauty of a woman

The beauty of a woman
Is not in the clothes she wears,
The figure that she carries,
Or the way she combs her hair.

The beauty of a woman
must be seen from in her eyes,
Because that is the doorway to her heart,
the place where love resides.

The beauty of a woman
is not in a facial mole,
But true beauty in a woman
Is reflected in her soul.

It is the caring that she lovingly gives,
The passion that she shows,
And the beauty of a woman
With passing years only grows!

Author Unknown
(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

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12. Advance planning department

A. PULSE OF THE NETWORK, my public affairs radio show, next airs on Saturday, April 30, at 8:30 p.m. on WWFM--the classical network . . . my guest will be Joe Doyle, managing director of Actors' Net of Bucks County . . . we'll be discussing "Regional Theater."

To find out more about the outstanding work done by Joe and the Actors' Net, please click:
<http://www.actorsnetbucks.org/>

To listen to the show locally, check out:
WWFM
89.1 FM: Trenton, NJ

The show is also broadcast throughout New Jersey, Pennsylvania and as far away as Colorado . . . for a complete list of stations and/or further information, please click:
<http://www.wwfm.org>

You can now listen via Internet, too . . . even if you're not in the above listening areas, the station has made it possible to listen from ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD! . . . just go the above site, then click "Enter Here" . . . neat, huh?

***** REMINDER *****
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I'm still interested in doing a similar-type radio show for another station . . . or even a cable TV version . . . so if you have any media contacts/suggestions, please do share them with me.

B. I'm teaching a two-part course on "eBay Basics" at Bucks CCC on Thursday, May 5 and Thursday, May 12 . . . both nights from 6:30-9:30 . . . there's a registration fee and seats are limited . . . for more information, call 215.968.8409.

C. My good friend Kevin Jameson is presenting two upcoming workshops . . . see below for more information:

Fortune and Fame awaits the Inventor of the Next Big Thing!
That could be YOU!

The Wellness Center at Doylestown Hospital presents Kevin Jameson, noted seminar leader (you may have attended "Breathe with Ease" and/or his "Whole Brain Diet" workshops), with an exciting new program based upon his book **WOWideas!**

This 2-hour introductory session entitled "Your Inventive Mind" takes you on a rollicking 150 year history of the United States Patent system and shows in 5 easy-to-implement steps . . . how to ignite your creativity.

You will enjoy a fun night out of great entertainment and lasting education.

Full details below. Click here or paste into browser to register for either event:

<http://www.wellnessdh.org/store/page2.html>

Regards, Tourneu & Associates LLC

WOWideas! Your Inventive Mind Seminar:
Wednesday, May 11, 7-9 p.m.
\$25.00

Do you constantly have ideas popping into your head but you can't seem to get them off the ground? You see others take your ideas and make a ton of money with them? If you find yourself wishing to be more creative but just don't know how, when or where, then this is the course for you. It will unlock your innate creativity, put Your Inventive Mind (TM) to work, and make the complex process of invention a series of simple steps! Finances, careers, family and your personal life require daily doses of inventiveness too, not just to survive but to thrive. You are filled with WOWideas! (TM) and will leave with 5 simple techniques to ignite Your Inventive Mind! Presented by Kevin Jameson, a very creative sales trainer and national account manager for a division of Honeywell.

WOWideas! Your Inventive Mind Workshop
Saturday, May 14, 9 a.m-1 p.m.
\$75.00

This action-packed workshop combines all of the humor and insight that the Seminar does, with the added value of individual and group activities. You will learn how to apply the 4 Inventive Personality Roles required to take an idea from thought to profit and beyond. Plus, you'll get an in-depth understanding and explore the successful techniques and attributes of the likes of Einstein, Edison, Lincoln and many others. Each participant completes their own personal "to do" list which represents a unique real-world way to further their innate creativity for ultimate long-term success! Presented by Kevin Jameson, a very creative sales trainer and national account manager for a division of Honeywell. Prior attendance at the seminar on May 11 is encouraged, but not required.

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PS. Belated wishes to any reader who celebrates the Passover season . . . and regardless of your religion, make sure you get to eat at least a few chocolate-covered macaroon; they're

delicious . . . also, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

Blaine Greenfield
19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
Phone : 828.633.1049

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #447

04.18.2005

In this issue:

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12. ... **Advance planning department**

1. Reflections

A. THE IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT: I popped the question and, fortunately, for me, Cynthia accepted . . . we are now officially engaged and planning to get married sometime in July.

Cynthia, my beautiful babe, and I were at a Beatlemania show at Havana (215.862.5501) in New Hope, PA, on Sunday night . . . toward the end of the show, one of the performers asked: "Are Blaine and Cynthia here?"

We waved, then from the stage came the question: "Cynthia, will you marry Blaine?" . . . she jumped up and said, "Yes" and that's the story--at least as of this writing.

OK, OK, for all you non-romantics out there . . . the show was fun and our meal was good, too . . . we both had oversized hamburgers in a concert setting that surprised us . . . there were mobs of people at the outside bar in the front of the restaurant, plus lots of people smoking . . . however, when you come to the area where they have the concerts, it's a whole different environment . . . every seat provides a pretty good view of the stage . . . and if you're fortunate like we were, you'll get to sit on the plush couches toward the sides of the room.

***** HELP NEEDED *****

As many of you know, I've absolutely loved living in Washington Crossing (Bucks County, PA) . . . yet it is far from where Cynthia works and even further from her mother, as well as my folks . . . so it is with some degree of sadness that we've come to the conclusion that I'll sell my place here in the near future.

I mention it for two reasons:

1. If you know of somebody looking to buy a great townhouse in

an even better location, have them get in touch with me . . . I have three bedrooms, 2.5 baths, a deck, a large unfinished basement, a great view, and much more . . . I do believe the house will sell quickly, so the sooner I'm contacted, the better; and

2. We're looking to move someplace between where Cynthia works (Somerset, NJ) and where I work (Newtown, PA) and, also, toward where her mother lives (West Orange, NJ) . . . that is in the direction of where my folks live as well . . . if need be, I'm willing to drive a bit if we can find the perfect location.

We're thinking near Route 78 might work, say anywhere between Basking Ridge and Clinton . . . we'd therefore consider such other towns as Bernardsville, Bedminster, Pluckemin, Bridgewater, Martinsville, Somerville, Whitehouse, Annandale, etc.

We do want a townhouse-type place with 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, garage (2 car garage would be ideal), and basement . . . location is key, in that we want a place that is both quiet and with some sort of view . . . we'd also consider a 55 and over community, in that as unlikely as it sounds, I qualify.

Any ideas/thoughts? If so, I'd be MOST APPRECIATIVE if you would share them with me.

B. Unfortunately, this past week was not a good one with respect to news I heard about some people I care about . . . actually, change that . . . it was a terrible week.

Three people died . . . first, I heard the news about Peg Zimmerman--a longtime friend and colleague of mine at Bucks . . . that was then followed by Anita Parente's death . . . I did not know her well, but from my brief interactions (and from her many students), I came to realize that she was a magnificent teacher . . . then, lastly, I was saddened to hear that my good friend Jim Richard's wife passed away . . . she was loved by so many people; in fact, Cynthia and I never saw anything like her wake . . . we got there toward the tail end of the visiting period and still had to wait some two hours in a line that stretched outside of the funeral home.

Writing this makes me realize that we all just need to keep being grateful for all our many blessings!

C. I've been fortunate to have been assigned to a new Small Business Development Center client, Judith Lindemberger . . . she heads her own firm, The Lindemberger Group, that specializes in consulting for the human resource community.

She knows her stuff, and if you're in need of assistance in such areas as HR audits, executive coaching for your employees, mentoring programs, sexual harassment awareness, and a whole lot more, then consider contacting Judith.

For more information about The Lindemberger Group, please click: <http://www.lindembergergroup.com>

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

This week, it goes to Devang Patel--owner of MaggieMoo's (908.359.6020) in Hillsborough, NJ . . . he and his wife Malini,

the store's manager, always make Cynthia and I feel welcome when we visit their place for ice cream that never fails to delight . . . their ice cream cakes are also out of this world, and they'll make them in any flavor combination that you want.

There are at least three other places we could get ice cream from within a one-mile radius of where Cynthia lives, but to us it's a no-brainer in large part because of the big smile we always get from Devang . . . no, make that from Devang, Malini, and ALL his employees . . . they make you feel like they're happy to see you, and they want you to experience the same joy from the ice cream that they get from both making and serving it.

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2. FYI

You ever make a bet with somebody you care about, say over something silly; e.g., who won the Academy Award in some year? Or even what time it is (say when you're in bed, and you and your partner wake up in the middle of the morning).

Some of my friends bet on the outcome of games, be they poker or sports-related.

Here's an approach to consider: Make the prize something that is mutually beneficial to both people betting.

So the next time you're in an argument with somebody you care about, and let's say it is over a factual matter, decide that the winner will get a kiss or hug. That way, everybody wins.

One person who shall remain nameless even gave me this bit of advice when I asked her about this idea: I bet [my husband] all the time. I win, he gets sex from me. He wins, I get sex from him.

If you have the bet with somebody you're not romantically involved with, consider making a walk the prize. Or chocolate often works, though the key is to make the prize of very little monetary value. (So give a Hershey Kiss, as opposed to a box of chocolates.)

FYI, part 2

I've been alluding to a something that something I'd like to run at Bucks CCC to help smokers kick the habit . . . stay tuned for details, as I'm close to finalizing my idea . . . in the meantime, I thought you'd like to see these e-mails I've received from readers:

* Brian in Pennsylvania:

I don't know if you were aware that my dad had died from smoking-related cancer. This habit seems to be a life decision that many make, seemingly without any logic. Even my mom smoked, despite her condition and my father's tragic end. This activity makes no sense. I wish I had a solution. How about \$10/pack taxes?

* Carol in Pennsylvania:

I am sorry to hear about your father's ailments. I, too, once smoked. I did quit many years ago, and it was the BEST thing that I have ever done in my life. When my daughter turned 7 years old, I asked her what she wanted for her birthday. She said, "I want you to quit smoking."

I said, come on . . . what do you really want? She insisted, "I want you to quit smoking!" She was serious. I agreed to her request.

I can't explain the FREEDOM that I feel. I never realized the hold that cigarettes had on me and my life. I feel lucky that I was able to quit. It took me a solid year, but I did it! And the best part is that I was able to hold her to not smoking because she made me quit. So as she went through the peer pressure years of Jr. High and High School, I reminded her of how she made me quit, so she better not start! To date, she is smoke free, and she is almost 18!

* Jean in Pennsylvania:

AM very sorry to hear about your Dad and, from the stories you have told me, am certain he will put his attitude behind his recovery. As for ideas regarding helping others with the hideous effects of smoking, what would happen if you got one of the marketing people from the cigarette companies to stand behind their own messages of wanting to be customer-centered and ask them to put a 30-minute TV program on.

You are the moderator, and you get people to tell their individual stories about smoking and health, and you have them pledge dollars to some agreed upon cause and have people phone in with pledges. Important to have a medical person on the panel to talk about the silence of ravage coming from heavy cigarette smoking. Or maybe just do that on a smaller scale and have hospitals sponsor you.

* Sharyn in Pennsylvania:

In regards to your Dad's years of smoking . . . yes, this is a terrible habit and can lead to some many illnesses. My best friend in New York had a vein transplant in one of her legs. She is 62 years old and has much trouble walking and uses a cane and sometimes a wheelchair.

She had several surgeries and said to me "if I had know then what I know now." She was a smoker and stopped many years ago. As for my husband Hank, we have been married for twenty years this June. He smoked from the time he was 15 until approximately 10 years ago when he stopped when our grandson was two and diagnosed with Asthma. Hank was fine until the winter of 2002 when he developed a dry cough, and we thought he had lung cancer. He had a lung biopsy and was diagnosed with Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis. We just completed many tests and evaluations at U of Pa, and he will be on a list for a possible lung transplant. He has this disease in both lungs. We have oxygen at home, which he uses at night. He still works full time in a lighting showroom, does not have to walk far, but is tired when he returns home at night.

There is no cure for this. He was taking interferon (shots 3x a week) at a cost of \$50,000.00 per year. He is now off this drug. Many people who have this disease live only up to 5 years; hopefully, he will survive a lot longer.

This damn smoking does nothing good for anyone! I have a son 33 years old who still smokes (not around us), and I cannot get him to quit. For years after Hank stopped smoking, he was hospitalized for minor things; e.g., kidney stones, eye surgery, etc. And every time up until 1999, his chest and lung x-rays were fine, no sign of any disease. This comes out of nowhere. Check it out on the website; there are many sites including Huff'n'Puff.

It is very difficult watching my husband try to grab breathes, especially when we are walking through flea markets, for example. He walks slowly.

PLEASE: ALL OF YOU SMOKERS--STOP!! STOP!! STOP!! EVERY TIME

YOU LIGHT UP, YOU ARE PUTTING ANOTHER NAIL IN YOUR COFFIN. I KNOW WHEN YOU ARE YOUNG YOU THINK NOTHING WILL HAPPEN TO YOU BUT I AM HERE TO TELL YOU THAT EVEN WHEN YOU ARE IN YOUR EARLY SIXTIES YOU ARE STILL NOT READY TO "CASH IN."

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3. Bad news

The doctor goes to the patient and says, "You only have six months to live."

The patient replies, "That's awful!"

The doctor adds, "And what's worse, you owe \$5,000."

"I don't have five thousand dollars," says the patient.

So the doctor says, "OK, I'll give you a year."

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4. Reviews ...

A. WALK ON WATER is a complex drama that will hold your interest . . . it is a combination part spy thriller, part romance about an Israeli hit man who finds that things are not always quite what they seem when he is sent to help track down an old Nazi war criminal . . . I liked everything about it: the music, the acting, and the scenery in such countries as Turkey, Israel and Germany . . . you may have to look some to find this film, in that it won't typically be found in your local multiplex . . . but when you do, your effort will be worth it . . . Not Rated; however, methinks it would be appropriate for anybody over the age of 15.

B. MEET THE FOCKERS is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #431 follows:

I wasn't expecting much from MEET THE FOCKERS, in that I had found the original (MEET THE PARENTS) only somewhat amusing . . . plus, I feared that all the best scenes had already been given away by the coming attractions . . . yet that said, I must admit to being pleasantly surprised by this sequel . . . it had me laughing out loud in several spots, and the inspired casting of Dustin Hoffman and Barbra Streisand as Ben Stiller's parents added to my enjoyment . . . make sure you stay for the credits after the film's end . . . rated PG-13.

C. Enjoyed ONE THING AT A TIME by Cindy Glovinsky . . . its subtitle says it all: 100 SIMPLE WAYS TO LIVE CLUTTER-FREE EVERY DAY.

There's nothing here that you may have not already thought and/or read about . . . yet to actually do as Glovinsky suggests is a whole separate matter if you're anything like me; i.e., prone to have papers accumulate . . . it seems that whenever I get rid of piles of them, their friends return in even greater force!

Glovinsky presents each tip in the form of a short chapter that contains such sensible bit of advice as the following:

One thing at a time;
Stop perfecting, start bettering;
Make a list of minitasks;
Throw away coupons;
Put up pictures now;
Move from quality to quantity; and one I need to think some more about:
Break the clipping habit.

There were several memorable passages; among them:
Invest a little time and money that may save you trouble in the long run.
Buy 100 stamped postcards. For the next month, each time you receive a piece of junk mail from an outfit that has frequently contacted you, send its employees a postcard pointing out that they're wasting money and asking to be removed from their mailing list. If the junkmail contains a 1-800 number or an e-mail address, use these means to contact them as well. Some businesses will ignore your request and continue to send you unwanted mail, but others will get the message. Dump all junk mail into the recycle bin as soon as it comes in the door.

If they're on the floor, put them in the hamper. If they're in the hamper, put them in the laundry baskets. If they're in the laundry baskets, put them in the washer. If they're in the washer, put them in the dryer. If they're in the dryer, hang them on the line or fold them and put them back in the laundry baskets. If they're on the line or in the laundry baskets, put them in the closets and the drawers. Clothes that get stuck somewhere in the laundry cycle create big mounds of clothes clutter, all of which can be easily removed. Just keep the clothes moving until they're all back in the closets and drawers and watch the piles disappear.

When you're ready to sort, stand next to a recycle bin and toss everything useless into it. Don't bother to open envelopes if you're really sure they're junk mail. Then divide what's left into three piles: items to send or give to somebody else, action items and file items. Get rid of the Send/Give pile ASAP by mailing or handling papers over to their proper recipients. Meanwhile, put the File items--papers you want to put away--in a to-file box. Its size depends on how often you're able to file and how many papers you typically have. Schedule filing time in your planner within the next week to empty the box.

D. Heard THE 50 MOST ROMANTIC THINGS EVER DONE by Dini Von Mueffling . . . it contains a wide range of wonderful tales of love, ranging from the famous (George Burns and Grace Allen) to everyday folks who glance at each other on a plane and then somehow manage to connect afterwards . . . I got a special kick out of reading about how Clark Gable took Carole Lombard to a Hollywood party in her Valentine's Day gift to him--a beat-up Model T with hearts painted all over it . . . this is the perfect gift to give to anybody you care about . . . S. Patricia Bailey's narration added to my enjoyment of the book.

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5. VCR alert

A. RING OF FIRE: THE EMILE GRIFFITH STORY, according

to TV GUIDE, is an "ambitious documentary (airing commercial free) about a boxing champ who, in 1962, killed a rival in the ring who taunted him as a homosexual." . . . Wednesday at 9 p.m. on USA.

B. VH1 SAVE THE MUSIC CONCERT features such performers as Mariah Carey, Alicia Keys, Rod Stewart, Donna Summer, and Josh Groban . . . Tuesday at 12 p.m. on VH1; repeated on Wednesday at 11:30 p.m. and Saturday at 12 p.m.

C. THE JOURNAL EDITORIAL REPORT offers insightful, informative discussions from Pulitzer Prize winning journalists, many from THE WALL STREET JOURNAL that tackles topics such as the Bush's plan for Social Security.

It airs on channel 12 in Philadelphia, typically at 6:30 am. on Saturday. To find out the upcoming schedule, as well as more information about the show, please click:

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/journaleditorialreport/>

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6. Negotiations

Negotiations between union members and their employer were at an impasse. The union denied that their workers were flagrantly abusing the sick-leave provisions set out by their contract.

One morning at the bargaining table, the company's chief negotiator held aloft the morning edition of the newspaper, "This man," he announced, "called in sick yesterday!"

There on the sports page was a photo of the supposedly ill employee, who had just won a local golf tournament with an excellent score.

A union negotiator broke the silence in the room.

"Wow!" he said. "Just think of what kind of score he could have had if he hadn't been sick!"

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7. Websites

A. A centenarian is a person who lives to be 100 years old. The average person will live to be approximately 85 years old.

People who take good care of themselves may live longer. While at the same time, failing to take good care of yourself may take years off your life.

The following website was designed to provide the latest information on health and aging issues. There is also a quiz to help you calculate your life expectancy. After completing the quiz, there is information about what you are currently doing right, what you are doing wrong and what possible health risks may be lurking.

After you take the quiz, the website will calculate your health span age and will provide an informational health assessment based on your

personal answers.

For more information about living long and healthy, please click:
<http://www.agingresearch.org/calculator/>

This website also offers a free newsletter regarding all the latest and greatest medical research about healthy aging. And here are only a few interesting health tips you'll find:

Excessive coffee drinking can both indicate and exacerbate stress.

Exercise leads to more efficient energy production and a lower production of age accelerating free radicals in our cells.

Charring food can change proteins and amino acids into carcinogens.

Cigarette smoke contains toxins that directly damage DNA and subsequently cause cancer.

Some studies suggest that 90% of all human cancers are environmentally produced, 30-40 percent of these by diet.

Extended family's cohesiveness and frequent contact is a notable feature of centenarian families.

Centenarians preserve their cognitive function by engaging in mental activities that are interesting to them.

B. You might be a little surprised to learn about how much money people make. PARADE magazine puts out an interesting annual report about what people earn. The following link is the interactive salary showdown game.

It's a fun way to test your knowledge about what people earn for a living, as well as looking at all different professions, such as teachers, dancers, politicians, scientists, CEOs, real estate brokers, athletes, actors, and many more. To play the game, please click:

<http://whatpeopleearn.parade.com/>

If you have a dial-up connection, be patient since the game uploads slowly. However, it is worth the wait. You even get to guess who earns more, Catherine Zeta Jones or Angelina Jolie. There is also a bonus round, where you will be asked to answer which quarterback earned the highest salary for the 2004-05 season. Your choices are Peyton Manning, Brett Favre, Donovan McNabb, or Michael Vick.

Chances are that any one of these guys earn more than all of my newsletter readers and me combined! I guess it pays to know how to throw a football!

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

THANKS to Dan Becker, my webmaster, who has done a great job putting past issues back on the website . . . just click above, then

Newsletter, Past issues, and you'll be taken to an area where you can see the past month's issues . . . more will be added.

Best of all, if you go to any past issue, you'll be able to "jump" from one section to the next--much like I plan to do with future current issues of BLAINESWORLD.

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8. Computer tip

I've said it before, I've said it before . . . when you get e-mail, even from a source that looks legitimate, be very careful.

For example, I recently received the following from somebody who shall remain nameless (which is perhaps the key; i.e., don't even open mail from anybody that you don't know) . . . it read as follows:

Greetings from BlueMountain.com's E-Greetings Department!

You have been sent an E-Greeting Card from a friend or loved one!
To access your card please read these instructions and go to the following link:

The following file is located on AOL's Secure Server for quality delivery and safety!

<http://members.aol.com/bluemountain> (REST INTENTIONALLY CHANGED by Blaine, so that nobody clicks on it by mistake)

1. Click or paste the above link in your web browser's address bar and hit your Enter Key.
2. Either save the file for later viewing than open it, or run it from current location.
3. Your E-Greeting Card will display after downloading completes and you run the E-Greeting file.
4. If there is an error accessing your E-Card, please contact [sic] BlueMountain.com's support email at support@bluemountain.com with this Reference No. BM40117

Best regards and wishes!
John Stanza
BlueMountain.com
support@bluemountain.com

Don't forget to visit BlueMountain.com for our other great products and services!

HOW I SPOTTED THE ABOVE AS FAKE:

1. It came from somebody I did not recognize.
2. The link did not look like anything I had ever seen before (it contained some initials not familiar to me).
3. There was at least one typo that I've included so you can see it.
4. I contacted AOL and was told that this was not legitimate.

5. I also contacted bluemountain.com, but to date, have not yet received a response.

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9. Two friends

Two friends were discussing the public trend towards more traditional family values, sex, marriage, etc.

Ralph said, "I didn't sleep with my wife before we were married, did you?"

"I'm not sure" said the friend, "What was her maiden name?"

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10. A quote I like

It is the facility's goal to always look back with pride and look forward with vision.--framed statement on wall at Grace Plaza Nursing Home (Great Neck, NY), the facility where my dad is presently in rehab

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11. Thought for the day

Something from nothing
by Phoebe Gillman
(adapted from a Jewish folktale)

When Joseph was a baby, his grandfather made him a wonderful blanket to keep him warm and cozy and to chase away bad dreams.

But as Joseph grew older, the wonderful blanket grew older too.

One day his mother said to him, "Joseph, look at your blanket. It's frazzled, it's worn, it's unsightly, it's torn. It is time to throw it out."

"Grandpa can fix it," Joseph said.

Joseph's grandfather took the blanket and turned it round and round.

"Hmm," he said as his scissors went snip, snip, snip and his needle flew in and out and in and out, "There's just enough material here to make . . . a wonderful jacket." Joseph put on the wonderful jacket and went outside to play.

But as Joseph grew older, the wonderful jacket grew older too.

One day his mother said to him, "Joseph, look at your jacket. It's shrunken and small, doesn't fit you at all. It is time to throw it out!"

"Grandpa can fix it," Joseph said.

Joseph's grandfather took the jacket and turned it round and round.

"Hmm," he said as his scissors went snip, snip, snip and his needle flew in and out and in and out, "There's just enough material here to make . . . a wonderful vest."

Joseph wore the wonderful vest to school the very next day.

But as Joseph grew older, the wonderful vest grew older too.

One day his mother said to him, "Joseph, look at your vest! It's spotted with glue and there's paint on it too. It is time to throw it out!"

"Grandpa can fix it," Joseph said.

Joseph's grandfather took the vest turned it round and round.

"Hmm," he said as his scissors went snip, snip, snip and his needle flew in and out and in and out, "There's just enough material here to make . . . a wonderful tie." Joseph wore the wonderful tie to his grandparents' house every Friday.

But as Joseph grew older, his wonderful tie grew older too. One day his mother said to him, "Joseph, look at your tie! This big stain of soup makes the end of it droop. It is time to throw it out!"

"Grandpa can fix it," Joseph said.

Joseph's grandfather took the tie and turned it round and round.

"Hmm," he said as his scissors went snip, snip, snip and his needle flew in and out and in and out, "There's just enough material to make . . . a wonderful handkerchief." Joseph used the wonderful handkerchief to keep his pebble collection safe.

But as Joseph grew older, his wonderful handkerchief grew older too.

One day his mother said to him, "Joseph, look at your handkerchief! It's been used till it's tattered, it's splotched and it's splattered. It is time to THROW IT OUT!"

"Grandpa can fix it," Joseph said.

Joseph's grandfather took the handkerchief and turned it round and round.

"Hmm," he said as his scissors went snip, snip, snip and his needle flew in and out and in and out, "There's just enough material here to make . . . a wonderful button. Joseph wore the wonderful button on his suspenders to hold his pants up.

One day his mother said to him, "Joseph, where is your button?"

Joseph looked. It was gone!

He searched everywhere but he could not find it. Joseph ran down to his grandfather's house.

"My button! My wonderful button is lost!"

His mother ran after him. "Joseph! Listen to me.

"The button is gone, finished, kaput. Even your grandfather can't make something from nothing."

Joseph's grandfather shook his head sadly. "I'm afraid that your mother is right," he said.

The next day Joseph went to school. "Hmm," he said, as his pen went scritch scratch, scritch scratch, over the paper. "There's just enough material here to make . . . a wonderful story."

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12. Advance planning department

PULSE OF THE NETWORK, my public affairs radio show, next airs on Saturday, April 23, at 8:30 p.m. on WWFM--the classical network . . . my guest will be Melissa Companick public relations manager for the Better Business Bureau of New Jersey . . . we'll be discussing the outstanding work done by that organization.

To find out more about the Bureau, please click:

<http://www.newjersey.bbb.org>

To listen to the show locally, check out:

WWFM

89.1 FM: Trenton, NJ

The show is also broadcast throughout New Jersey, Pennsylvania and as far away as Colorado . . . for a complete list of stations and/or further information, please click:

<http://www.wwfm.org>

You can now listen via Internet, too . . . even if you're not in the above listening areas, the station has made it possible to listen from ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD! . . . just go the above site, then click "Enter Here" . . . neat, huh?

***** REMINDER *****

PULSE OF THE NETWORK will be off the air as of the end of May after some 250 shows over the last five years . . . the station has new management and is moving in some different directions with respect to programming.

THANKS to all who listened, as well as to those who suggested guests--or were, in fact, guests themselves.

I'm still interested in doing a similar-type radio show for another station . . . or even a cable TV version . . . so if you have any media contacts/suggestions, please do share them with me.

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

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SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . click my address here: bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

Blaine Greenfield
19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
Phone : 828.633.1049

Contact Us at bginbc@aol.com

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #446

4.11.2005

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1. Reflections

A. I love hearing good news about my friends, readers, etc. . . . so that said, CONGRATULATIONS to Kirk Wessner . . . he is the proud father of a baby girl, Fiona, born on April 2 at 10:04 a.m. . . . she was 7 lbs. 14 oz.

And though he's just a few pounds heavier, CONGRATULATIONS also to Steady Moono . . . he was recently named as dean of student success (and isn't that a great title?) at Montgomery County Community College in Blue Bell, PA . . . I'm sure he will do his usual super job there, just as he did at Bucks where he was assistant dean for student development/director of adult and multicultural student services.

Not so great news is the fact that PULSE OF THE NETWORK (my radio show; see Section 12A) will be off the air as of the end of May after some 250 shows over the last five years . . . the station has new management and is moving in some different directions with respect to programming.

THANKS to all who listened, as well as to those who suggested guests--or were, in fact, guests themselves.

***** MR. CURIOUS HERE *****

I'm interested in doing a similar-type radio show for another station . . . or even a cable TV version . . . so if you have any media contacts/suggestions, please do share them with me.

B. Cynthia and I split a delicious calzone on Friday at Frank's Pizza (908.359.2253) in Hillsborough, NJ . . . we've been there before and will return again . . . the calzone is stupendous in size, and it comes with a sauce that is full of actual pieces of tomato.

On Saturday, we went with friends to the Hillsborough Star

Diner/Restaurant . . . my turkey was great, as was Cynthia's eggplant parmesan . . . they both were part of a mini-meal, a great value offered by Hillsborough Star . . . for under \$10, you get soup or salad, vegetable, main course, and dessert, plus great cheese bread that accompanies every meal.

From there, we went to the ROOM SERVICE--a production of the Somerset Valley Players . . . this was the first time we had seen the Players; it won't be the last.

ROOM SERVICE is the stage version of the Marx Brothers film with the same name . . . it is a hilarious comedy about a Broadway producer who accrues an enormous hotel bill feeding and housing the cast of his next play . . . though the entire cast was excellent, the work of James Houston stood out in my mind . . . he plays the hotel manager (and brother-in-law of the producer), and the audience cracked up every time he appeared on stage . . . Mike Sunburg also got a lot of laughs as one of the actors in the troupe.

The above play runs through this coming weekend . . . catch it, if you can . . . for more information, please click:

http://www.svptheatre.org/Home_initial.htm

C. My dad continues to make progress in recovering from his fall, largely because of the many prayers and cards that have been sent his way . . . I'm sooooo appreciative to all who have taken the time to do so; if you'd still like to send him a card, your best bet is to mail it to this address:

Bernard Greenfield
271-18A Grand Central Parkway
Floral Park. NY 11005

If you do, please also tell him how you heard about him; i.e., via BLAINESWORLD . . . that way, he won't be wondering why all these people he doesn't know are writing him!

My dad has also been fortunate to have received help from many different individuals, including:

* Sal Alma, a tax associate with H & R Block (516.775.2442) in Lake Success, NY, who went out of his way to prepare my parents' tax return in a timely fashion; and

* Tammy Rose Lawlor, a most helpful attorney with Miller and Milone (516.296.1000) in Garden City, NY, who is in the process of preparing his Medicaid application.

MY TWO CENTS:

If you have relatives who are currently on Medicare, please speak to them about preparing a Medicaid application now--as opposed to sometime in the future . . . in my dad's case, it will take some three months to process because he lives in New York . . . in other states, the process takes longer . . . I don't know all that much about the subject yet, but I'm learning . . . and what I have found out is that the earlier you take care of such details, the better (even if you don't know if the coverage will ever be needed).

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

This week, it goes to Dina Morgan--general manager at Applebee's (215.497.3470) in Newtown, PA . . . that is where I go with a bunch

of folks on Tuesday night before class . . . about a month earlier, I had experienced a minor problem with the restaurant that wasn't completely resolved to my satisfaction . . . another friend had an even more significant problem.

I mention it because Dina handled both situations as well as anybody I've ever seen . . . she used tact, as well as an engaging smile . . . she completely turned around something negative to the point where we were all commenting, afterwards, that she was and is incredible . . . no wonder that the firm uses her to train other managers!

That evening, our waitress was Stacie Bobbie . . . though new to the job, she did just fine . . . our regular waiter, Nate Berry, is the ABSOLUTE BEST . . . he regularly anticipates our every need, often before we think of it . . . the fact that he was just named store employee of the month comes as no surprise.

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2. FYI

Cynthia recently introduced me to something called medita~~in~~ment . . . to quote from the website, it "is a rich blend of meditation techniques, narration, storylines, sound effects and music, which will calm the mental chatter of your mind and free you on a journey of self discovery within your imagination."

I must admit that I was skeptical, but decided to give the CDs a try . . . and now I'm a believer!

There are programs for self-discovery, rest and sleep, adventure, nature, intimacy, and stress relief . . . although to date I've really only used the rest and sleep one, I am amazed to report that it works . . . real well, too.

On at least two separate occasions, it has helped me get back to sleep when I've gotten up in the middle of the night . . . I'm sure you have been there as well . . . you know the feeling; i.e., you get up but when you check the clock, you see it is still only 3 or 4 a.m. . . . in the past, I've tossed and turned . . . from now on, I'll try one of these tapes.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.meditainment.com/>

FYI, part 2

* Joyce in California had this to say about my recent comments about Nordstrom:

YES! Nordstrom is one of the best with customer service! I recently purchased my "Mom-of-the-Bride" Dress from there. The dress I tried on was too big; they didn't have another in stock so called around to find one that would fit. They found one in Baltimore, had it shipped for free to my home. The dress fit perfectly.

I tried it on the night before the wedding with shoes and all, for a "trial run." The zipper split and would not budge. I had an early appointment to get my hair done and was finished by 9:30. I had half an hour to kill before Nordstrom opened. The wedding was at 1. I was going to buy

another dress. I noticed the door from outside the mall was open, so figuring it was the employee entrance, I by chance went in.

I explained my problem and hoped they could help. A gal named Michelle said they always open the door early for customers, and not to worry, she would take the dress to the seamstress. She felt it could be fixed. She came back, took me by the hand and said, we are going to get your make-up done. She took me down to the Lancom, had my makeup professionally done and by the time they were finished, so was my dress. I was home by noon and to the church in time.

* When I shared my initial comments with the store itself, here's the response I got that contained some interesting information about pricing that I did not know (and you may not have, either):

My name is Glenn Bellman, and I am the store manager at Nordstrom at Short Hills. Thank you for the wonderful feedback regarding the expert care and service you received from Avery Woods, Men's Shoes Salesperson. I have shared your e-mail with all of our associates and have let them know how important the interactions are with our customers. Your note confirmed that we are introducing new people everyday to Nordstrom. Avery has only been with us for a short time but please know that he is really beginning to live the Nordstrom culture.

Also, I wanted to share with you that Nordstrom will not be undersold. We strive to provide great service and great selection at a tremendous value. If you find the same shoes anywhere else for a better price, we will beat that price. That is a small detail that many do not know about us.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to share your wonderful feedback. Avery and I appreciate your patronage.

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3. Brothers

A man goes on a two-month business trip to Europe and leaves his cat with his brother. Three days before his return he calls his brother.

Brother 1: So how is my cat doing?

Brother 2: She's Dead

Brother 1: She's Dead! What do you mean She's Dead? I loved that cat. Couldn't you think of a nicer way to tell me! I'm leaving in three days. You could have broken the news to me easier. You could have told me today that she got out of the house or something. Then when I called before I left, you could have told me, Well, we found her but she is up on the roof, and we're having trouble getting her down. Then when I call you from the airport, you could have told me, The Fire Department was there and scared her off the roof, and the cat died when it hit the ground.

Brother 2: I'm sorry. You're right; that was insensitive. I won't let it happen again.

Brother 1: All right, all right, forget about it. Anyway, how is Mom doing?

Brother 2: She's up on the roof, and we're having trouble getting her down.

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4. Reviews ...

A. Saw MILLIONS with Cynthia and her mother, and despite the great reviews, we all just couldn't get into it . . . the English accents were very hard to follow, plus the plotline just didn't do it for us . . . so we were decided to leave after about 45 minutes and were able to find another film just starting: FEVER PITCH . . . this is a cute romantic comedy, starring Jimmy Fallon and Drew Barymore . . . it is about a successful woman who thinks she has finally met the perfect guy; i.e., until baseball season begins--and she has to compete with his first true love, the Boston Red Sox . . . there's not that chemistry between Fallon and Barymore, yet overall, I'd recommend FEVER PITCH if you're not looking for something too deep . . . however, if you're a Red Sox fan, methinks this will be one of the best flicks you've ever seen . . . rated PG-13.

B. HOTEL RWANDA is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #436 follows:

HOTEL RWANDA is a masterful tale about the massacre that took place in Rwanda while most of the world looked away . . . Don Cheadle is superb as the hotel manager whose courage helped save 1,200 lives . . . don't be put off by the subject matter of the film . . . even if you don't think it is something you'd ordinarily want to see, I urge you to reconsider . . . it is the type movie that will make you think--many days and weeks after your initial viewing . . . rated R, though I'd urge you to consider having any mature teenagers see if possible.

C. A friend recommended that I read PAWTALK: A GUIDE FOR GETTING WHAT YOU WANT by Roger HB Davies . . . I'm glad he did, too, because this is a book that helped me better understand the process of communicating with others.

It is written in the form of several conversations (part allegory, part satire) between Davies and his dog, Calypso . . . they point out how each of use three distinct styles:

* Think!

Values the written word.

Prefers one-on-one communication.

Likes time to process communication.

Values structure, numbers, sequence, and logic.

* Leap!

Values spoken word.

Prefers group discussion.

Likes variety, change.

Uses time instantly.

Likes picture.

Responds fast.

* Relate!

Values relationships.

Enjoys communication process.

Prefers group interaction.

Uses time to achieve agreement, buy-in.

Seeks opinions.

Though each of us usually prefer one style over another, the key is to adjust our style to be more effective both at work and in life . . . PAWTALK shows you how this can be

done . . . do read it if you want to learn more.

D. I'm usually a big fan of Sidney Sheldon . . . so when I saw his latest novel--ARE YOU AFRAID OF THE DARK?--I listened to it with great anticipation . . . and was I ever disappointed!

It was terrible; in fact, the worst Sheldon I have ever read and/or heard . . . it is a supposed thriller about two widows who race around the country, trying to discover the secret behind their husbands' deaths.

I found the underlying premise (a company with a machine that can control the world's weather) unrealistic . . . even more unbelievable was the fact that the women were able to escape, over and over . . . make that, over and over still more times . . . from the hands of supposedly proficient killers.

Only the narration by Marsha Mason managed to keep my interest.

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5. VCR alert

A. FRONTLINE profiles Karl Rove, the man President Bush calls the architect of his 2004 victory . . . Tuesday at 9 p.m. on PBS Channel 13; 10 p.m. on Channel 12 . . . check local listings for a station and time near you.

B. REVELATIONS debuts on Wednesday at 9 p.m. on NBC . . . it pairs a quietly tenacious maverick nun (Natascha McElhone) with a cynical astrophysics professor (Bill Pullman) . . . according to TV GUIDE, this is "a wide-ranging, fast-paced and lavishly produced nail-biter."

C. Dolly Parton guest stars on REBA as a super real estate agent . . . Friday at 9 p.m. on WB.

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6. Utterances

Father Murphy was playing golf with a parishioner. On the first hole, he sliced into the rough. His opponent heard him mutter "Hoover!" under his breath.

On the second hole, the ball went straight into a water hazard. "Hoover!" again, a little louder this time.

On the third hole, a miracle occurred and Father Murphy's drive landed on the green only six inches from the hole! "Praise be to God!"

He carefully lined up the putt, but the ball curved around the hole instead of going in. "HOOVER!!!!"

By this time, his opponent couldn't withhold his curiosity any longer, and asked why the priest kept saying "Hoover."

"It's the biggest dam I know."

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7. Websites

A. What is your dream job? What did you want to be when you were a child? What do you want to be when you grow up? At the following website, you can arrange to spend a few days experiencing the profession of your choice. The price range is between \$500-5,000. Before you quit your job for the career of your dreams, first please click: <http://www.vocationvacations.com/>

Some of the vacations include a trip to LA for Fashion Week and a visit to the Sundance Film Festival. Some of the dream jobs available are architect, baker, cattle rancher, golf pro, raceway manager, sports announcer, wine taster, and plenty more in the making. And be sure to let me know about your experience should you decide to try this out.

B. Here is my Passover greeting to all. It's a cute animation that put a smile on my face--and hopefully will do the same for you. For your enjoyment, please click: <http://www.passovergreeting.com/>

Be sure to have your sound card on so you can hear the humorous lyrics. And be patient if you use a dial-up connection; it's worth the wait!

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click: <http://www.blainesworld.net>

As you hopefully know by now, you should ALWAYS feel free to mention this newsletter to your friends, relatives, etc. . . . should they want to subscribe (AT NO COST), all they have to do is go to my homepage . . . then click on "Special Offer" at the bottom . . . it's that simple!

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8. Computer tip

Google now offers FREE software that helps you organize all your digital pictures. It enables you to find, edit and share all the pictures currently saved on your PC. The software locates all your pictures, sorts them into visual albums, and organizes them for you by date. From there you can edit them to make them look better. The software also enables you to email, print, make CD gifts, write captions, and even order prints from your favorite websites. To download and/or to get more information, please click: <http://www.picasa.com/>

Be sure to double-check for system requirements that can be found on the homepage. The software only takes a few seconds to download. However, if you are using a dial up connection, it will take approximately 10 minutes.

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9. Warning

This new scam is being pulled mainly on older men. What happens is when you stop for a red light a

young, pretty nude woman comes up and pretends to be washing your windshield.

While she is doing this, another person opens your back door and steals anything in the car.

They are very good at this!

They got me seven times Friday and five times Saturday.

I wasn't able to find them on Sunday.

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10. A quote I like

Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goals.—Henry Ford (1863-1947), founder of Ford Motor company

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11. Thought for the day

Going to town

An old man, a boy and a donkey were going to town. The boy rode on the donkey, and the old man walked. As they went along, they passed some people who remarked it was a shame the old man was walking and the boy was riding.

The man and boy thought maybe the critics were right, so they changed positions. Later, they passed some people who remarked, "What a shame, he makes that little boy walk."

They decided they both would walk!

Soon they passed some more people who thought they were stupid to walk when they had a decent donkey to ride. So the both rode the donkey!

Now they passed some people that shamed them by saying how awful to put such a load on a poor donkey. The boy and man said they were probably right so they decided to carry the donkey. As they crossed a bridge, they lost their grip on the animal--and he fell into the river and drowned.

The moral of the story?

If you try to please everyone, you will eventually lose your ass!

Author Unknown
(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

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12. Advance planning department

A. PULSE OF THE NETWORK, my public affairs radio show, next airs on Saturday, April 16, at 8:30 p.m. on WWFM--the classical network . . . my guest will be Kitty Getlik, the talented artistic director of Kelsey Theatre at Mercer County Community

College in West, Windsor, NJ . . . we'll be discussing the "Community Theater."

To find out more about Kelsey Theatre and its upcoming productions, please click:

<http://www.kelseyatmccc.org>

And make sure you consider going to SWEET CHARITY, one of my all-time favorite musicals . . . it opens on April 22 and runs through May 1 with performances on Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and on Sundays at 2 p.m.

To listen to the show locally, check out:

WWFM

89.1 FM: Trenton, NJ

The show is also broadcast throughout New Jersey, Pennsylvania and as far away as Colorado . . . for a complete list of stations and/or further information, please click:

<http://www.wwfm.org>

You can now listen via Internet, too . . . even if you're not in the above listening areas, the station has made it possible to listen from ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD! . . . just go the above site, then click "Enter Here" . . . neat, huh?

B. "Let Go and Lighten Up--a Day of Imperfection and Laughter" takes place at the Livengrin Foundation in Bensalem, PA, on Saturday, April 30 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. . . . Anne Smith will speak place on "Overcoming Perfectionism" in the morning, and Yvonne Kaye (a past guest on my radio show) will speak on "Humor and Spirituality" in the afternoon . . . while there is no charge for this day-long event, donations at the door will be gratefully accepted and appreciated . . . you MUST register in advance . . . to do so, call Linda Taylor at 215.638.5200, ext. 141 or e-mail ltaylor@livengrin.org with your name and a daytime phone number.

C. From Denise in New Jersey, house manager of the theatre at Raritan Valley Community College:

Here's one that country fans would appreciate. The Oakridge Boys will be performing on May 21 8 p.m. . . . tickets are \$33-38. A country radio station is running an advertisement, and tickets are on fire! I would hate for people to miss this opportunity.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.rvccarts.org/Major.htm>

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is: bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

Blaine Greenfield
19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
Phone : 828.633.1049

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #445

4.4.2005

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1. Reflections

A. THANKS TO EVERYBODY who has put my dad in their prayers . . . he's doing remarkably well after his recent fall and is now in a nursing home.

His attitude is amazing, as evidenced by his response to one nurse who asked him was there anything she could get him . . . he replied without blinking an eye: a leg!

I'm also most appreciative of the desire of several readers to send him a card . . . should you still want to, the best address is to send it to his home address:

Bernard Greenfield
271-18A Grand Central Parkway
Floral Park. NY 11005

If you do, please also tell him how you heard about him; i.e., via BLAINESWORLD . . . that way, he won't be wondering why all these people he doesn't know are writing him!

B. I'm also glad that so many read last week's issue . . . as you know by now, the first section was an April Fool's joke; i.e., I've NOT stopped publishing this newsletter . . . in addition, there's no such person as Otto Grossman.

What wasn't a joke was my desire to do something about getting folks to quit smoking; e.g., so they don't wind up in my dad's condition . . . I was moved by several e-mails from readers . . . so much so, in fact, that I'm in the process of planning to offer what I think will be an innovative smoking cessation program . . . details to follow, but if you're personally interested in an invite, drop me a note to that effect . . . my only regret is that you'd have to be somewhat local to get involved, in that it will most probably

be offered at Bucks County Community College in Newtown, PA.

C. Cynthia and I had some weekend . . . on Friday, we attended my friend Barry's surprise 60th birthday party . . . I love how Jody, his wife, carried it off . . . she told him she was being honored with an award . . . in fact, she even went so far as to have an actual acceptance speech for the award that she practiced in front of Barry . . . a DJ made the event even more fun, allowing us to dance throughout the evening . . . we had a blast.

On Saturday, after visiting my folks, we met our friends Jan and Bill for dinner at Shogun 27 (732.422.1117)--a Japanese restaurant and hibachi steak house in Kendall Park, NJ . . . we chose the hibachi option and enjoyed not only the food, but the ample portions . . . I decided to try something different: alligator meat . . . it was OK, but methinks I'll take a pass on that particular item in the future . . . it was a bit like chicken, though somewhat chewier . . . Cynthia enjoyed her lobster tail, and Jan reported her mango chicken was excellent . . . ice cream is included--usually a rarity at such places . . . we sampled both the green tea and the red bean varieties . . . the former did nothing for me, but I did like the latter . . . from there, it was on to hear David Brahinsky and friends in concert at the Six Mile Run Reform Church . . . David, a talented guitar player/singer, was excellent as usual . . . however, the high spot of the evening for us was getting to hear another friend (Gail Caruso) on violin . . . she was excellent, and we look forward to seeing her in many future gigs.

On Sunday, we got to see Gail again--along with Mark, her friend and ours--as we accompanied them to New York to see THE LION KING . . . this was the second time I've seen the show, and it again blew me away with the costumes, staging and moving story line.

We went via a trip sponsored by the Morris Hills Adult School and what a pleasure that was . . . parking is free, the bus leaves you off right in front of the theater and you get picked up there as well . . . we've already signed-up for a May 15 trip to DIRTY ROTTEN SCOUNDRELS . . . I don't know how they're doing it, but the cost for that trip and orchestra ticket is just \$59 . . . call Roseann or Karen at 973.664.2296 for tickets, in the unlikely event that any still remain.

Upon our return, we went to Caffe NaVona (973.627.1606) in Rockaway, NJ for dinner . . . this is an attractive restaurant that serves Italian dishes that are a bit more inventive than you might ordinarily find in such an establishment . . . we shared and enjoyed our two dishes: veal and pasta with vegetables . . . if you can believe it, we passed on dessert; however, that said, Gail and Mark said that their white chocolate mousse served with raspberries in Chambord was superb.

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

This week, it goes to Judy West--a social worker at St. Francis Hospital (where my dad was) in Roslyn, NY . . . she was both extremely responsive and helpful in getting our family the assistance we needed to get him on the next step to recovery; i.e., into a nursing home . . . she answered all our questions, often going above and beyond what was needed and/or expected.

I feel blessed to have encountered such a fine employee . . . my hope is that St. Francis Hospital feels the same.

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2. FYI

A friend is after me to eat organic food . . . she says it tastes great, and it is good for me . . . plus, in her case at least, it even helped her lose weight . . . so to get me started, she gave me--of all things--a candy bar: Crispy Rice Milk Chocolate from Newman's Own Organics.

I did enjoy it . . . so much so that I'm thinking if all organic food tastes this good, I might even try some more of it.

Eating this particular product even helps save the planet, according to the wrapper . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.newmansownorganics.com>

I also like how Paul Newman devotes all of his royalty after taxes from the sale of this product for educational and charitable purposes.

FYI, part 2

* Mike in Pennsylvania:

I read your recommendation for Santa Fe Grill & Bar. About a year ago, I sent you an e-mail, recommending you try it with the stipulation that you keep it a secret. I hadn't read any mention of it in the past year, and I figured, "He has to have been there by now. I guess he IS keeping it a secret." Sadly, no. But I guess I won't shed too many tears, as I now live 2 hours away.

Make sure you check it out several times a year. They have fabulous seasonal-themed menus and dishes. We went once in the fall. I had wild boar chops, and my mom had ostrich sausage. You won't see that on the menu at Applebee's!

* Joyce in California:

I have a friend who does the same thing [walk out on movies]. Her kids are grown, and she loves going to the movies. She might go three or four times a week. If something is really good, she will see it more than once. If she doesn't like what she sees in the first 10 or 15 minutes, she will leave and ask for her money back, telling them she doesn't think she will like the movie. She has always been given a refund, no questions asked.

* Brian in Pennsylvania:

Very impressed with the soccer coach at Pennsbury. Teaching athletes at an early age that playing sports is only one part of a student athlete. This comes from somebody who played soccer.

MY TWO CENTS:

Like Brian, I'm also very impressed with Peter Hughes--and I never played soccer . . . make sure you read Section 12 of this week's newsletter for more information about this remarkable coach.

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3. Handwriting

In school one day, a teacher asked my six-year-old son why his handwriting wasn't as neat as it usually was.

"I'm trying out a new font," he explained.

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4. Reviews ...

A. Liked THE UPSIDE OF ANGER, especially for Joan Allen's performance as a sharp-witted suburban wife . . . she has been fine in so many films and now gets to really shine here . . . the film, overall, is a bit choppy in parts but comes together at the end when it gets you to think about how anger can be so destructive in our lives . . . Kevin Costner is also effective as Allen's neighbor, a once-great baseball star turned radio DJ . . . rated R.

B. SIDEWAYS is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #426 follows:

Loved SIDEWAYS, a rare film that is as good--if not even better--than the virtually unanimous raves I've seen from the critics . . . it is both a funny and touching tale of two guys on the road trip of a lifetime who drive through the wine country in California, questioning their relationships as they do so . . . the dialogue is superb, as is the acting . . . Paul Giamatti, so great in AMERICAN SPLENDOR last year, perhaps tops his performance here . . . yet it's the work of Thomas Haden Church that really made SIDEWAYS work for me . . . he plays a former hot actor with such verve that I hope he receives at least an Academy Award nomination . . . Virginia Madsen, an under-appreciated actress, also shines . . . rated R.

C. I've long been a fan of Julie Morgenstern . . . her other books, ORGANIZING FROM THE INSIDE OUT and TIME MANAGEMENT FORM THE INSIDE OUT, had a big impact on me--and contained much useful information that I still use.

So it was with great anticipation that I obtained and devoured her latest, MAKING WORK WORK . . . it did not disappoint!

Morgenstern presents ideas and suggestions that apply to just about any situation . . . what she writes may sound basic, but it is the type thing that you need to read more than once . . . then begin to use.

For example, she urges you to begin conversations with: "What can I do for you?" not "How are you?" As she notes: "How are you?" is an open invitation to chat and warm up. "What can I do for you?" immediately focuses your interrupter on getting straight to the point. It's professional and gets you both down to business. This enables you to handle the interruption in the least amount of time possible.

There were several other memorable passages; among them: The only real chance you have at choosing the most important tasks begins with keeping a complete list of everything you need to do in one place. After all, prioritizing is a matter of relativity--the true question is, What's most important in relation to the other things on your list? Taken one item at a time, everything can mask itself as a critical task.

Control Lateness: Use odd start times, such as 27 or 41 minutes after the hour, to control lateness. People are far less likely to be late for

a meeting that starts at 11:27 than one at 11:30. Designate an official timekeeper to watch the clock for every meeting, and rotate that role among attendees. It's their responsibility to regulate the meeting so it doesn't go overtime, and they'll have an invested interest in doing a good job-they could be on the other side of the clock the next time around.

Change "but" to "and." What a difference a word makes, implying a can-do, take-charge approach to problems rather than an argument. For example, a client tells you they want to bring the budget down. Instead of saying, "But that's going to compromise quality," try saying, "Okay, and that's likely to compromise quality. Where would you be most comfortable shaving costs?" Or your boss asks you to have something on his desk in two hours. Instead of saying, "But then I won't be able to meet tomorrow's deadline," try, "Okay, and if I need to do that, what should I do about tomorrow's deadline? Can someone else finish it off?" Focus on solutions, not obstacles.

D. Heard an interesting Nightingale-Conant cassette program, *YOUR SLEEPING GENIUS*--written and read by Dr. Gale Delaney . . . she's an internationally recognized dream psychologist who contends that your dreaming brain is busy at work every night, helping you come up with practical solutions to current problems and challenges.

I've been interested in this subject for quite some time . . . what I liked about this material is that it wasn't just a mere listing of dreams with possible explanations . . . I recently glanced at a such a book, and it meant little to me.

Delaney instead shows you how to actually target your own dreams, if so desired, by use of something she calls an incubator question . . . she also gives specific instructions on how to conduct a dream interview, either by yourself or with the help of somebody.

This process involves four steps:

1. Elicit a good description. Ask the dreamer to describe each of the major elements in the dream (settings, people, objects, feeling, and action). Do not try to help the dreamer find words to describe the images. Let him/her come up with his/her own adjectives.
2. Recapitulate the description. After eliciting a good description of one or more images, summarize the description the dreamer has just provided. Include any relevant and emotionally charged definitions, descriptions and associations.
3. Bridge to waking life. Ask the dreamer to bridge his/her dream to some experience in waking life. How does the dream metaphor relate with a waking solution or attitude?
4. Summarize the exploration. Summarize (at the end or partway through the interview) or retell the dream, linking each dream to its description and bridge. Summaries give the dreamer the opportunity to incorporate new associations.

YOUR SLEEPING GENIUS includes an excellent Guidebook, which provides instructions on how to maintain a dream journal, conduct the dream interview, map a dream, and use cue cards (a list of questions an interviewer uses to guide a dreamer through the dream).

This fine program is available for purchase or rental . . . if you

want to get it, please click:
<http://www.achievement.com/>

Above is the tape rental club I belong to; i.e., the Achievement Tape Library . . . this a great way to hear CDs and/or audio cassette tapes, view videos, etc.--all for a fraction of what it would cost to buy them . . . call the head of the firm (Paul Arroyo) directly at 1.800.735.3660 and mention my name . . . that way, you'll be sure to pay even higher prices . . . NOT.

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5. VCR alert

A. IMAGINARY WITNESS: HOLLYWOOD AND THE HOLOCAUST . . . according to TV GUIDE, "This fine documentary traces movies from the days when filmmakers avoided the word 'Jew' to SHINDLER'S LIST, which epitomized honest, graphic, depictions" . . . Tuesday at 9 p.m. on AMC.

B. I'll be watching the WEST WING season finale to see who the Democrats pick as a candidate for president: Vice President Russell (Gary Cole), Congressman Santos (Jimmy Smits) or Governor Baker (Ed O'Neill) . . . Wednesday at 9 p.m. on NBC.

C. WHOOP! BACK TO BROADWAY--THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY is an adaptation of her recent one-woman show . . . Saturday at 10 p.m. on HBO.

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6. Job opening

A while back there was an opening in the CIA for an assassin. These highly classified positions are extremely difficult to fill, requiring an extensive background check, training and testing before candidates are even considered for the position. After reviewing several applicants and completing all the checks and training, the field was narrowed to the three most promising candidates. The day came for the final test, which would determine which of equally qualified candidates, would get the job.

The final candidates consisted of two men and one woman. The men administering the test took the first candidate, a man, down a corridor to a closed door and handed him a gun saying, "We must be completely assured that you will complete your assignments and follow instructions regardless of the circumstances. Inside this room you will find your wife, seated in a chair. Take this gun and kill her."

The man, looking completely shocked said, "You can't be serious! I could never kill my wife."

The CIA man said, "Well, then, you're obviously not the man for the job. Take your wife and go home."

They brought the next candidate in, the other man, and repeated the instructions. This man took the gun, walked into the room and closed the door. However, after five minutes of silence, the door opened, and the man handed the CIA tester the gun, saying, "I just couldn't do it."

I couldn't kill my wife. I tried to pull the trigger, but I just couldn't do it."

The CIA man said, "Well, then, you're obviously not the man for the job. Take your wife and go home."

Then they brought the woman down the corridor to the closed door, handed her a gun, and said, "We must be completely assured that you will complete your assignments and follow instructions regardless of the circumstances. Inside this room you will find your husband, seated in a chair. Take this gun and kill him."

The woman took the gun, walked into the room, and before the door closed all the way, the CIA men heard the gun start firing. One shot after another, for thirteen shots, the noise continued. Then all hell broke loose. For the next several minutes, the men heard screaming, cursing, furniture crashing and banging on the walls; then suddenly, silence. The door opened slowly and there stood the woman. She wiped the sweat from her brow and said, "You guys didn't tell me the gun was loaded with blanks! I had to beat him to death with the chair!"

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7. Websites

A. For all you pet owners out there, the Internet offers some great websites for animal lovers to post photos, keep pet journals, search for animal facts, form online buddies with fellow animal lovers, and adopt or donate a pet. For more information, be sure to check out the following free websites:

If you think your cat deserves its own web page, this site is for you. You can post a photo of your adorable kitty or check out other people's felines. The website also has all sorts of interesting cat facts. To see for yourself, please click:

<http://www.catster.com/>

This site is similar to the one above, but is for dog owners. It boasts having around 40,000 members. That's a lot of dogs! If you prefer dogs to cats, please click:

<http://www.dogster.com/>

And not to leave out any four-legged pet, the following website is for hamsters and gerbils. Yes, that's right--even hamsters have their own website. Be sure to check out what happens to your cursor when you roll over a link when you visit this site! Sadly, the oldest hamster at this site recently went to hamster heaven. To learn more, please click:

<http://www.hamsterster.com/>

The following website caters to cat, dog and hamster owners. But if you have a bird, ferret, fish, frog, horse, rabbit, reptile or even just a stuffed animal, it may also cater to you. For more information on just about any pet, please click:

<http://www.petster.com/>

And for anyone dedicated to finding shelter for homeless animals, the following site is considered a "virtual shelter." You can find links to thousands of various animal shelters, searchable by zip codes. And if you are looking to adopt, you can search through a database for a specific breed, species, age or size. For all your

animal adoption needs, please click:
<http://www.petfinder.com/>

SOURCE:

Material abstracted from "Pets in Cyberspace" bY Barbara Ortutay,
BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES, October 6, 2004, p. B1

B. Want to vote for the most annoying man on television? Or see the 100 funniest jokes of all time? Or perhaps learn what are the top 20 "number" songs of all time? Or maybe you would like to see a survival guide to the NFL's quarterback rating system? (I always wondered where they got their numbers from.) As you can see, this website has something for just about everyone. For some interesting facts and tidbits, please click:
<http://www.bluedonut.com/>

There are plenty of interesting articles here from all different sources including but not limited to GQ MAGAZINE, THE NEW YORKER and THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER. And best of all: You do not have to sign up or pay for a membership to view the stories.

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view it, please click:
<http://www.blainesworld.net>

If you want to see some of the books I've reviewed previously (and typically liked), go to "Blaine's Best" on the left, then "Websites" . . . at letter "O," click on the second paragraph.

You'll see nearly 420 of my past reviews that I've posted at the amazon.com website . . . as always, if you find any of them helpful and if given the opportunity, please click the "Yes" button indicating that fact.

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8. Computer tip

As I've mentioned before, spyware can create MAJOR problems for you when you use your computer . . . it is something you MUST protect yourself from!

AOL, to its credit, now includes Spy Zapper software that can run every time you turn on your computer . . . since there is no extra charge to use it, I recommend you do just that; i.e., run when you load your AOL software.

Here's just one reason why: To protect yourself, as I have fortunately done, from the following:

Diablo Keys is a Windows keylogger. It is able to log all keystrokes, including those performed in DOS sessions. It will create logs of all keystrokes and send them back to a predetermined destination using FTP or SMTP. It is very customizable on the attacker's end and can be difficult to remove as it places entries in startup folder, win.ini file, system.ini file, and multiple Windows registry startup keys.

Reportedly Diablo Keys will not only send captured information back to you but it also reportedly sends additional information back to those that created Diablo Keys, therefore doubling the risk posed to the end user.

For those not on AOL, you might want to consider this option:
http://reviews.cnet.com/Yahoo_Toolbar/4505-3514_7-31213298.html

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9. What's new

Jack came home in great excitement and said to his wife,
"Jill, love, you'll never believe it, dear, but I've
discovered an entirely new position for lovemaking."

"Really," she said, interested at once. "What is it?"

"Back to back," Jack replies

"But that's crazy. We can't do anything back to back."

"Yes we can," he says. "I've persuaded another couple
to help out!"

What's new

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"Yes we can," he says. "I've persuaded another couple
to help out!"

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10. A quote I like

If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change
your attitude. Don't complain.--Maya Angelou, American poet, historian,
author, actress, playwright, civil-rights activist, producer, and director

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11. Thought for the day

Negative positivity
by Peter Hughes

NOTE:

Peter Hughes, last week's "BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD" recipient,
is the soccer coach at Pennsbury High School (Fairless Hills, PA) . . . he
recently told me about a phrase, "negative positivity," that he developed
several years ago . . . his explanation follows:

The phrase is "negative positivity," and I use this to describe coaches
and mostly parents who are partaking in a major disservice to our
children. By way of a brief explanation: In today's "win-driven, have to
create the perception that I am successful and better than you" society,
there is much insecurity that has developed in parents when involved
in competitive academics and especially sports. The majority of

ego-driven parents and coaches fail to detach their own self-worth from the performance or success of their children in their athletic or academic endeavors.

In sports, this manifests all too often as the unacceptable--and often criminal--behavior from parents and coaches acting under the convenient umbrella of "competitiveness" and the unhealthy need to win that drives it. Is it any wonder that we have children quitting sports, not enjoying them as they should, or that we have sportsmanship and self-esteem issues in many young athletes?

As in road rage where the false protection of the private space in the car liberates antisocial behavior, so too does a cultural acceptance of competitiveness without limits promote sideline rage. It still amazes me how often adults behave in and around sports in a way that would get them arrested and sent for court-ordered psychiatric evaluation under any other circumstances.

This is a topic I could spend hours on based on 25+ years coaching soccer in two very different cultures and at various levels, but to get to the point--one of the behaviors I have noticed as a result of this endemic issue is the fear of making a mistake. I have seen this in both players and in their parents too. A mistake is now regarded as a disaster and a failure to the parents. I have lost count of the times I see parents overreact in a negative way, both verbally and with negative body language when their kids make a mistake during a game. In fact, some coaches pull players off the field as soon as they made a mistake. I personally do not follow this policy. In contrast, I believe it is more beneficial to the player and the team to have the player recover and learn how to bounce back!

Another problem with this phenomenon is the total denial of errors. Players will argue, deflect and point fingers rather than simply accept the error and then listen to instruction on how to improve and reduce the chances of it happening again. This makes coaching much more difficult and tedious as the essence of the role of coach is to observe mistakes, expose them and then fix them. Players, in part due to the pressure they are under, have lost sight of the fact that mistakes and failures are opportunities to improve themselves.

I have many players that I could point to who have not improved simply because they are in denial of their weaknesses. Parents have jumped on this denial or deflection band wagon also. In an effort to protect their children, they will also deny their mistakes or errors and make statements of "negative positivity."

Case in point: I was coaching a player recently who has developed a really bad habit of controlling the ball incorrectly. I stopped the drill to make corrections as it was breaking down at her station. The player became instantly nervous and uncomfortable (because of the fear of failure). I tried to relax her and explained it is OK to make mistakes, that I am being paid to be here to help you improve. I demonstrated the correct control technique to her and the group, and we moved on.

During a water break a few minutes later, I overheard her mother as she put her arm around the player and say, 'It's OK honey, you keep doing it the way you have been. It's not right or wrong; it's just that you are different.'" She totally undermined me, the opportunity to improve, and did a complete disservice to her child--a classic example of negative positivity.

Another example: I was coaching a team that to reduce turnovers, you need to look for an open teammate instead of just kicking the ball

aimlessly away. I also explained this to the parents to get their support on this mission. One player was receiving the ball and his teammates worked to get open for him. Instead of passing with composure, he turned up field and kicked the ball 40 yards to one of the other team!

I got his attention and told him we are not supposed to be doing that anymore. He shrugged at me while his Mom and Dad were yelling "Woo-Hoo, great kick son, keep it up buddy." Meanwhile, the opposition defender who received the ball started a combination play that, six passes later, resulted in a goal against us. The player on our team who gave the ball away and his parents started yelling at our defense to play better. Classic case of ego-driven denial, deflection and reinforcement of "negative positivity."

As you know in business and life, there is hardly a success worth having without first a collection of failures to learn from. I fear for the youth of today as many are being lead to make the most damaging mistake of all; i.e., the denial of failure and the refusal to accept that mistakes are the very foundation for the success they seek!

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12. Advance planning department

PULSE OF THE NETWORK, my public affairs radio show, next airs on Saturday, April 9, at 8:30 p.m. on WWFM--the classical network . . . we'll be discussing the outstanding work done by NOVA (Network of Victim Assistance).

For more information about NOVA, please click:

<http://www.novabucks.org>

To listen to the show locally, check out:

WWFM

89.1 FM: Trenton, NJ

The show is also broadcast throughout New Jersey, Pennsylvania and as far away as Colorado . . . for a complete list of stations and/or further information, please click:

<http://www.wwfm.org>

You can now listen via Internet, too . . . even if you're not in the above listening areas, the station has made it possible to listen from ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD! . . . just go the above site, then click "Enter Here" . . . neat, huh?

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is: bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #444

3.28.2005

In this issue:

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1. Reflections

A. SPECIAL THANKS to Otto Grossman, a longtime reader and friend . . . we've been speaking for quite some time about how he likes BLAINESWORLD, how he'd like to write something similar, etc. . . . and then the other day, he made me an offer that I really couldn't refuse; i.e., that he'd take over writing and mailing this newsletter for me . . . in fact, he even offered to pay me for the so-called "rights" . . . so after not too much deliberation, I agreed, which means that--effective with next week's issue--Otto will be both the publisher and editor . . . as part of the changeover, he has agreed to keep the name BLAINESWORLD until the end of May . . . he then has the right to keep that name and/or change it . . . so with that important announcement out of the way, let me proceed with another one: that you've been the victim of an early April Fool's notice since I didn't want to wait until Friday (4.1) . . . gotcha!

B. Alas, I wish I could find something to kid about with my dad's condition . . . he had been doing remarkably well over the past year or so, adjusting to his prosthesis and actually starting to walk.

However, on Saturday, he had a setback . . . he fell, breaking his shoulder and fracturing his hip . . . so it's now back to rehab (after some time in a nursing home), but if anybody can make a comeback, it will be my dad . . . Cynthia and I got to visit him on Sunday, and despite being in some degree of pain, his spirits were high.

I mention the above because I need your help with something . . . as many of you know, my dad's initial condition was brought about by a lifetime of smoking . . . it resulted in some 10 operations over the last several years, including an amputation below

his one knee followed by a second amputation above it . . . what I'm trying to do is find a way I can help others avoid going through anything even remotely similar.

In the past, I've told readers of this missive that if they gave up smoking and told me about it, I'd make a contribution in their name to the American Cancer Society . . . two people have written to tell me that they've stopped, but I'm looking to somehow make more of a difference than that . . . any ideas?

C. When Cynthia and I see a movie, we've recently taken to checking with each other to see if either of us wants to leave . . . the question we ask is this: on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the highest, how would you rate (whatever we're watching)? . . . if either of us gives it a 5 rating or lower, then we ask would the other person mind if we left early? . . . that's exactly what happened when we saw MISS CONGENIALITY 2 . . . we both gave it about a 2 and so rather than waste more of our time, we left early with no regrets . . . I won't even bother reviewing it in Section 4A; see it at your own risk.

We did have a better time checking out two restaurants during the past week . . . on Wednesday, we went to the Santa Fe Grille & Bar (609.683.8930) in Rocky Hill, NJ . . . this is a place you may have never heard about; however, consider this a strong recommendation for you to now find it . . . my oversized hamburger was excellent, and Cynthia liked her ultimate chicken quesadilla . . . yet whatever you do, make sure you leave room for dessert . . . our fried cheesecake, rolled in cinnamon and sugar, was as good an ending to a meal as we've ever had! . . . then on Saturday, we went to Houlihan's (973.992.0455) in Livingston, NJ for ribs . . . they were great . . . best of all, the sauce was applied in a fashion that did not drown the meat--something that happens far too often when ordering this particular dish.

Afterwards, we went shopping for shoes for me at Nordstrom in The Mall at Short Hills, NJ . . . I've always read about the chain, yet somehow had managed to never to shop at any of its stores . . . my reaction is that what I've heard IS true; i.e., both the selection and service are excellent . . . I had only planned to buy one pair of shoes, but for the first time in my life, I wound up leaving a shoe store with four pairs of shoes . . . though the price I paid may have been somewhat higher than I could have found elsewhere, the overall experience more than compensated for what I wound up paying . . . my sales associate, Avery Woods, was extremely helpful, and I'm appreciative of the fact that he stayed some 45 minutes beyond the normal closing time to help me out.

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

This week, it goes to Peter Hughes . . . he is the soccer coach at Pennsbury High School (Fairless Hills, PA) who believes there's more to life than just wins and losses for his team . . . as an example, he recently implemented a requirement that all his players participate in a community service activity during the team's "off" season; i.e., when it is not playing regular league games . . . he also believes that team captains should not be chosen by means of a popularity contest, so he actually has them apply in writing for the position.

His teams usually do well on the field, but even when they lose, it is imperative that they practice good sportsmanship . . . as such, he has his players shake the hands of the officials after each

game . . . now when was the last time you saw that at a game at any level of sports?

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2. FYI

I don't know about you, but I'm getting to REALLY enjoy shopping online . . . you can do so any hour of the day or night, plus you often get more information than if you asked a salesclerk either in person or on the phone.

Perhaps best of all: Price comparisons are quite easy; i.e., if you are willing to put in the time to check several websites.

Sometimes life is made easy for you using a price comparison service such as:

<http://froogle.google.com>

Yet even then you need to be careful because shipping charges often drive up the eventual price.

As an example, I recently was searching to purchase Jobst stockings . . . no, NOT for me but for Cynthia . . . I saw a price for \$8.49 per pair; however, shipping was not free.

I then went to one of my favorite search engines:

<http://www.iwon.com>

When I typed-in "cheapest prices for Jobst stockings," I got a listing of some 25 possible websites to check.

Now I didn't bother checking the all of these . . . for those few that I did, the price range amazed me--\$9.50/pair with FREE shipping up to \$35/pair . . . some places charged for shipping; others did not (depending on the quantity you purchased).

I eventually used a firm

<http://www.dermadoctor.com>

Shipping was free for any order over \$49 and ordering online couldn't have been easier . . . phone orders are also welcome; call toll free: 1.877.dermadr (1.877.337.6237).

FYI, part 2

Pat in Florida, a longtime reader, will be walking on Saturday in The Walk to Cure Diabetes . . . she is doing so to promote the notion of how many people are affected by Type 1 diabetes and the need for funds for research for a cure.

I commend her for doing this and will be making my contribution, just as soon as I finish writing this week's newsletter . . . if you'd like to join me, see how by reading the rest of Pat's e-mail to me:

Donations are still (and I imagine, always) be accepted. It would be nice if the funds came in advance of that date. But I certainly wouldn't turn anything away that came later.

If there is a way for people to send checks, written to JDRF (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation) to me (Pat Spinella-Mamo, P.O. Box 880024, Boca Raton, FL 33488), it would help because

I have found that Sam's Club (and I am looking into other places as well) will match the funds that I can document as coming in through me.

Yet if people want to donate on line via credit card, they can click:
https://www.jdrf.org/index.cfm?page_id=100903

There is a place where they can input my name, though I don't know if I can have access to how much comes through under my name. Perhaps if they donate online, they can send their name and amount of donation to me via e-mail. My e-mail address is: pat9500@aol.com

I hate asking that, but I don't know any other way to meet the matching funds requirement to present to Sam's Club.

Any amount of donation and anyone wishing to help is greatly appreciated. Feel free to forward my e-mail for any questions that may arise.

JDRF is closer now than ever to finding a cure. Your donation will make a dramatic impact as JDRF moves life altering research out of the lab and into human clinical trials. Typically, more than 80 cents of every dollar donated to JDRF goes directly to worldwide research and education about research.

To stay alive, children with juvenile diabetes must take up to six insulin injections every day. By supporting JDRF's mission to find a cure, you won't only be saving children, you will be saving childhoods.

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3. Rounds

While making rounds, a doctor points out an X-ray to a group of medical students.

"As you can see," she says, "the patient limps because his left fibula and tibia are radically arched. Michael, what would you do in a case like this?"

"Well," ponders the student, "I suppose I'd limp too."

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4. Reviews ...

A. MELINDA AND MELINDA, written and directed by Woody Allen, is a delightful look at two versions of the same story--one tragic, the other comic . . . it is an intelligent film that caused me to smile often and laugh outright whenever Will Ferrell appeared on screen . . . Radha Mitchell was also excellent, taking on the main role in both stories . . . MELINDA AND MELINDA isn't necessarily vintage Allen; however, it certainly is an improvement over many of his latest efforts . . . rated PG-13.

B. VERA DRAKE is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #430 follows:

Enjoyed VERA DRAKE, a morally complex drama set in post WWII London . . . Imelda Staunton deserves an Oscar nomination for her portrayal of a middle-aged woman of relentless good cheer who serves others--and especially young girls "in trouble" . . . this

eventually runs her afoul of the law . . . her subsequent trial will get you thinking about what justice is all about, regardless of how you feel about abortion . . . rated R.

C. I've never watched Joel Osteen, senior pastor of Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas, on any of his television broadcasts that are watched by millions . . . furthermore, I am not of the same religious persuasion that he is . . . however, neither fact mattered as I got much out of YOUR BEST LIFE NOW--his excellent book.

Reading it reminded me of the first time I came across Norman Vincent Peale . . . there were too many references to both Christ and the Bible in THE POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING, yet I managed to gloss over them and got a great deal out of reading that particular book . . . I think that's going to be the case with YOUR BEST LIFE NOW; i.e., it has much to offer me . . . and it is something that can't fully be absorbed with just one reading, so I believe I'll want to refer to it quite often.

As Osteen notes, your journey to a brighter future begins with seven steps:

One: Enlarge your vision.

Two: Develop a healthy self-image.

Three: Discover the power of your thoughts and words.

Four: Let go of the past.

Five: Find strength through adversity.

Six: Live to give.

Seven: Choose to be happy.

He goes on to give lots of examples for each step, including many from his own personal background.

Also, I liked many of the passages; these three stand out:
Every single day, a husband should tell his wife, "I love you. I appreciate you. You're the best thing that ever happened to me."
A wife should do the same for her husband. Your relationship would improve immensely if you'd simply start speaking kind, positive words, blessing your spouse instead of cursing him or her.

"Do you know that no matter how big your problem is today, somebody else had a bigger problem, a tougher road, a more heartrending story than yours? You can help make a difference in somebody's life. You can help ease somebody's burden. You can cheer somebody up, and give somebody a fresh new hope."

One of the healthiest things you can do is learn to smile more often. When we smile, it sends a message to our whole body, setting the tone for our lives. Studies tell us when we smile, certain chemicals are released that travel throughout our system, relaxing us and helping us stay healthy. Whether you have a reason to smile or not, make up your mind that you are going to smile anyway.

D. Heard and liked CONVERSATIONS WITH GOD, BOOK TWO by Neale Donald Walsch . . . whereas Book One dealt with personal matters, this dialogue takes on more political and global concerns . . . Edward Asner and Ellen Burstyn served

as narrators, along with Walsch, and they certainly added to my enjoyment of the cassette program.

There were several memorable passages; among them: You do not live each day to discover what it holds, but to create it.

"I am" is the strongest creative statement in the universe. Whatever you say after "I am" calls forth these expectations.

The point of life is to experience who and what you are, then to experience it.

Your life is always a result of your thoughts about it.

The purpose of a relationship is not to have another who might complete you, but to have another who might share your completeness.

If you cannot love yourself, you can't love others.

Ask: What would love do now?

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5. VCR alert

A. A month long salute to comedy films and screen comedians begins on Friday at 7:30 a.m. on Turner Classic Movies . . . the first day showcases Laurel & Hardy in 18 shorts and full-length features.

B. AMERICAN IDIOT, a Grammy-winning punk rock opera, is on Saturday at 10 p.m. on VH1.

C. GREY'S ANATOMY might prove to be more than just a typical hospital drama because of the work of Sandra Oh, so fine in SIDEWAYS . . . Patrick Dempsey, another watchable actor, also stars . . . Sundays at 10 p.m. on ABC.

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6. Pigeons

An independent 75-year-old woman liked sitting by the park feeding the pigeons.

One day she brought with her a whole loaf of fresh bread just to feed her daily company. Little by little, pinch by pinch, she fed each pigeon with joy. She sat there without being noticed by anyone in the rich suburban neighborhood.

Then suddenly a man in his early 40s rained on her parade by telling her that she shouldn't throw away good food on a bunch of pigeons that can find food anywhere when there are a lot of people starving in Africa.

She replied without hesitation, "That may be the case, but I can't throw that far!"

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7. Websites

A. You may be somewhat surprised to hear this, but I enjoy eating out at restaurants occasionally . . . ok, ok, I enjoy eating out a lot . . . to the point where I could be called a chowhound . . . that is, at least according to the following website. A chowhound is a person who knows where all the good restaurants are, enjoys delicious food and basically lives to eat. If you think you may be a chowhand or just want to learn about great places for dining out, please click:

<http://www.chowhound.com/>

It's a great place to team up with others at the message board to discuss the ultimate cuisine. Bon Appetit!

B. As I have started to think about my dreams and their meanings, I came across this one website that methinks you'd find of interest . . . it's an online guide to help you interpret your dreams. It has just about everything you might want to know about dreams, including the history, research, A-Z dictionary, themes, and a discussion forum. To learn more about the mysterious world of dreams, please click:

<http://www.dreammoods.com/>

Here are a few tidbits from the website that I found to be of interest:

We spend 1/3 of our lives asleep.

Approximately 6 years of our lives are spent dreaming.

Approximately 5 minutes after your dream, you will forget half of the content.

Approximately 10 minutes after your dream, you will forget 90% of the content.

Everybody dreams on average 1-2 hours per night and has 4-7 dreams per night.

Men dream more about other men.

Women dream about men and women equally.

If you are snoring, you cannot be dreaming.

You do not actually begin to "star" in your dreams until after age 3 or 4.

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

As you hopefully know by now, you should ALWAYS feel free to mention this newsletter to your friends, relatives, etc. . . . should they want to subscribe (AT NO COST), all they have to do is go to my homepage . . . then click on "Special Offer" at the bottom . . . it's that simple!

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8. Computer tip

If you change your e-mail address, please remember to let me know in advance; e.g., so you can continue to get this newsletter . . . but don't just let me know, tell all the folks in your address book.

It annoys me when I lose a subscriber, particular somebody who wants to continue getting BLAINESWORLD.

One other suggestion, if I may: Before you make the switch, keep both e-mail addresses active--say for at least a week . . . that way, you can test your new one to make sure it is working properly.

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9. Questions

After a long night of making love, a guy notices a photo of another man on his date's nightstand right beside the bed. He begins to worry.

"Is this your husband?" he nervously asks.

"No, silly," she replies, snuggling up to him.

"Your boyfriend, then?" he continues.

"No, not at all," she says, nibbling away at his ear.

"Is it your dad or your brother?" he inquires, hoping to be reassured.

"No, no, no!!!" she answers.

"Well, who is he then?" he demands.

"That's me before the surgery."

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10. A quote I like

Do not fear to be eccentric in opinion, for every opinion now accepted was once eccentric.--Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), British philosopher, logician, essayist, and social critic.

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11. Thought for the day

No nursing home for me

About 2 years ago my wife and I were on a cruise through the western Mediterranean aboard a Princess liner. At dinner we noticed an elderly lady sitting alone along the rail of the grand stairway in the main dining room. I also noticed that all the staff, ships officers, waiters, busboys, etc., all seemed very familiar with this lady. I asked our waiter who the lady was, expecting to be told she owned the line, but he said he only knew that she had been on board for the last four cruises, back to back.

As we left the dining room one evening I caught her eye and stopped to say hello. We chatted and I said, "I understand you've been on this ship for the last four cruises." She replied, "Yes, that's true." I stated, "I don't understand" and she replied, without a pause, "It's cheaper than a nursing home."

So, there will be no nursing home in my future. When I get old and feeble, I am going to get on a Princess Cruise Ship.

The average cost for a nursing home is \$200 per day. I have checked on reservations at Princess and I can get a long term discount and senior discount price of \$135 per day. That leaves \$65 a day for:

1. Gratuities which will only be \$10 per day.
2. I will have as many as 10 meals a day if I can waddle to the restaurant, or I can have room service (which means I can have breakfast in bed every day of the week).
3. Princess has as many as three swimming pools, a workout room, free washers and dryers, and shows every night.
4. They have free toothpaste and razors, and free soap and shampoo.
5. They will even treat you like a customer, not a patient. An extra \$5 worth of tips will have the entire staff scrambling to help you.
6. I will get to meet new people every 7 or 14 days.
7. TV broken? Light bulb need changing? Need to have the mattress replaced? No Problem! They will fix everything and apologize for your inconvenience.
8. Clean sheets and towels every day, and you don't even have to ask for them.
9. If you fall in the nursing home and break a hip you are on Medicare; if you fall and break a hip on the Princess ship they will upgrade you to a suite for the rest of your life.

Now hold on for the best! Do you want to see South America, the Panama Canal, Tahiti, Australia, New Zealand, Asia, or name where you want to go? Princess will have a ship ready to go. So don't look for me in a nursing home, just call shore to ship.

PS, And don't forget, when you die, they just dump you over the side at no charge.

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12. Advance planning department

A. Dr. Barry Sysler, my longtime friend, asked me to spread the word about an informative FREE seminar he is presenting:

It is on Financial Aid and will be presented at Goodnoe's Restaurant in Newtown, PA, on Wednesday at 7 p.m.

Come and learn about the Nine Best Kept Secrets of the College Funding System and how to send your child to the college of their choice regardless of your family's income. In addition, there will be a special section on the new SAT format.

Call 215.579.8281 to reserve a seat. Adults only. Seating is limited so call today.

NOTE:

If you can't make the above or would like information on upcoming seminars, call the same number.

B. Natalie Kaye, programming coordinator at the Women's Center at Bucks CCC, has asked me to invite readers to the following FREE day of programs "Celebrating Women Around the World" . . . Wednesday from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. in the Gallagher Room at Bucks . . . plenty of exhibits, programs and food . . . be there!

C. A talented colleague of mine, David Brahinsky, will be performing with friends on Saturday at the Six Mile Run Reform Church, 3037 Route 27, Franklin Park, NJ; 732.297.3734 . . . admission is \$5 . . . doors open at 7:30 p.m.; music begins at 8 . . . Cynthia and I will be there, partly because we always enjoy hearing David perform an eclectic range of music (blues, folks, etc.) . . . in addition, we're looking forward to hear one of his friends--Gail Sheehan--who just so happens to be our good friend and one very fine violin player.

D. PULSE OF THE NETWORK, my public affairs radio show, next airs on Saturday, April 2, at 8:30 p.m. on WWFM--the classical network . . . my guest will be Elaine Welch, executive director of the Bucks County Association for the Blind . . . we'll be discussing "Coping with Vision Loss."

Should you want to find out more about the fine work done by Elaine's group, please call 215.968.9400 or 800.472.8775 (toll free in Bucks County).

To listen to the show locally, check out:
WWFM
89.1 FM: Trenton, NJ

The show is also broadcast throughout New Jersey, Pennsylvania and as far away as Colorado . . . for a complete list of stations and/or further information, please click:
<http://www.wwfm.org>

You can now listen via Internet, too . . . even if you're not in the above listening areas, the station has made it possible to listen from ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD! . . . just go the above site, then click "Enter Here" . . . neat, huh?

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

Also, let me extend belated Easter wishes to all who may have celebrated that holiday . . . I don't know about you, but personally I wouldn't miss it for all the world . . . when else can you overdose on chocolate-covered marshmallow bunnies and have nobody object?

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
BLAINESWORLD subscription

New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

Issue #443

3.21.2005

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1. Reflections

A. Michael Gelb, author of HOW TO THINK LIKE LEONARDO DAVINCI, was a spectacular success when he spoke at the Bucks County Community College Foundation's 2nd Annual "Meet the Author" Business Seminar . . . some 250 people attended and over \$6,500 was raised to support College programs.

Gelb began by using an exercise, in which all those in attendance were shown how to use their brain (much like DaVinci did) by memorizing a list of ten objects . . . the key: to peg those ten objects--or anything you want to remember--to the following items: 1. bun; 2. shoe; 3. tree; 4. door; 5. hive; 6. sticks; 7. heaven; 8. gate; 9. vine; and 10. hen . . . the more visual you can make the association, the easier it will be to remember something . . . so, for example, if you were trying to recall a shopping list, you might think along these lines: 1. 6 AA batteries in an oversized hamburger bun; 2. milk overflowing in a shoe; 3. dishwashing liquid hanging from the limbs of a tree, etc.

He next had the group consider an everyday object; e.g., a paper clip . . . Gelb then gave everybody two minutes to come up with as many uses for the paper clip as possible . . . no response was wrong; rather, the object was to just get the mind going . . . this is an excellent exercise, by the way, that I use in many of my classes . . . it is also one that can be a lot of fun to do with children and/or grandchildren.

Gelb went on to teach us DaVinci's seven principles and, also, how to pronounce them in Italian . . . he said it was crucial to use lots of hand expressions.

We also had fun replicating Mona Lisa's smile, though I'm not so sure I agree with his choice of somebody having the perfect Mona Lisa smile--yours truly!

But I'll let you make the call yourself . . . see below (I'm the guy on the right):

Gelb got us thinking, that's for sure . . . among the other points he raised that caught my attention:

- * Keep a journal.
- * You should view all things from at least three different angles.
- * If you don't know something is impossible, then just go ahead and do it.
- * Making comparisons make things more memorable; however, when doing so, don't be judgmental
- * If you don't fear you'll be wrong, you can again be like a kid.
- * At work, consider doing team-building activities like wine tasting. Perhaps then write poetry. The group might well like this more than walking on hot coals.
- * DaVinci said, "Sometimes people work best when they work least."
- * Ask yourself: What are things you could do or stop doing that would let you live your life to the fullest?

Gelb concluded his memorable presentation by attempting to teach everybody how to juggle three tennis balls . . . he said all we had to do was take them and throw them up, then make sure we don't let them drop!

For more information about Michael Gelb, please click:
<http://www.michaelgelb.com/>

B. THANKS to Natalie Kaye, president of the Human Services Communications Coalition of Bucks County . . . she recently presented me with a most unexpected Certificate of Appreciation for my radio show work (see Section 12A) "for building a stronger community by raising awareness of human service agencies, their clients, programs, and services in Bucks County."

This reminds me, incidentally, of my request of YOU: If you represent such an agency--anywhere in New Jersey, Pennsylvania or even Colorado--do feel free to get in touch with me about being featured on PULSE OF THE NETWORK . . . I'm always looking for future guests, and they can also be from other organizations (including non-profits) that tie into the public affairs nature of my show.

C. Cynthia and I had a relatively quiet weekend--or at least for us . . . we got to watch some videos we had never seen together: WEST SIDE STORY and BRIGADOON, two of my all-time favorites . . . had an International House of Pancakes breakfast at the Hillsborough, NJ (908.281.9753) location . . . Cynthia ordered and enjoyed one of her favorite dishes, a garden omelet stuffed with vegetables and cheese; I liked my blueberry pancakes . . . and for one dinner, we ordered-in from Frank's Pizza (908.359.2253) in Hillsborough, NJ . . . the calzones there are always excellent . . . on Saturday, Cynthia tried the veal parmesan and said it was good; my chicken parmesan didn't quite hit it . . . however, the accompanying pasta with tomato sauce was excellent, as was the salad . . . portions were also ample, so we both had enough for

two meals.

In addition, we began giving some thought to our summer vacation . . . we did some online research and decided to sign-up for a weekend at the Omega Institute for Holistic Studies in Rhinebeck, NY, the nation's largest holistic learning center . . . we're both looking forward to the class we will be taking together: a forum in improvisation, conducted by Alan Arkin . . . if that name sounds familiar, it should . . . he's the actor who has been in such memorable films as GLENGARY GLENN ROSS; JOSHUA THEN AND NOW; THE IN-LAWS; THE HEART IS A LONELY HUNTER; CATCH-22; and THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING, THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING.

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

We are also planning a longer trip in July or August, possibly to Europe (Paris and/or the French Riviera? Greek Islands? Spain?) . . . do you have any experience with any of these locales? If so, please share? Or any other places you might recommend? . . . as you may know, we visited Florence and Venice last summer and had a great time, so we're not interested in a return to Italy . . . but are receptive to almost any other possibility.

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

This week, it goes to Tobi Bruhn . . . he's the dynamic coordinator of development projects at Bucks who was responsible for much of the success of the aforementioned Gelb seminar (see Section 1A).

Tobi is one of those guys who just does and does . . . he never complains or at least I've never heard him do so . . . and he always goes beyond the call of duty.

His enthusiasm and engaging smile are a pleasure to behold.

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2. FYI

No matter how many times we've been to lunch, I will always make sure I send a thank-you note later that day or the following day. Every time, without fail. That is, I'm willing to admit, an obvious attempt on my part to be charming in business. But here's the interesting fact. In more than twenty years in Hollywood, meeting executives, movie stars, directors, musicians, businesspeople and countless others, I have never received a single thank-you note for a lunch I bought. Not just a low percentage-not one of the people I've met for business lunches has ever formally thanked me for buying a meal, which can sometimes be quite expensive (as are the ones I thank them for, I want to point out). And they say there's no such thing as a free lunch.

Now I'm sure a good number of the people who read this book will react with no surprise at all. "Of course no one ever sent a thank-you note for lunch! Who sends thank-you notes anymore, anyway? It was business." And rather than wondering why the other people I mention aren't trying to charm me, many--if not most--readers will wonder why I would go to all that trouble to try and be charming to them.

And in that reaction--in the incredulity about my seemingly over-the-top, inexplicable behavior--lies my point. People don't expect you to be charming. In fact, if you're merely civil, most will find that a refreshing change of pace. But when you go out of your way, when you make the

extra effort, and especially when you make an unexpected gesture that shows you're thinking about someone else's needs, you are making an impression. You are creating a positive memory of yourself that can translate into a business decision in the future. You are creating an opportunity for yourself.

In short, you are charming your way to the top.

SOURCE:

CHARMING YOUR WAY TO THE TOP (see also Section 4C) by Michael Levine

FYI, part 2

* Catherine Ryan Hyde had this to say about my review of her excellent book, PAY IT FORWARD, in last week's issue:

That's wonderful. Thank you for being part of the word of mouth that still has this book selling five years after its release, long after the publisher has ceased to promote it in any way.

Thank you especially for taking the time to send it to me. I'm glad you enjoyed the book. And I'm glad you gave it a try after seeing the movie. It was not the most faithful adaptation.

NOTE:

You might also want to see the author's website:
www.cryanhyde.com

And two related websites she told me about:

www.payitforwardfoundation.org

www.payitforwardmovement.org

* Warren in Pennsylvania:

Concerning BRIDE & PREJUDICE . . . I saw it twice because I enjoyed it so much. I loved the music and dancing, even if it made no sense. And I couldn't get enough of the mother, who had to marry off her daughters. And the character from California . . . wonderful send up. I hope they make another Bollywood film for all of us to enjoy.

* Deb in New Jersey:

I agree completely about Bed, Bath & Beyond! They always take their own and Linens 'n' Things' coupons, expired or not. I love that store!!

* Harry in Pennsylvania:

Do you know that April 15-April 21 has been designated an international time for the celebration of creativity and innovation? If you choose, this could be a good time for you and you your students to creatively celebrate.

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3. I remember

In June of 1998, I was in the hospital recovering from a thyroid operation. A member of my temple's council came to visit. He said he brought greetings from the entire council, along with the group's wishes that I should recover soon and live a long and healthy life. I thanked him and said that was very nice.

He was somewhat taken aback and said, "It's more than 'nice,' Blaine. It was an official resolution . . . passed by a vote

of 14-7, too."

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4. Reviews ...

A. Enjoyed BECAUSE OF WINN-DIXIE, an adaptation of the popular children's novel of the same name by Kate DiCamillo . . . it is the tale of a 10-year old girl who, after being abandoned by her mother when she was three, adopts a stray dog . . . the pooch then helps her meet an eclectic group of townspeople and rekindle her almost lost relationship with her father . . . newcomer AnnaSophia Robb is excellent as Opal, as is Jeff Daniels as her preacher-father . . . I also loved the work of the dog who played Winn-Dixie; he was excellent . . . rated PG-13.

B. FINDING NEVERTHELAND will be released tomorrow in both DVD and VHS formats . . . to tide your over, my review from BLAINESWORLD #427 follows:

FINDING NEVERLAND is my favorite film of the year, thus far . . . it details the experiences of PETER PAN author J.M. Barrie, which lead him to write the children's classic . . . you'll smile at times while watching it, yet be prepared to cry too . . . I know I was teary-eyed at the end, if you must know . . . Johnny Depp continues to amaze me as an actor . . . here he plays still another role that is not quite the same as any other performance he has given . . . don't be put off by the PG rating . . . methinks you'll like it, perhaps even more than any children or grandchildren you might choose to accompany you . . . in addition, don't be surprised to see the audience clap at the end; it happened at the showing I attended.

C. In his entertaining and informative book, CHARMING YOUR WAY TO THE TOP (see also Section 2), Michael Levine defines charm as "the act of making the other person believe you care" . . . he then goes on to present countless examples of how this can be done in a wide variety of situations.

Levine, who heads his own public relations firm, also mentions names of people who have and haven't used charm in their careers . . . my only regret is that he hadn't mentioned both Cary Grant and Adolph Hitler quite so much and instead had cited his actual clients more.

Yet that said, I still liked CHARMING and got much out of it . . . you will, too . . . for example, here were just a few of the ideas that caught my attention:

The most obvious way to ingratiate yourself to other people is to demonstrate interest in them. Women often complain that first dates are awful because the men they date rarely want to talk about anything but themselves. Listening as well as talking is a severely under-practiced skill and one that needs to be cultivated and used intelligently. It is simple and basic, but it is also true--we want people to listen to us.

Light conversation is a skill and an art--it requires a little thought, and quick reactions. But it is not difficult and it is not dangerous. Asking people how their day is going is a simple and quick way to start a conversation, and-especially-to demonstrate that you

are interested in them, in their feelings and problems, at least on a very limited basis. I'm not talking about the robotic "have-a-nice-day" kind of communication that is clearly rehearsed and insincere. In this case, the easiest thing at the dry cleaner, the supermarket, the restaurant, or the bookstore is simply to look the person behind the counter in the eye, smile, and ask, "How's your day going?"

Also, using that technique [using someone's name] when leaving voice mail or telephone answering machine messages is a very telling, important point. Yes, identify yourself, but make sure you speak directly to the person for whom you're leaving the message, and use his name. It shows that even during unguarded moments you are thinking of someone other than yourself.

D. Heard RETURN TO LOVE, a cassette program written and read by Marianne Williamson . . . it contained her reflections on the principles of A COURSE IN MIRACLES, and though I've not yet gone through that latter work, I feel as if I've already gotten great benefit from it because of Williamson's enthusiasm for the subject matter.

In these tapes, she discusses the principles and practices of miracles, as well as what we need to do to allow them (and love) into our lives.

I also enjoyed learning about Williamson's background and how she came to embrace A COURSE IN MIRACLES, though she was born Jewish . . . in fact, what I got out of listening: the material applies to any religion . . . for example:

The internal equivalent to oxygen is love. Without love, we'll all die.

Ask yourself: Do you prefer to be right or happy?

God doesn't need us to police the universe.

There's enough room for everyone to be rich. It is only our thinking which blocks that possibility for manifestation.

Whatever we focus on, we're going to get more of it. Think lack, and we get lack. Think abundance, and we get abundance.

You don't have to be a virtuoso in everything. You do need to seek to become a virtuoso in life.

In heaven, everyone is allowed to be successful.

The important thing about our past is not what happened, but what we did with what happened.

What did we learn from what we did yesterday? (This is more important than what we actually did.)

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5. VCR alert

A. MOM AT SIXTEEN is described by TV GUIDE as "the perfect teen birth-control device: an angry mother" whose "openness about sex makes it a fine public service" . . . stars Mercedes Ruehl and Jane Krakowski . . . Thursday at 9 p.m. on Lifetime;

repeated on Saturday at 9 p.m.

B. THE OFFICE debuts on Thursday at 9:30 p.m. on NBC . . . THE DAILY SHOW'S Steve Carell plays the clueless boss in this version of the hit British mockumentary about life at a paper company.

C. KOJAK returns to the streets of the Big Apple in a remake of the 70s crime drama . . . Ving Rhames takes over the role made famous by Telly Savalas . . . Friday at 9 p.m. on USA, thereafter Sundays at 10 p.m.

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6. Mr. Popularity

An engineer dies and reports to the pearly gates.

St. Peter checks his dossier and says, "Ah, you're an engineer--you're in the wrong place."

So the engineer reports to the gates of hell and is let in. Pretty soon, the engineer gets dissatisfied with the level of comfort in hell, and starts designing and building improvements. After a while, they've got air conditioning, flush toilets and escalators, and the engineer is becoming a pretty popular guy.

One day God calls Satan up on the telephone and asks with a sneer, "So, how's it going down there in hell?"

Satan replies, "Hey, things are going great. We've got air conditioning, flush toilets and escalators, and there's no telling what this engineer is going to come up with next."

God replies, "What??? You've got an engineer? That's a mistake--he should never have gotten down there; send him up here."

Satan says, "No way! I like having an engineer on the staff, and I'm keeping him."

God says, "Send him back up here or I'll sue."

Satan laughs uproariously and answers, "Yeah right. And just where are YOU going to get a lawyer?"

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7. Websites

A. Together we CAN make a difference. I am referring to the current campaigning to save the Arctic National Wildlife from the proposed oil drilling. The Senate is about to pass a budget resolution that calls for the oil development in all over America, including Alaska. This plan would destroy the natural habitat for many endangered species.

This fight is far from over, however. To become law, the Senate budget bill must still be "reconciled" with the House budget bill -- something Congress has been unable to do for the past few years. The goal is to remove Arctic drilling from the final budget that actually winds up on President Bush's desk.

Congress must still pass two different budget measures to complete its assault on the refuge. The plan is to fight and stop these bills from being passed. If you care about the wildlife, I kindly urge you to convert your outrage and sorrow into action.

You can support this cause by going to the following website. For more information, please click:

<http://www.savebiogems.org/>

Once there, you can learn more about the wildlife that is endangered. You can also send e-post cards to everyone you know to help raise awareness. You can also learn more about how to "take action" after clicking on the "Donate" link.

Further, I will keep you posted about the latest developments, including what you can do to help. If anyone has any further information about this, please feel free to share.

B. Chances are if you have kids, you already know about this website. If not, it may be something you want to check out for your kids. It's one of the most popular websites among children and is even turning into a marketing frenzy because its "creatures" from the site are leaping into toys, video games and even animated movies.

The website offers a lot of fun activities for kids including games, trading auctions, greetings, messaging, and screen savers. But the biggest attraction is creating your very own personal virtual Neopet that needs constant feeding, love and attention. To learn more about creating your own private virtual pet, please click:

<http://www.neopets.com/>

This website is free and offers endless fun to over 70 million virtual pet owners. Even if you don't have kids, you might want to see what all the latest frenzy is about.

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

If you want to see some of the books I've reviewed previously (and typically liked), go to "Blaine's Best" on the left, then "Websites" . . . at letter "O," click on the second paragraph.

You'll see over 400 of my past reviews that I've posted at the amazon.com website . . . as always, if you find any of them helpful and if given the opportunity, please click the "Yes" button indicating that fact.

D. NEW FEATURE:

From time to time, I'll feature websites of readers . . . if you'd like yours mentioned, send it to me with the following in subject line:
READER WEBSITE POSSIBILITY

Here's one such website that Darcy in Pennsylvania recently sent me:

I noticed that, in your current e-newsletter, you gave another reader some PR for his website, so I figured I'd jump on the bandwagon.

Actually, my site is an indirect reflection on you. If you recall, I took your "Marketing on the Internet" course several years ago. Well, now that's exactly what I'm doing--marketing my own services online.

If you're so inclined, my website is:
<http://home.comcast.net/~thehiredhand/>

And you'll notice that I make a reference to the course here:
<http://home.comcast.net/~thehiredhand/worksamples-awards.htm>
(see the next to last bullet)

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8. Computer tip

If you have a lot of saved links under Favorites in Internet Explorer, they may well be a jumbled mess . . . to make them easier to find, just alphabetize them . . . to do this, click on the word Favorites in the menu list . . . then right-click any link in the list . . . click "sort by name" . . . this process will first alphabetize any folders . . . then it arranges the individual listings.

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9. Barbecuing

It's the only type of cooking a "real" man will do. When a man volunteers to do such cooking, the following chain of events is put into motion.

1. The woman goes to the store.
2. The woman "fixes" the salad, vegetables, and dessert.
3. The woman prepares the meat for cooking, places it on a tray along with the necessary cooking utensils, and takes it to the man, who is lounging beside the grill.
4. The man places the meat on the grill.
5. The woman goes inside to set the table and check the vegetables.
6. The woman comes out to tell the man that the meat is burning.
7. The man takes the meat off the grill and hands it to the woman.
8. The woman prepares the plates and brings them to the table.
9. After eating, the woman clears the table and does the dishes.
10. The man asks the woman how she enjoyed "her night off." And, upon seeing her annoyed reaction, concludes that there's just no pleasing some women.

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10. A quote I like

The thing that is really hard, and really amazing, is giving up on being perfect and beginning the work of becoming yourself.--Anna Quindlen, American author and NEWSWEEK columnist.

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11. Thought for the day

Rainy day, sunny day:
A change in perspective

Long ago, there lived an old woman whose tears never ceased because her worries were never-ending. She had two daughters. The eldest had married an umbrella merchant. On days filled with sunshine, the old woman would glance upward and think, "The weather is too nice! No one is going to want to buy any umbrellas and the shop may need to be closed!" Overcome with worry, she would cry and cry. Her younger daughter had married a noodle vendor and the old woman knew that when the rains came, the noodles would not dry and there would be no noodles to sell. On rainy days, the old woman would again be consumed with worry and her tears would pour. Thus, ever grieving for one of her daughters, she lived in constant sorrow. Her well-meaning neighbors, unable to console the old woman, began to call her "the crying woman."

One day, she crossed paths with a monk. He had heard of the crying woman and was very curious as to why she never stopped crying. The old woman explained the source of her sadness. The monk, who was very kind, smiled and said, "You won't need to worry any more because I can show you the way to find happiness."

The old woman became very excited and quickly asked the monk to tell her what to do. He replied that the answer was simple. "You only need to change your perspective," he said. "On sunny days, think not of your elder daughter and her umbrellas, but of your younger daughter finding the warmth to dry her noodles. When the sunlight is brightest, she will be able to make mountains of noodles and her business will prosper. When the rains come, think not of your younger daughter and her noodles, but of the many customers who will come to your elder daughter in order to buy umbrellas. The more forceful the rain, the more she will sell."

The old woman knew the monk was speaking wisdom and did as he said. After a time, her tears became smiles, and her smiles grew as the days progressed. From that day forward, she was known to all as "the smiling woman."

What do you think?

Author Unknown
(if you know who wrote this and/or the source, please let me know)

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12. Advance planning department

A. PULSE OF THE NETWORK, my public affairs radio show,

next airs on Saturday, March 26, at 8:30 p.m. on WWFM--the classical network . . . my guests will be Rick Pine, executive director of the Livengrin Association, and Yvonne Kay, a consultant . . . we'll be discussing "Addiction Recovery."

Should you want to find out more about the fine work that Livengrin does, please click:

<http://livengrin.org>

To listen to the show locally, check out:

WWFM

89.1 FM: Trenton, NJ

The show is also broadcast throughout New Jersey, Pennsylvania and as far away as Colorado . . . for a complete list of stations and/or further information, please click:

<http://www.wwfm.org>

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B. YOU'RE INVITED to a presentation I'm giving on "Shoestring Marketing (of your Small Business)" on Tuesday, March 22, at 6:30 p.m. in Penn 410 at Bucks CCC . . . there's no charge; however, in case there's any change in time or room, please e-mail if you're planning to attend so I could get back to you if need be.

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PS. Join me in putting away your winter coats . . . spring is upon us, though you'd never be able to tell it by the low temperatures still in the air . . . also, don't forget to continue praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and make it a great week!

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To continue getting mailings of this type, you don't need to do anything further.

If you do NOT want to get future such mailings, please send me e-mail and make that request . . . my address is:
bginbc@aol.com

And, lastly, in the unlikely event that you are not already on the weekly mailing list for BLAINESWORLD (my free online newsletter that contains some jokes, hopefully not too risqué; websites; reviews, etc.) . . . AND if you want to be . . . please send me e-mail with the following in the subject line:
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New readers are always welcome, so also feel free to mention this missive to your friends.

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