



BLAINES WORLD

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BLAINESWORLD

Teaching
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Newsletter
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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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#691

12.28.2009

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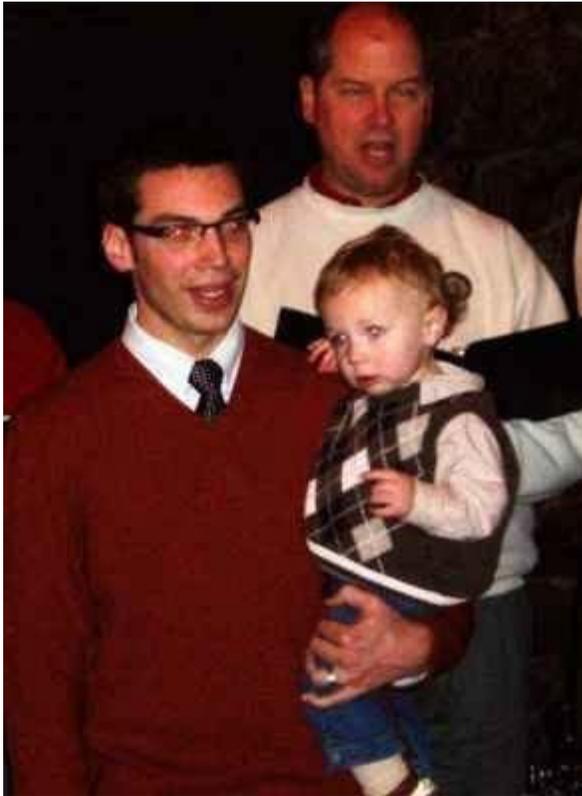
1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I visited the impressive National Gingerbread House Competition Display at the Grove Park Inn . . . that's us in the lobby:



B. We got there just in time to catch the daily concert that features

employees singing Christmas carols . . . below is my Leadership Asheville classmate, John Beatty, along with his son:



C. It was also the week for lots of gatherings with friends and neighbors . . . I went to a nice Holiday party at my accountant's office . . . you've heard me mention his name before, but here it is again: Glenn Gleghorn, CPA . . . I recommend both him and his staff highly . . . for more information, please visit:

<http://gleghorncpa.com/services.html>

We then both went to Julia, our next door neighbor, for Christmas dinner with her son Conner and some other neighbors.



She is a most gracious hostess who makes a terrific lasagna . . . afterward, we decided she could have us back any time . . . and she did, along with some other neighbors, when we got together for dessert the very next night.

And during the week, a bunch of us (we have a very friendly neighborhood) got together for lunch at Modesto (828.225.4133) in Asheville . . . I liked the spinach pizza; it had a thin yet tasty crust . . . Cynthia said her Caesar salad was good.

D. Like many others, we used the week to catch several of the movies that are currently out . . . we very much enjoyed UP IN THE AIR (see also Section 4A) and as reported previously, we both liked and recommend you see THE BLIND SIDE and INVICTUS.

We recently saw ME AND ORSON WELLES . . . catch it, if just for Christian McKay's portrayal of Welles . . . NINE was watchable, though overall, disappointing (especially because of the way it butchered "Unusual Way," one of my favorite songs) . . . whatever you do, miss DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS?

Next up: IT'S COMPLICATED.

For some reason, I'm still up in the air about seeing AVATAR, as well as SHERLOCK HOLMES.

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

As always, I'm interested in your reaction to any and/or all of the above films . . . plus any others that come along . . . thanks in advance!

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

This week, it goes to Mountain View Tire & Service in Asheville--the place where we now get service for both our cars.

I first heard about this business from Paul Anderson, president/CEO and a neighbor . . . being impressed with what he had to say, I checked it out recently and was convinced that these fine folks do things right.

How often do you see a waiting room that is both airy and spotlessly clean? In addition, they serve fresh popcorn, coffee and green tea on a daily basis, and women are given a rose on each visit.

We were helped by Glenn Lewis, story manager, and enjoyed his friendly manner . . . also, we appreciated how Neil Spieler, service manager, kept in touch with us about the status of repairs that we needed done.

Lastly, we liked the buy 4, get 1 free promotion on oil changes, along with the preferred customer discount card that we were given.

For more information, call 828.253.4818 or please click:

<http://www.mvtire.com>

NOTE:

Glenn and Neil are at the Patton Ave. location . . . that's the one we go to because it is closest to us . . . other Mountain View locations are on Tunnel Road in Asheville, as well as in Arden, Hendersonville and Waynesville.

2. FYI

Do you always fully listen when somebody is speaking to you? Methinks that I don't do this nearly enough, and that too often I resemble the character in the story below from Mitch Albom's HAVE A LITTLE FAITH (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11):

A little girl came home from school with a drawing she'd made in class. She danced into the kitchen where her mother was preparing dinner.

"Mom, guess what?" she squealed, waving the drawing.

Her mother never looked up, "What?' she said, tending to the pots.

"Guess what?" The child repeated, waving the drawing.

"What!" the mother said, tending to the plates.

"Mom, you're not listening."

"Sweetie, yes I am."

"Mom," the child said, "you're not listening with your eyes."

FYI, part 2

* Alyson in Colorado (with a REQUEST FOR HELP):

Two years ago, I volunteered for a study at our local animal shelter in which we played classical music for the crated animals waiting for adoption. Their anxiety symptoms (panting, incessant barking, pacing and repetitive scratching / licking) all diminished while the music played. There have also been studies that show some people with Alzheimer's Disease are similarly soothed by music. I'm interested in any stories about the healing properties of music that you'd like to share.

* Jim in Pennsylvania asked me to please forward the following:

Hello Lab Supporters and Friends!

This week, I am working with an amazing team of rescue folks in North Carolina to help get these labs out of the horrid County Shelter in Gaston, NC, which is a high kill gassing shelter. I am in urgent need for temporary housing for these dogs; they need foster homes in our area.

These are gorgeous lab & lab mixes, very adoptable dogs. They will get adopted quickly.

Can you help foster a dog or recruit a friend/ family member? It truly is a matter of life or death

for each of the dogs on this list! They MUST get out by Monday, Jan. 4.

Thanks so much for your help!

Jane

215.429.7746

* Terri in Pennsylvania:

Thinking of vacationing in Ocean City during Summer 2010? Consider this great beach house . . . just 4 Houses to the beach! We include beach tags, wireless Internet service, 42" HDTV, 3 Sharp 19" Flat Screens (1 in each bedroom), DVD/VCR combos, fully stocked kitchen, beach chairs and much more!

3 bedroom Condo sleeps 8 in Ocean City, New Jersey.

This 3 bedroom Ocean City Condo Rental sleeps 8. Book this Ocean City vacation rental, 7787 at:

www.vacationrentals.com

* Pat in Pennsylvania:

Check out my web site. Click on the video page, scroll down to the bottom and click the Youtube link to watch the movie I made for OFT labs. We even paid actors for this one. Be sure your sound is on. Hope you enjoy!

You may even see some people you know in the other pictures.

WHAT PAT IS REFERRING TO:

Under "weddings," you'll see a picture of my daughter Risa . . . under "portraits, you'll see a picture of Cynthia with her sister Joyce at our wedding . . . Pat took the pictures at both these events and did an absolutely super job.

* Nick in Vermont:

I wish more people would think this way! [He was commenting on my review of Tony Dungy's book, UNCOMMON, in which I wrote that Dungy is a devout evangelical Christian . . . that fact should not defer you from appreciating the book, even if you are not that particular religion.] Thanks, Blaine!

* Kathy in Florida:

My daughter has been a long-time fan of Celia Rievenbank, and I've read some of her stuff. Kelly even orders the books online before they are printed.

* Marty in New Jersey:

You're so effective [as a hypnotist] that just reading your newsletter has made me smoke free.

OK, so maybe I never did get started to begin with--but I'm sure that I was a smoker, I would've stopped by now thanks to your efforts!

* Diane in Pennsylvania:

I saw the funniest sign yesterday: If you need a shoulder to cry on, pull off to the side of the road!

3. Take your choice (for the New Year)

An optimist stays up to see the New Year in. A pessimist waits to make sure the old one leaves.

SOURCE:

Bill Vaughan (1915-77), American columnist and author

4. Reviews

A. I very much liked UP IN THE AIR; in fact, it's one of my favorite films from this past year . . . it's a comedy of sorts (with some serious parts) about a guy who travels the country, telling workers they've been let go . . . his one goal in life is to reach the five million frequent flyer plateau; however things change when he encounters another fellow frequent traveler . . . she is well-played by Vera Farmiga (also so fine in THE DEPARTED, THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PAJAMAS, etc.) . . . look for something different, too, in the man-on-the-street interviews throughout the proceedings . . . they were conducted with real people who had actually just lost their jobs . . . rated R.

B. FOUR CHRISTMASES is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #637 follows:

If Vince Vaughn is in a film, I'm usually going to laugh . . . that again was the case in his latest effort, FOUR CHRISTMASES, where he and Reese Witherspoon play a happily unmarried couple who find themselves having to spend time with their divorced parents . . . the beginning was very funny; however, by midpoint, it started to drag . . . and I did find the ending to be far too predictable . . . reviews from most critics were not very favorable; however, from a box office standpoint, FOUR CHRISTMASES has been a big hit . . . rated PG-13.

For a far better rental, look for FIVE PENNIES . . . based on the life of trumpeter Red Nichols, this sentimental biopic stars Danny Kaye as a musician with grand ambitions . . . just when he is to hit it big, his daughter (Tuesday Weld) develops polio . . . so he quits the entertainment business, only to make a comeback years later when the Weld

character convinces him to give it another shot . . . there are some great numbers, including a few featuring Louie Armstrong, along with a bunch of funny bits . . . it did not get rated at the time of release, though I do believe it would be appropriate for any child over 6.

C. Mitch Albom wrote one of my favorite books of the past 15 years, TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE . . . I don't know if his latest effort, HAVE A LITTLE FAITH (see also Sections 2, 4C, 10 and 11), tops it . . . but it is definitely up there with any list of current books that I'd strongly recommend.

FAITH begins when Albom is summoned to deliver the eulogy of the rabbi from his New Jersey hometown . . . though the rabbi is still living, he has chosen the author as the man to do the job in the future . . . Albom accepts, but only on the condition that he gets to conduct a series of interviews with the rabbi to get to know him better.

Around the same, Albom also becomes involved with a Detroit pastor who also happens to be a reformed drug dealer and convict . . . his church has its own problems; i.e., it is decaying and there's a hole in its roof.

The writing repeatedly moved me . . . to cite one such passage where that was the case:

* . . . and I am in my religious high school. The subject is the parting of the Red Sea. I yawn.

What is left to learn about this? I've heard it a million times. I look across the room to a girl I like and contemplate how hard it would be to get her attention.

"There is a Talmudic commentary here," the teacher says.

Oh, great I figure. This means translation, which is slow and painful. But as the story unfolds,

I begin to pay attention.

After the Israelites safely crossed the Red Sea, the Egyptians chased after them and were drowned. God's angels wanted to celebrate the enemy's demise.

According to the commentary, God saw this and grew angry. He said, in essence: "Stop celebrating. For those were my children, too."

Those were my children, too.

"What do you think of that?" the teacher asks us.

Someone else answers. But I know what I think. I think it is the first time I've heard that God

might love the "enemy" as well as us.

Years later, I will forget the class, forget the teacher's name, forget the girl across the room. But I will remember that story.

In addition, I liked the several stories that were interspersed throughout, including this one:

* A man buried his wife. At the gravesite he stood by the Reb, tears falling down his face. "I loved her," he whispered.

The Reb nodded.

"I mean . . . I really loved her." The man broke down.

"And...I almost told her once."

The Reb looked at me sadly. "Nothing haunts like the things we don't say."

Lastly, the book got me viewing life through a different framework--something I like to do from time to time . . . here Albom describes a realization that he came to while driving home one night:

* That I am neither better nor smarter, only luckier. And I should be ashamed of thinking I knew everything, because you can know the whole world and still feel lost in it. So many

people are in pain—no matter how smart or accomplished—they cry, they yearn, they hurt. But instead of looking down on things, they look up, which is where I should have been looking, too. Because when the world quiets to the sound of your own breathing, we all want the same things: comfort, love, and a peaceful heart.

Even though the holiday gift-giving season will have passed by the time you read this review, I still recommend you purchase HAVE A LITTLE FAITH . . . not just for you; it also makes the ideal gift for any man or woman of the cloth that you know.

D. Heard the CD version of YOUR POWER TO CREATE, written and read by Caroline Myss . . she is the author of three others books, as well as being a leading voice in the field of human consciousness.

Her message is that things aren't always quite as easy as they might appear in THE SECRET or any of countless other books about the law of attraction . . . rather:

* The reason people sabotage is because they don't want their life to change. They don't want to work so hard. You want the power to create IF it doesn't cost anything. You want a god to change everything around you, but you don't have to change a thing. That's why the "power to create" doesn't work for them: they're undisciplined. They can't follow the guidance to walk 20 minutes a day, but they'll try to heal a major illness.

Although the world may seem to be degenerating quickly, the good news according to the author is that the new millennium:

* is the "decade of mysticism" where we need to cooperate with God, tenaciously follow the soul's guidance, and become fearless "mystics without monasteries."

Though the author's voice comes across as shrill, especially in the beginning, it eventually grows on you . . . she has a lot to offer if you're ready to receive it.

5. TV alert

OOOPS, my part:

Last week's issue contained the some interesting TV shows--but they were for this week . . . sorry 'bout that . . . however, since they have not yet aired, here they are . . . again:

A. THREE STOOGES MARATHON begins at 7 a.m. on Thursday and continues for the next 23 hours on AMC . . . what a great opportunity to have your kids and grandkids discover the performers you may well have loved as a kid. (Guilty pleasure admission: I did!)

B. DOG TOWN has its season premiere on Friday at 10 p.m. on NATIONAL

GEORGRAPHIC with an episode about the pit bulls rescued from Michael Vick's dog-fighting ring.

C. TAYLOR SWIFT WORLD DOMINATION: A CMT INSIDER SPECIAL will, hopefully, help me understand why the singer is so popular . . . Saturday at 1:30 p.m. on CMT.

D. Finally, a show for me: WORST COOKS IN AMERICA . . . 12 people who have no business being in the kitchen compete for the chance to cook for a panel of food critics . . . season premiere on Sunday at 10 p.m. on FOOD NETWORK.

And as a special bonus, one more that I didn't mention last week:

E. IRON CHEF AMERICA: SUPER CHEF BATTLE . . . the Iron Chefs make a special stop to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue . . . Michelle Obama invites Bobby Flay and Mario Batali, along with Emeril Lagasse and White House Executive Chef Cristeta Comerford, to take part in a challenge to create a meal using "special ingredients" culled from the First Family's vegetable garden . . . Sunday at 8 p.m. on FOOD NETWORK.

6. Those were the days

Remember when Ronald Reagan was president. We also had Bob Hope and Johnny Cash.

Well, now we have Obama and no hope and no cash.

MY TWO CENTS:

If the above offended you, let me apologize in advance of your writing me . . . that was and is not my intent; rather, my goal is to put a smile on your face--regardless of your political leanings.

7. Websites

A. For a great new website to check out Asheville's cultural scene, please click:

<http://livewireasheville.com/>

For discount coupons in general (including restaurants), please click:

<http://www.halfpriceasheville.com/intro.php>

For restaurants in particular, please click:

<http://www.restaurant.com>

KEEP IN MIND:

Above is great for restaurants throughout the country, too . . . if you wait for the coupons to be on sale, you can sometimes pay just \$2 for a coupon that will save you \$25!

B. On how to turn disappointment around, please click:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGODurRfVv4>

You'll want to share this, I'm sure with anybody you know who owns dogs and/or is into surfing. It is very inspirational.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

MANY THANKS to Lori Hansen for upgrading the archives for this website with respect to past issues of BLAINESWORLD . . . so if you go to Newsletter on the left, then Past issues, you'll be able to find out what you seek if it came out over the past few years . . . a helpful search engine tool at the very top makes it possible to find information on such specific topics as "pregnancy weight" . . . using it I came up with the following from #513:

Social skills

Our catering manager lacks certain social skills—like knowing when to keep her mouth shut. While discussing a baby christening party with a young couple, she told the mother, "You look like you've lost most of your pregnancy weight."

"Thanks," came the clenched-teeth reply. "We adopted."

8. Computer tip

I hope your laptop never gets stolen . . . not only do you need to get a replacement, but you're also lose all your personal data that could be used by others to get into your checking and other accounts.

There's now an option that can help you:

<http://www.PreypProject.com>

Should your laptop go missing, just contact the website and report that fact . . . Prey then leaps into action, silently connecting your laptop to any available network . . . it starts sending back reports, documenting the current IP, screenshots of what the thief is doing and even photos, if you have a webcam . . . best of all, it's FREE.

The above sounded almost too good to be true, so I checked

another source to see if it is legitimate . . . it certainly seems legitimate to me, as evidenced by the following:

<http://blogs.bnet.com/businessstips/?p=3979>

9. Bear removal basics

A man wakes up one morning to find a bear on his roof. So he looks in the yellow pages and sure enough, there's an ad for bear removers. He calls the number, and the bear remover says he'll be over in 30 minutes.

The bear remover arrives and gets out of his van. He's got a ladder, a baseball bat, a shotgun and a mean old pit bull.

"What are you going to do?" the bewildered homeowner asks.

"I'm going to put this ladder up against the roof, then I'm going to go up there and knock the bear off the roof with this baseball bat. When the bear falls off, the pit bull is trained to grab his testicles and not let go. The bear will then be subdued enough for me to put him in the cage in the back of the van."

"Huh," the homeowner says. "But what's the shotgun for?"

"Well," the professional says as hands the shotgun to the homeowner, "if the bear knocks me off the roof, you shoot the dog."

10. A quote I like

The Reb was lucky to have such a love with Sarah. It had endured hardships by relying on cooperation—and selflessness. The Reb was fond of telling young couples, "Remember, the only difference between 'marital' and 'martial' is where you put the 'l.' " --Mitch Albom in HAVE A LITTLE FAITH (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11)

11. Thought for the day

What if you only get five minutes with God?

"Five minutes?" he said.

Five minutes, I said. God is a busy God. Here's your slice of heaven. Five minutes alone with the Lord and then, poof, on you go to whatever happens next.

"And in those five minutes?" he asks, intrigued.

In those five minutes, you can ask anything you want.

"Ah. Okay"

He pushed back into the chair, as if consulting the air around him. "First I would say, 'Do me a favor, God in heaven, if you can, members of my family who need help, please show them the way on earth. Guide them a little.' "

Okay, that's a minute.

"The next three minutes, I'd say, 'Lord, give this to someone who is suffering and requires your love and counsel.' "

You'd give up three minutes?

"If someone truly needs, yes."

Okay, I said, That still leaves you a minute.

"All right. In that final minute, I would say, 'Look, Lord, I've done X amount of good stuff on earth. I have tried to follow your teaching and to pass them on. I have loved my family. I've been part of a community. And I have been, I think, fairly good to people. So, Heavenly Father, for all this, what is my reward?' "

And what do you think God will say?

He smiled.

"He'll say, 'Reward? That's what you were supposed to do!' "

SOURCE:

HAVE A LITTLE FAITH (see also Sections 2, 4C and 10), a book by Mitch Albom that I REALLY liked as evidenced by the fact that the above was the fourth time cited it in this week's missive.

12. Advance planning department

A. Cynthia (see also Section 1A) will be conducting two JourneyDance/Move Your Body sessions in January . . . the first one takes place at 7 p.m. on January 5 at our Biltmore Lake clubhouse, and the second one takes place at 6:30 p.m. on January 28 at Jubilee (a spiritual center in Asheville) . . . if you'd like to attend either and/or both sessions, just send an email to bginbc@aol.com and put JourneyDance in the subject line.

B. Yours truly remains available to hypnotize you . . . or as I like to say, let me help you lose your baggage before you get to the airport . . . I specialize in helping folks become smoke-free, but can also help you lose weight, stop nail-biting, develop confidence, reduce stress, etc. . . to contact me, send an email to bginbc@aol.com and put HYPNOISIS in the subject line.

Keep in mind that I'm now having some fantastic results via the telephone (yes, it does work!) . . . so even if you're not in my immediate area, let's talk about whether I can help you.

C. OLD MAN TRAPS DEATH IN TREE AS ACTORS' NET STAGES FANTASY

The Actors' NET of Bucks County starts off the New Year with a classic fantasy drama, Paul Osborn's *On Borrowed Time*. When an old man meets Death in the form of "Mr. Brink," the sly old-timer tricks the grim reaper into climbing an enchanted tree from which there is no escape. Death must stay treed until the old man lets him down. Knowing he'll be the next victim, the old man has no intention of doing so. Meanwhile, nobody dies anywhere!

Directed by NET General Manager Joe Doyle of Morrisville and starring John Pinto of Yardley, Chuck Donnelly of Levittown and Joshua Baumgarten of Yardley. Costarring Virginia Barrie of Ewing, NJ; Jo Page of Doylestown; Jaci D'Ulisse of Trenton, NJ; Marco Newton of Yardley; Dennis McGuire of Levittown; Tom Harrelson of Churchville; Vince Pileggi of Southampton; John Helmke of Hamilton, NJ; and Mike Gearty of Langhorne. Set design by Cheryl Doyle of Morrisville. Lighting design by Andrena Wishnie of Morrisville. Stage managed by John Helmke. Production Assistants, Mike Gearty and Amanda Graf of Morrisville. Produced by special arrangement

with Dramatists Play Service, Inc. Rated PG.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.actorsnetbucks.org>

PS. Don't forget that 2010 is going to be your year . . . consequently, after serious and cautious consideration, your contract of friendship has been renewed for the new year with this wish for you:

May peace break into your house and may thieves come to steal your debts. May the pockets of your jeans become a magnet of \$100 bills. May love stick to your face like Vaseline and may laughter assault your lips! May your clothes smell of success , may happiness slap you across the face and may your tears be those of joy. May the problems you had forget your home address! Or in simple words . . .

May the best part of your past year be the worst part of your coming year.

Also, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan . . . and that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To subscribe to this newsletter, please put SUBSCRIBE in the subject line of an email and send to bginbc@aol.com . . . in the unlikely event you wish to unsubscribe, just put UNSUBSCRIBE in subject line and send to the same address.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#689

12.14.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had the pleasure of receiving Reiki treatments from our friends Kimberly and Ted Ross.

For those not familiar with Reiki, I quote from an email I received from Kimberly:

Reiki, an ancient form of energy healing, is a technique which reduces stress and promotes relaxation--thereby enhancing the body's natural ability to heal itself.

Among its many beneficial effects, Reiki supports the body's natural ability to heal itself; vitalizes mind body and spirit; loosens blocked energy and promotes a heightened state of relaxation; cleanses the body of toxins; balances the body's energies; adjusts itself according to the needs of the recipient; and reestablishes equilibrium and well-being.

Reiki is administered by a practitioner with or without physical contact over the fully-clothed body's major energy centers, clearing blockages, as well as balancing and harmonizing the body's energy. It reduces stress and allows the body to heal itself naturally.

For more information, please call Kimberly (828.335.7730) or Ted (828.333.8333); via email, they can both be reached at: rossreiki@chater.net.

SPECIAL OFFER:

Kimberly and Ted are certified Reiki practitioners, as well as Professional Ballroom Dance instructors . . . they are offering a \$20 discount on a one-hour Reiki session for first-time clients . . . ask about it when you call.

B. We had a grand time on Friday at the annual Holiday Party run by our development's Social and Recreation Committee.



The food from Pomodoro's was excellent . . . KUDOS to Marline Kwiatkowski, who chaired the event, and to the other members of her group who helped make the event the success that it was: Vic and Mary Allwein, David Berry, Sally Butcher, Christina Lief, Jim Parish, and Dianne and Tom Rebbin.

On Saturday, we joined our friends Cyndi, Julia and Marilynne for a great dinner at Sushi Thai, followed by fireworks in downtown Asheville--courtesy of the Grove Park Inn.

FOR YOUR FUTURE PLANS:

The Grove Park Inn sponsored these fireworks and will do so once again this coming Saturday . . . they start at 7 p.m. and are quite spectacular . . . in addition, you might want to stop by the Inn from now until January 3 to see its annual display of the entries from the National Gingerbread House Competition . . . from now until December 23, if you stop by during the week, you can also see a daily concert at 1 p.m. in the Grand Hall . . . employees gather to sing Christmas carols . . . I'm going to try to attend, largely because I want to hear the melodious voice of John Beatty (my Leadership Asheville classmate).

For more information about the Grove Park Inn, please click:

<http://www.groveparkinn.com/Leisure/>

From there, we went to the Asheville Community Theatre to see THE SANTALAND DIARIES . . . this is a laugh-filled production of the story by David Sedaris, and it starred Josh Batenhorst.

BAD NEWS, GOOD NEWS:

We had purchased tickets to see Tom Chalmers in the role . . . unfortunately, his mother had just died--so Batenhorst (the director) filled-in admirably at the last minute . . . that's the bad news; the good news is that Chalmers is slated to be back for all shows this coming weekend . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.ashevilletheatre.org/>

C. On Sunday, we went to a farewell party for our aforementioned friend Marilynne--hosted by her sister Cyndi . . . it was a real nice event, and I'm pleased to now welcome back Marilynne . . . it turns out that she is just moving from her apartment (near Cyndi) to a townhouse down the block from us . . . we're looking forward to having her as a neighbor.

On Sunday, I also got to attend the Open House for the Decorative Arts program at AB Tech . . . I was most impressed with the work of all the students, but most particularly with what my friend Sally Butcher completed over the one-year program . . . that's her on the left, along with our mutual friend Christina Lief, in front of the wall that she had done as one of her projects:



D. CONDOLENCES to Marty Litchman, my brother-in-law, and his family on the death of Marty's son Andrew in California . . . should you wish to make a contribution in the memory of Andrew, it can be made either to:

* the Israel National Fund to plant a tree:

<http://www.jnf.org/support/tree-planting-center/>; or

* the American Cancer Society:

http://www.cancer.org/docroot/don/don_0.asp

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

This week, it goes to Patty Diienzo--the hypnotist who helped so many folks quit or greatly reduce their smoking in my sabbatical project last Spring (see BLAINESWORLD #687 for more details).

I've known Patty for many years and have always been impressed with her passion toward healthcare . . . she holds a master certificate in hypnotherapy and also does work in such other fields as Also practice Reiki, IET, AFT, Deep Tissue and Hot Stone Massage, Reflexology, Dowsing, Muscle Testing and ear candling . . . in addition, she does extensive energy balancing work.

Should you wish to work with her, she can be reached via phone, 267.318.8316, or by email: InspirationsWellnessInstitute@gmail.com.

In her "spare" time, Patty writes a most interesting blog with a catchy title: Diary of a Mad Ex-Smoker . . . should you want to receive that for free, sign-up at: MadExSmoker@gmail.com.

2. FYI

Death by Minimum Payment

Never, ever pay the minimum payment due on a credit card.

Never.

Do so, and you'll be trapped in credit card hell, spending more dollars than you ever imagined for a period of time that can cover your entire working career

Consider this example: You ring up a \$12,000 balance on your MasterCard in college, then decide after graduation you'll never use it again and that you'll just pay it off over time making the minimum payments. Sure, no one would likely do it this way-probably-but this is just for the sake of shock value. This card has a 14% interest rate (not unreasonable), and, like many, requires a minimum payment of 2% of the monthly balance.

How long will it take to repay the debt, and how much money will you actually send to the credit card company?

Time spent: 46 ½ years.

Money spent: More than \$35,000, of which \$23,000, or nearly double the original charges, is interest.

Priceless. Right?

Double up on the minimum and you cut your repayment schedule to 14 years and the amount you ultimately repay to \$18,000.

SOURCE:

FINANCIALLY EVER AFTER (see also Section 4C) by Jeff D. Opdyke

FYI, part 2

* Scott in Pennsylvania:

7-11 is giving away a free hot 12-ounce beverage through December 31:

http://s.fatwallet.com/static/attachments/23551_711_coupon.pdf

* Mark in Pennsylvania:

if you missed the little KYW TV segment about me, go to:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bx0W064Yk9Y>

NOTE:

Click the above to learn more about Mark Sfirri, an outstanding Bucks County Community College professor who was recently named as one of only three educators in the country to receive the prestigious Renwick Award.

* Mandy in Pennsylvania (responding Josephine's question last week on consumer credit):

I'm not entirely sure if the following person can help, but . . .

A former classmate from grad school, Loretta Hutchinson, MA, NCC, Financial Life Planner, works for a company called Harvest Group (Financial Services). Contact location follows:

loretta.harvestgroup@comcast.net
215-860-6056

They are located in Newtown, PA, which is a long way from Las Vegas but again, perhaps they at least could make a solid referral.

I know Loretta had a background in Accounting and Finance and then became a counselor with interest in helping people solve financial concerns. I think she could be a good person for Josephine to connect with.

* Lana in Ohio (with another response):

I worked in the credit industry for over 30 years . . . if Consumer Credit Counseling Service could not help this gal, she may be hard pressed to find another way . . . they are the specialist in the credit field. However, there is also Chapter XIII (bankruptcy), which works out plans with creditors that are secured, generally 75-100 % of the debt . . . unsecured creditors generally receive no monies, but her best bet is to discuss with her attorney . . . an attorney will generally recommend Chapter VII because their fee is paid up front . . . in a Chapter XXX, the attorney fee is included in the debt pay back plan so they must wait on their fee . . . most chapter XIII plans are 3 years in duration.

3. Second opinion

My friend was at the beauty parlor when she overheard another woman rattle on to the manicurist about the sad state of her marriage. "Things have gotten so bad," she said, "I think I might ask for a divorce. What do you think?"

"That's a serious matter that requires a second opinion," came the reply. "I think you should consult another manicurist."

4. Reviews

A. INVICTUS tells the inspiring true story of how Nelson Mandela helped bring his country together through his support of South Africa's underdog rugby team run to the 1995 World Championship . . . Morgan Freeman as Mandela was great, as usual, and Matt Damon was believable as Francois Pienar--the team's captain . . . I'd say it was the best film about rugby I've ever seen, though thinking about that statement, it's the only film about the sport I have ever seen . . . the final match went on far too long and I had no idea of what was happening in the game, but overall, I'd strongly recommend the film . . . rated PG-13.

B. HANGOVER is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #663 follows:

If you're in the mood for a funny, stupid movie that has absolutely no redeeming social value, then HANGOVER is just for you . . . it is about four guys who go to Las Vegas for a bachelor party that turns out to be unlike any you've ever seen and/or heard about . . . not all of the parts click, but there's enough here to make it worth seeing--especially the performance by Zach Galifiankis . . . he's one crazy guy . . . rated R.

C. I am a big fan of Jeff D. Opdyke . . . he has written about personal finance and the investment markets for THE WALL STREET JOURNAL since 1993, and for six years he wrote that paper's nationally syndicated "Love & Money" column.

So when I came across his latest book, FINANCIALLY EVER AFTER (see also Section 2), I had to get hold of it in large part because of its subtitle: THE COUPLES' GUIDE TO MANAGING MONEY . . . my only regret is that I did not get this many years ago when I was first married.

Back then, I alternated between the two options the author mentions: I sometimes fought and made the situation worse; other times, I just kept quiet and made the situation worse . . . what I did not know was that there was and is a third option; i.e., family financial fluency--the insight, knowledge and vocabulary every couple needs to effectively communicate about money.

Opdyke covers just about all financial issues that two people in a relationship will face, including budgeting, deciding whether to have joint or individual accounts and confronting debt, as well as how best to handle a mortgage, allowances (for adults and children) and even engagement rings . . . he offers many real-life examples, several of them based on his own personal life.

I particularly liked this heads-up he gave about entering into any relationship:

* A bad sign to beware of is someone who complains regularly about the bills that arrive, who receives numerous monthly statements from creditors or who has to split a purchase across two or more credit cards because the credit available on one card isn't enough. Remember: When you take a partner into your life, you're also taking your partner's debt. While you aren't responsible for paying it, you will still be subject to its influence on the relationship, whether that influence manifests as a partner's stresses and frustrations about always being in debt.

He also shared this useful rule to remember:

* Family finance works best, and stress is reduced the most, when both partners know exactly what's going on with the money and where all the accounts are located.

And, lastly, I appreciated the wisdom he shared on such basic everyday decisions as buying a house:

* So how do you know if you're buying too much house?

Here's a clue: If your lender cannot qualify you for the home of your

dreams using a traditional, fixed-rate mortgage and, instead talks to you about considering adjustable-rate or interest-only mortgages, you're on the verge of living beyond your means.

Methinks this would not only be a good book for most any couple to read, but it would make a fine gift for your children and/or grandchildren . . . in fact, just as soon I as finish this review, I'm going to send a copy of FINAICIALLY EVER AFTER to my daughter and son-in-law!

D. I was inspired by GIVING--written and read by Bill Clinton . . . it's a call for action about how each of us can change the world.

You will learn little about his presidency in this book . . . rather, you will learn what Clinton has spent his life doing since leaving the White House . . . as he writes:

* Politics is a getting business--[getting votes, support, contributions, etc.]. To balance the sales [he has devoted his post-presidency to giving]. . . . After I narrowly escaped what could have been a fatal heart attack in 2004, I felt that way even more strongly.

He then presents accounts of what companies have done, but I was most moved by the stories of such individuals as the following:

* Oseola McCarty, a retired cleaning lady in Mississippi, who gave her life savings to the University of Southern Mississippi for a scholarship for poor African-Americans;

* Paul Farmer, who grew up living in a trailer park, a boat and even a tent but eventually graduated from Harvard Medical School and went on to devote his life to fighting AIDS and tuberculosis in destitute places around the world; and

* McKensize Steiner, a six-year old California girl who organized and supervised drives to clean-up the beach in her community.

GIVING motivated me to want to do more not only for my Asheville community, but also for this country and the rest of the world . . . you'll feel the same way, too, if you read this book.

5. TV alert

A. THE SING-OFF is a new reality contest that is actually worth watching, at least in my opinion . . . a cappella singing groups compete for a recording contract . . . I saw the first episode and enjoyed it to the extent that I look forward to future ones . . . it is running Monday through Wednesday this week on NBC at 8 p.m. and then the finals are live next Monday at the same time.

IF YOU GET THIS TOO LATE IN TIME FOR THE FIRST EPISODE:

You can catch up to it here by clicking:

<http://tinyurl.com/y88clo8>

B. SNL: A VERY GILLY CHRISTMAS features holiday-themed skits from the late-night show's archives included are guest appearances

by Alec Baldwin and Steve Martin, as well as new sketches involving mischievous moppet Gilly (Kristen Wiig) . . . Thursday at 8 p.m. on NBC.

C. BARTENDER WARS airs on Friday at 10:30 p.m. on FLN . . . in this weekly competition, hosted by radio DJ Egypt Sherrod, bartenders duke it out in challenges ranging from how fast they can mix to how well they flirt.

D. PIXAR SHORT FILMS will feature two hours of animated goodness, including three Academy Award winners . . . Friday at 10 p.m. on ABC FAMILY.

6. Two doctors

Two doctors, a psychiatrist and a proctologist, opened an office in a small town and put up a sign reading: "Dr. Smith and Dr. Jones: Hysterias and Posteriors."

The town council was not happy with the sign, so the doctors changed it to read, "Schizoids and Hemorrhoids."

This was not acceptable either, so in an effort to satisfy the council, they changed the sign to "Catatonics and High Colonics." No go.

Next, they tried "Manic Depressives and Anal Retentives." Thumbs down again.

Then came "Minds and Behinds." Still no good.

Another attempt resulted in "Lost Souls and Butt Holes." Unacceptable again!

So they tried "Analysis and Anal Cysts." Not a chance.

"Nuts and Butts?" No way. "Freaks and Cheeks?" Still no go.

"Loons and Moons?" Forget it.

Almost at their wit's end, the doctors finally came up with: "Dr. Smith and Dr. Jones, Odds and Ends." Everyone loved it.

7. Websites

A. For one of the finest renditions of a song you'll ever hear, catch Bruce Springsteen with Darleen Love, Sam Moore and others at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame finale in October, 2009 as they perform "Higher and Higher" . . . just click:

<http://tinyurl.com/ykrboop>

Also, you can still see the entire show on HBO by clicking:

<http://www.hbo.com/apps/schedule/ScheduleServlet>

Then at the search engine at the top, type "Rock and Roll Hall of Fame."

B. Continuing on the music kick, you'll enjoy viewing "Ode to Forgetfulness" by clicking:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7lSlucgygc>

If you'd like to know more about the performer, Mack Dryden, please click:

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

There's even an option to get a free copy of Dryden's "Seven Steps to Achieving Your Goals," along with 25 of his top jokes . . . I laughed at this one:

A jury awarded the Food Lion Supermarket chain five and a half million dollars in that lawsuit against this network, saying ABC used illegal means to videotape rat-gnawed cheese and unsafe food handling. So ABC was forced to eat a little crow . . . which at Food Lion is marked "Cornish Hen."

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

If you'd like to see the reviews of some 860 books that I've read and usually enjoyed, see "Blaine's Best" on the left and then letter "O" . . . click the second paragraph.

Currently, I am #370 of Amazon's top 500 reviewers . . . if you'd like to help me move up in the ranking, here's all that you need to do:

1. Go to the amazon.com website:

<http://www.amazon.com>

2. At the search engine at the top, type-in some book I recently reviewed; e.g., DON'T LET AN OLD PERSON MOVE INTO YOUR BODY by Jim Donovan.

3. Click on my review and read it. If you find it helpful, and I think you will, respond "YES" when asked that was the case.

4. Thanks!

8. Computer tip

THANKS to Karen in North Carolina who recently wrote:
Here's another computer tip I thought your readers might find useful:

5 FREE Microsoft programs worth checking out

Microsoft isn't known for giving away its products, but if you know where to look you can find a handful of pretty cool, free applications. Here are a few:

Paint.NET

An image and photo editing program. Easy-to-use and has all the

essential image editing features you need plus layers, special effects and it supports a wide range of formats.

WorldWide Telescope

Virtual telescope from Hubble Space Telescope and approximately 10 earthbound telescopes. If you don't have XP or higher or have a Mac, you can run as a Web client.

SyncToy

This tool assists in maintaining duplicate files (e.g., on your computer and laptop). Can also be a great back-up tool. It doesn't have a built-in scheduler so will need to be done manually.

Office Accounting Express 2009

Easy-to-use accounting package. Provides most accounting features a small business might need, such as managing credit cards, bank accounts, payroll, vendors, invoices, quotes, cash sales, and even built-in PayPal functionality.

Visual Web Developer 2008 Express Edition

An easy-to-use tool for dynamic Web application development. Creates Web sites or small applications. From HTML to ASP.NET or even SQL Server databases.

Adapted from TECHREPUBLIC.

For more information, you can reach Karen as follows:

Twitter: http://twitter.com/SEO_Web_AVL

Linked In: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/karenmazza>

Email: klmazza@charter.net

Phone: 828.252.3612

Karen runs "Charlotte's Web Design," a company designed to help you stand out with web design, SEO and Internet marketing.

9. Three proofs

THREE PROOFS THAT JESUS WAS PUERTO RICAN:

His first name was Jesus.

He was bilingual.

He was always being harassed by the authorities.

THREE PROOFS THAT JESUS WAS BLACK:

He called everybody "brother."

He liked Gospel.

He couldn't get a fair trial.

THREE PROOFS THAT JESUS WAS JEWISH:

He went into his father's business.

He lived at home until he was 33.

He was sure his mother was a virgin, and his mother was sure he was God.

THREE PROOFS THAT JESUS WAS ITALIAN:

He talked with his hands.
He had wine with every meal.
He worked in the building trades.

THREE PROOFS THAT JESUS WAS A CALIFORNIAN:

He never cut his hair.
He walked around barefoot.
He started a new religion.

THREE PROOFS THAT JESUS WAS IRISH:

He never got married.
He was always telling stories.
He loved green pastures.

And now the most compelling evidence . . .

THREE PROOFS THAT JESUS WAS A WOMAN:

He had to feed a crowd, at a moment's notice, when there was no food.
He kept trying to get the message across to a bunch of men who just didn't get it.
Even when he was dead, He had to get up because there was more work for him to do.

CAN I GET AN AMEN?

10. A quote I like

Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life.--Berthold Auerbach (1812-1882), German-Jewish poet and author

11. Thought for the day

The Ivory and Gold Tablecloth
by Howard C. Schade

At Christmas time, men and women everywhere gather in their churches to wonder anew at the greatest miracle the world has ever known. But the story I like best to recall was not a huge miracle --not exactly.

It happened to a pastor who was very young. His church was very old. Once, long ago, it had flourished. Famous men had preached from its pulpit, prayed before its altar. Rich and poor alike had worshipped there and built it beautifully. Now, the good days had passed from the section of town where it stood. But the pastor and his young wife believed in their run-down church. They felt that with hard work and lots of faith they could get it in shape. Together they went to work.

But, late in December, a severe storm whipped through the river valley, and the worst blow fell on the church--a huge chunk of rain-soaked plaster

fell out of the inside wall just behind the altar. Sorrowfully the pastor and his wife swept away the mess, but they couldn't hide the ragged hole.

The pastor looked at it and had to remind himself quickly, "Thy will be done!" But his wife wept, "Christmas is only two days away!"

That afternoon the dispirited couple attended the auction held for the benefit of a youth group. The auctioneer opened a box and shook out of its folds a gloriously beautiful, very ornately sewn, gold and ivory lace tablecloth.

It was a magnificent item, nearly 15 feet long. But it, too, dated from a long vanished era. Who, today, had any use for such a thing? There were a few halfhearted bids. Then the pastor was seized with what he thought was a great idea.

He bid \$6.50 for it.

He carried the glorious gold and ivory lace cloth back to the church and very carefully put it up on the wall behind the altar. It completely hid the hole! And the extraordinary beauty of its shimmering handwork cast a fine, holiday glow over the chancel. It was a great triumph. Happily he went back to preparing his Christmas sermon.

Just before noon on the day of Christmas Eve, as the pastor was opening the church, he noticed a woman standing in the cold at the bus stop. "The bus won't be here for 40 minutes!" he called, and invited her into the church to get warm.

She told him that she had come from the city that morning to be interviewed for a job as governess to the children of one of the wealthy families in town but she had been turned down. A Jewish war refugee, her English was imperfect.

The woman sat down in a pew and chafed her hands and rested. After a while she dropped her head and prayed. She looked up and saw the great gold and ivory cloth. She rose suddenly and walked up the steps of the chancel.

She looked at the beautiful tablecloth with remembering eyes.

The pastor smiled and started to tell her about the storm damage, but she didn't seem to listen. She took up a fold of the cloth and lovingly rubbed it between her fingers, tears welled in her kind eyes. But they were happy tears of recognition.

"It is mine!" she said. "It is my banquet cloth!" She lifted up a corner and showed the surprised pastor that there were initials monogrammed on it. "My husband had the cloth made especially for me in Brussels! There could not be another like it."

For the next few minutes the woman and the pastor talked excitedly together. She explained that she was Viennese; that being Jews, she and her husband wanted to flee from the Nazis. They were advised to go separately. Her husband put her on a train for Switzerland. They planned that he would join her as soon as he could arrange to ship their household goods across the border. She never saw him again. Later she heard that he had died in a concentration camp.

"I have always felt that it was my fault--to leave without him," she said. "Perhaps these years of wandering have been my punishment!" The pastor

tried to comfort her and urged her to take the beautiful cloth with her. But she refused saying, "no, no, the cloth has found it's way to you. You need it. It has a purpose here. I want you to have it. I am happy knowing you have it."

She gazed lovingly up at the magnificent gold and ivory lace cloth, then quietly went away.

As the church began to fill on Christmas Eve, it was clear that the magnificent cloth was going to be a great success. It had been skillfully designed to look its best by candlelight.

The glorious gold and ivory lace cloth actually glowed in the candlelight! It cast lovely fine designs on the walls and ceiling of the church. Everyone looked around in wonderment, and a tranquil ambiance was cast over all.

After the service, the pastor stood at the doorway. Many people told him that the church looked more beautiful than ever before.

From the generous donations that were given, a few days later the pastor had the local jeweler who was also the clock-and-watch repairman come to repair the church chimes.

The repairman's gentle middle-aged face drew into a look of great astonishment! As if in a trance he walked right up to the beautiful cloth and looked intently!

"It is strange," he said in his soft accent. "Many years ago my wife--God rest her--and I owned such a cloth. My wife put it on the table"--and here he gave a big smile--"for holidays and when the Rabbi came to dinner."

The pastor suddenly became very excited. He told the jeweler about the woman who had been in church to get warm, saw the cloth, and recognized it to be hers! The startled jeweler clutched the pastor's arm. "Can it be?" he said through desperate tears.

Together the two got in touch with the family who had interviewed the woman for the governess position, got her address, then they both drove to the city.

The jeweler knocked on the heavy, weathered, door. As it opened, there stood his beloved wife. The many years of separation were immediately washed away by their blissfully tears, as they held each other in loving embraces, never to be parted again. True love seems to find a way.

To all who hear this story, the joyful purpose of the storm was to knock a hole in the wall of the church.

So Dear Ones, the next time something knocks a hole in your dreams, your goals . . . just remember to have enough faith, enough belief in those dreams and goals, to lovingly and creatively hang your own brilliant lace cloth over the temporary mar. Then watch the miracles come.

THE REST OF THE STORY:

This story was first published in the December, 1954 READER'S DIGEST and reprinted in Alice Gray's CHRISTMAS STORIES FOR THE HEART in 1968 . . . some say it is true, but even if it's not, it is touching . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.snopes.com/glurge/tablecloth.asp>

12. Advance planning department

A. Buster, a great local band headed by Bob Butcher, is playing at Mararitagrille (Main Street in Hendersonville) on Friday, December 18, from 6-7 p.m. . . . to find our more about the group, please click:

<http://bustertunes.com/>

B. Cynthia (see also Section 1A) will be conducting two JourneyDance/ Move Your Body sessions in January . . . the first one takes place at 6:30 p.m. on January 5 at our Biltmore Lake clubhouse, and the second one takes place at 6:30 p.m. on January 28 at Jubilee . . . if you'd like to attend either and/or both sessions, just send an email to bginnj@aol.com and put JourneyDance in the subject line.

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To subscribe to this newsletter, please put SUBSCRIBE in the subject line of an email and send to bginbc@aol.com . . . in the unlikely event you wish to unsubscribe, just put UNSUBSCRIBE in subject line and send to the same address.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#688

12.7.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I joined our friend Tammy to see the second to last performance of THE HALLELUJAH GIRLS at the Asheville Community Theatre . . . it's a delightful comedy about four women who at the funeral of a friend, decide to stop drifting and make something of themselves by doing what makes them happy . . . in this case, it involves converting an old church into the Spa-Dee-Dah! Day Salon.

Everybody in the case was excellent . . . however, in particular, I liked the work of Rhonda Parker who dons various costumes as she sings a song for every conceivable holiday . . . Joan Atwood also had us in stitches, especially in one scene where she lost her voice.

Though you won't be able to see this particular show, do catch other productions at this theatre . . . we've enjoyed everything we have seen there . . . for news of what's upcoming, please click:

<http://www.ashevilletheatre.org>

B. We also got to attend the ribbon cutting ceremony of Asheville 4 Seasons Realty . . . Suzanne Smith, our friend and favorite local realtor, has opened this office with Susan Lodato . . . it's located at 4 Sulphur Springs Road, just off Haywood Road; 828.225.6911.

There was plenty of good food, including BBQ from 12 Bones; music; friendship, etc., and we are both hopeful--make that convinced--that Suzanne will succeed in her latest venture.

I will tell you this: You won't go wrong if you work with Suzanne Smith as your realtor!

C. If you're like me, you celebrate ALL holidays . . . that way there's more food and great presents, as well as time with loved ones and friends . . . furthermore, for a fun holiday activity that can be enjoyed by the entire family, drive around your neighborhood to conduct your own contest to determine the best Christmas decorations . . . I've tried to help in this issue by pointing out several homes that caught my attention.

However, I have also tried to be fair to my Jewish readers by giving justice to that holiday as well . . . so make sure you see Sections 7 and the PS after Section 12.

I truly believe that the more we learn about and appreciate the cultures of others, the more we can all pull together to make this country--and world, too--an even better place than it already is.

D. CONGRATULATIONS to Bill Lewis . . . as to why, I quote his lovely wife Diane:

I want to let everyone know that Bill passed his driving test today with hand controls! What an accomplishment for him. I cried like a baby. I am so proud of him. He has come such a long way from 8.10.2008!

GIVING CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE:

I am proud of the role that I played in helping with the above . . . after all, I was the guy who sent him this video that undoubtedly helped him with the parking requirement:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VyFnFPcqrAw>

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

This week, it goes to Art Finkle--a longtime friend and an Advanced Practitioner Mediator (as designated by the Association for Conflict Resolution). In addition, he is rostered by the Mediation Works Incorporated Panel of Employment Mediators.

During the past year, he has published two books:

Intervention in the Workplace: Federal Laws Touching the Workplace

<http://tinyurl.com/ntndzb>

Thought Teasers Workbook: Landmark Employment Caselaw

<http://tinyurl.com/lzmna>

In addition, he has had seven articles published:

"The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990: Securing Non-discrimination for those with Disabilities in the Workplace," International Personnel Management Association – Human Resources, <http://www.ipma-hr.org/>. March 2009.

"COBRA, 2009," International Personnel Management Association--Human Resources, April 2008, <http://www.ipma-hr.org/>. March 2009

"Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)," International Personnel Management Association--Human Resources, <http://www.ipma-hr.org/>. March 2009.

"Ethics in Government," International Personnel Management Association-- Human Resources, April 2008, <http://www.ipma-hr.org/>. March 2009.

"Creativity: Lifeblood of a Mediator," Advanced Practitioner Mediators.<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/APMediator/message/20>. Accessed

February 8, 2009.

"A Mediation Primer, Part 1," HR News, International Personnel Management Association--Human Resources, April 2008, p 15-27.

"A Mediation Primer, Part 2," HR News, International Personnel Management Association – Human Resources, May 2008, p 26-38.

He has done this while also teaching part-time at Empire State, Kean University and ITT . . . and maintaining the following Shofar Sounders website:

<http://shofar221.com/>

For more information about any of the above, your best bet is to contact Art directly via email: afinkle221@yahoo.com.

2. FYI

If you're a new home buyer . . . or even if you already have a home . . . you may well qualify for the 2010 extension of the stimulus package . . . THANKS to Marilynne in North Carolina for sharing this information . . . as she notes:

Cyndi [her sister] passed along some interesting news today re: \$6,500 tax credit for new home owners. I ran it past my accountant in NY this morning, and he said I qualify. And if I qualify, you must also. We can thank Barack for this. Here's the link for more information:

<http://tinyurl.com/calmro>

ALAS:

I don't qualify, in that I bought my Asheville home shortly before this kicked-in . . . however, perhaps you can use this information . . . and if not, feel free to forward it to your children, grandchildren and friends . . . your neighbors might be interested as well, especially if you want them to move!

FYI, part 2

* Josephine in Las Vegas (with a REQUEST FOR HELP):

We have some financial challenges ahead of us. I'm wondering if you have any recommendations regarding some type of financial counselor/consultant that perhaps we could talk to. The consumer credit counseling service could not help us since I don't make enough money for its 5-year payoff plan.

* Ruth in Pennsylvania

We did it!

The challenge was to create a 3-7 minute film of professional peace makers and have it go Live during the 2nd week of December 2009, the week of the Noble Awards.

And voila!

You can watch it by clicking:

<http://www.LiveYourPeace.com>

* Steve in Pennsylvania:

You will love this link to this article about my mom, the grandmother of invention:

<http://www.inc.com/topic/Experience+Works+Inc>.

* Ken in New York:

How can anyone write a review about PIRATE RADIO without mentioning Leonard Cohen's "So Long, Marianne?" I'm aghast.

IN MY DEFENSE:

I now do remember the song in the movie, but for some inexplicable reason, it never made it to the soundtrack.

* Christina in North Carolina:

Forgive me for sending this to you, but this is important legislation that is being introduced by U.S. Rep. George Miller, D-California, chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee and the chairman of the House Democratic Policy Committee. U.S. Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, R-Washington, is a member of the House Education and Labor Committee and vice chairman of the House Republican Conference. A bipartisan effort!

If you believe this is an important new law that would train teachers, limit restraint and provide oversight please contact your representative in support of the bill. Or click:

<http://tinyurl.com/y8hxxtb>

* Joe in Las Vegas (with an excellent article he has written on enhancing your career):

<http://tinyurl.com/yg9omce>

* Andy in Pennsylvania:

Buy one Comedy Cabaret gift certificate - YOU get one FREE. YOU JUST SAVED \$40

This is a limited time offer.

* You need to order before Dec. 18th.

* You must type in the words 'E Special' in the comments box to receive this offer.

Easy to order - here is the link - order now:

<https://www.comedycabaret.com/giftcert.html>

* Natalie in Pennsylvania:

I was a featured guest on LIVE YOUR PEACE. To listen to the interview, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/y8mk3k2>

* Debbi in New Jersey:

The newest virus circulating is the UPS/Fed Ex Delivery Failure. You will receive an email from

UPS/Fed Ex Service along with a packet number. It will say that they were unable to deliver a package sent to you on such-and-such a date. It then asks you to print out the invoice copy attached. **DON'T TRY TO PRINT THIS. IT LAUNCHES THE VIRUS!** Pass this warning on to all your PC operators at work and home. This virus has caused millions of dollars in damage in the past few days.

UPDATE:

If this looks familiar, it is because it is . . . the virus circulated last year and is back . . . for more information, here's what Snopes has to say about it:

<http://www.snopes.com/computer/virus/ups.asp>

3. My favorite Christmas decorations, Part 1

This one is especially great if you're in the search for a cheap way to decorate for the holidays. Make sure you look at the house to the right.



4. Reviews

A. Do try to see **BROTHERS**, a powerful drama about two brothers . . . one of them gets sent to Afghanistan and when his plane is shot down, he is presumed dead . . . I'm still revisiting in my mind some of the scenes from the film . . . they'll live with me for quite some time, as will the performances by both Tobey Maguire and Jake Gyllenhaal in the leading roles . . . though not specifically an anti-war film, I do think that if you see it, you'll rethink the wisdom of sending even one American soldier to war in any foreign country . . . rated R.

AN INVITE:

Shortly after I saw the above, I read an excellent op-ed piece about the war in Afghanistan . . . written by Thomas L. Friedman, it got me thinking some more about the subject . . . you will, too, if you take the time to read what he has to say.

<http://tinyurl.com/yeej7sf>

B. JULIE & JULIA is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #657 follows:

JULIE & JULIA is almost a great movie . . . it's a comedy/biopic about Julia Child and the woman who attempts to recreate all her recipes--and blog about them . . . Meryl Streep is fantastic as Child; methinks she deserve at least another Oscar nomination for her performance . . . Stanley Tucci, as always, was great in a supporting role . . . Amy Adams was cute as Julie; however, her part of the film was just not as strong as the other part . . . rated PG-13.

C. OPEN by Andre Agassi is probably the best tennis book I have ever read . . . though considering the fact that I haven't read too many other tennis books (maybe just one other), that's not saying much . . . so I'll amend that statement to say that it was one of the best sports books I have ever read.

It's a gripping account of the tennis star's life that had me hooked from the very first page . . . there's some dirt in it, of course; e.g., about his use of crystal meth that cost him his No. 1 ranking . . . yet some of the stuff that's revealed is actually funny, such as his account of the problems with the wig he wore to hide his premature baldness.

I was also surprised to learn how his father worked him so hard as a youngster:

* My father says that if I hit 2,500 balls each day, I'll hit 17,500 balls each week, and at the end of one year I'll have hit nearly one million balls. He believes in math. Numbers, he says, don't lie. A child who hits one million balls each year will be unbeatable.

Yet, by far, OPEN most came alive when Agassi described in amazing detail how he thought about actually playing the sport (he actually hated most of his life):

* I'm winning more often. I should be happy. Instead I'm uptight, because it's over. I've enjoyed a triumphant hard-court season, my body wants to keep playing on hard courts, but clay season is starting. The sudden switch from one surface to another changes everything. Clay is a different game, thus your game must become different, and so must your body. Instead of sprinting from side to side, stopping short and starting, you must slide and lean and dance. Familiar muscles now play supporting roles, dormant muscles dominate. It's painful enough, under the best of circumstances, that I don't know who I am. To suddenly become a different person, a clay person, adds another degree of frustration and anxiety.

And the vivid accounts of his battles with such tennis greats as Jimmy Connor's, Pete Sampras and Roger Federer had me

feeling almost as if I was on the court, right beside him . . . for example, there was this description of a match he had with Xavier Malisse from Belgium:

* He moves admirably well and has slingshot of an arm. He features a meaty forehand and an acing serve, but he's not consistent. Also, his backhand is mediocre: it looks as if it should be great because he's so comfortable hitting it, but he's more interested in the way it looks than actually executing it. He simply cannot hit a backhand up the line, and if you can't do that, you can't beat me. I control the court too well. If you can't hit a backhand up the line, I'll dictate every point. An opponent has to move me, stretch me off the mark, put me in a position where I'm dealing with him, or else he'll have to play on my terms. And my terms are harsh. Especially as I get older.

The book concludes with an account of what did happen to Agassi as he grew older and eventually retired from competitive tennis . . . I was touched how he has turned to philanthropy, and I was also gladdened to read of the happiness he has found with his second wife (Stefanie Graf).

D. I heard MAESTRO by Bob Woodward . . . it's the account of Alan Greenspan's role as chairman of the Federal Reserve from 1987 2000.

Though the book was not about a subject that I ordinarily would seek out, I found it quite interesting . . . in addition, I was appreciative of the fact that it explained economics in a way that I could understand too.

What I liked best about it, however, was the fact that I got to understand Greenspan's role as a maestro . . . though he ruled by consensus, he did so with a firm hand that was able to get support from both political parties in what were some very turbulent times.

I also got a kick out the story behind his proposal to his wife . . . it turns out the he had to propose twice to her, the violinist-turned-TV news star Andrea Mitchell, before she understood that:

* His verbal obscurity and caution were so ingrained that Mitchell didn't even know that he had asked her to marry him.

And this account of how Greenspan made decisions was most insightful:

* It turns out that for all his awesome knowledge of monetary minutiae, the Fed chief literally relies on "a pain in the pit of my stomach" to make decisions. "At times, he found his body sensed danger before his head," writes Woodward. The Fed chief also adapts Einstein's technique to economics, hunting for discrepancies as keys to deeper theories.

Actor James Naughton handled the narration duties . . . his familiar voice added to my enjoyment of the book,

5. TV alert

A. BAM MARGERA PRESENTS: WHERE THE #\$&% IS SANTA? airs on Friday at 10 p.m. on MTV . . . the JACKASS alum assembles his motley crew and heads to the Arctic Circle in search of the big guy.

B. CHRISTMAS IN CANAAN stars Billy Ray Cyrus as a widower who devises an unconventional plan to ease the tension between his son and a neighborhood boy . . . Kenny Rogers wrote the story . . . Saturday at 8 p.m. on HALLMARK.

C. THE PEOPLE SPEAK is a 90-minute civil-rights documentary, inspired by the books of historian Howard Zinn . . . Matt Damon is the executive producer and is one of the voices . . . he is joined by such others as Morgan Freeman, John Legend, Sean Penn, Pink and Bruce Springsteen . . . Sunday at 8 p.m. on HISTORY.

D. If you miss Michael Jackson, then you will perhaps want to check out THE JACKSONS: A FAMILY DYNASTY . . . it follows the remaining Jackson brothers as they deal with the loss of their brother . . . this new reality show premieres on Sunday at 9 p.m. on A&E.

6. My favorite Christmas decorations, Part 2

Unfortunately, the guy who came up with this idea was once again disqualified from his neighborhood's "Best Decorated House" due to his bad attitude!



7. Websites

A. My favorite Christmas decorations, Part 3

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CeD1_peLMdQ

Just imagine this family's electrical bill!

B. My favorite Christmas decorations, Part 4

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUtPKbMwnRo>

What a great idea; i.e., to get the whole family (including pets) into the act . . . for some reason, though, I doubt that our cats would be too interested in such an activity.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

With all this talk about Christmas decorations, I'd be remiss if I didn't give at least some consideration to the Jewish holiday of Chanukah (see also the PS. after Section 12) . . . this wintertime Festival of Lights, which celebrates religious freedom, begins at sunset on Friday and runs through December 19.

Writing the above got me thinking that I once addressed--in a previous issue sometime last year--the very heady topic of what is the correct way to spell the holiday . . . I typically use Chanukah, but many others use Hanukah . . . in fact, I found out that there are actually 16 different spellings that are used . . . but where, oh where, did I write that?

So in search of an answer, I checked the handy archives that can be found on the left of the homepage (click Newsletter, then Past Issues) . . . I knew that what I originally wrote had to appear sometime around the same time as this year; hence, I was quickly able to find BLAINESWORLD #637 and the link that I was seeking:

<http://joemaller.com/2005/12/21/sixteen-ways-to-spell-hanukkah/>

8. Computer tip

Imagine watching all your favorite TV shows online; i.e., if you want to do so (personally, I still prefer my big screen TV) . . . there's now a website that operates like a digital TV GUIDE:

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

According to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, "If you spend a lot of time in front of your computer and find yourself searching all over the Web for the TV shows you'd like to watch, Clicker will be a huge help. And even if your show isn't available, you might find something similar--or better--in Clicker's recommendations."

You can even create your own playlist to let you save shows to watch now or later.

9. My favorite Christmas decorations, part 5

From a guy who wishes to remain anonymous:

Good news is that I truly outdid myself this year with my Christmas decorations. See below for what I put up:



The bad news is that I had to take them down after two days, even though I had more people coming up to my house than ever.

First, the cops advised me that it would cause traffic accidents as many cars almost crashed as they drove by.

Second, a 55-year old lady grabbed the 75-pound ladder and almost killed herself putting it against my house. She didn't realize the guy was fake until she climbed to the top. (She was not a happy camper.) By the way, she was one of the many who attempted to do that. My yard couldn't take it either. I have more than a few tire tracks where people literally drove up my garden.

10. A quote I like

You can take no credit for beauty at sixteen. But if you are beautiful at sixty, it will be your own soul's doing--Marie Stopes (1880-1958), Scottish author, palaeobotanist, campaigner for women's rights and pioneer in the field of family planning

11. Thought for the day

When Chris Spielman suffered a brutal neck injury, he said overcoming it was a breeze

compared to most everything his wife Stefanie had faced. When her hair started falling out, when clumps of it began landing on the floor and in their toddler's hands, Chris decided to shave his own head, a soldier in solidarity. When it became apparent that more chemotherapy and a mastectomy--breast cancer's evil twins--were high on Stefanie's schedule, Chris bid a temporary farewell to the NFL, skipping an entire year so he could be with the woman he proposed to on the 18th hole of a Putt-Putt course.

For the rest of the story, please click:

<http://lisa-olson.fanhouse.com/2009/11/20/spielmans-special-story-of-love-and-life/>

PLEASE NOTE:

Do read this story even if you're not a football fan . . . methinks you'll be moved by it.

12. Advance planning department

A. Marie in New Jersey:

See and hear Neil Foglio, Pharm. D. Candidate, perform with the prestigious Rutgers Symphony Orchestra THIS FRIDAY NIGHT! Catch Neil while you can! The Holiday Pops concert is a first and not to be missed! Support NJ's Arts Conservatory and my favorite Bassist!

For more information, please click:

http://www.masongross.rutgers.edu/calendar/month_04_12.html

B. Cathy in Pennsylvania (with a list of holiday peace events planned by the Princeton regional office and several of our chapters:

On Friday, December 11, CFPA's South Jersey affiliate is co-sponsoring a Peace Vigil from 5:30-6:30 PM in Woodstown, NJ.

Next Tuesday, December 15, our CFPA Regional Office is having our annual 5 PM Vigil at Palmer Square, 6 PM Potluck and 7:00 PM Peace Concert at Nassau Presbyterian Church, 61 Nassau Street (right across from Palmer Square in Princeton). The Vigil will feature a large sign with the message, "President Obama: Fulfill the Promise of Peace." All CFPA/peace supporters throughout the region are urged to come.

Finally, on Monday, December 28, CFPA's South Jersey affiliate is co-sponsoring a Peace Vigil starting at 1:30 PM and going until after dark at the Monument in Atlantic City, NJ. The Vigil will be led by high school students.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.peacecoalition.org>

C. Cyndy in Pennsylvania:

MONTHLY DRUM AND SOUND HEALING CIRCLES

December, January and February

We will focus our heart and our intent on the qualities and teachings of the Winter during the upcoming winter session of circles. Our personal cycles are much like what you see on the earth. We are getting ready to go within . . . into the delicious dark. Letting go of what is no longer needed or no longer empowers us in order to energize that which will burst forth in the light of Spring. Each cycle of the seasons provides much for us two-leggeds to learn.

I invite you to join us in this cycle of power. All are welcome and newcomers are honored. If you have a frame drum, bring it. If not, loaners are available. ABSOLUTELY NO EXPERIENCE IS NEEDED.

Come drum, dance, chant, journey, experience healing sounds and CIRCLE WITH SOULS ON A SPIRITUAL PATH OF SELF DISCOVERY . . . come:

December 11, 2009
January 15, 2010
January 29, 2010
February 12, 2010
February 26, 2010

All circles meet from 6:30-9:30 p.m. and are followed by a bit of social time if you can stay.

Energy Exchange \$30.00.

SELF-HEALING THROUGH SHAMANIC JOURNEY

December 19, 2009
from 6:30-9:30 p.m.

During our evening, you will be introduced to the ancient ways of the shaman. Journeying can serve as powerful support for the many of the experiences we go through in our lives. As you follow the heartbeat of the drum, you will learn the techniques to enter the shamanic state of consciousness where we seek guidance, insight and healing. As humans all over the Earth have done for millennia, we will journey to remember our connection to the Earth Mother and all of her creatures.

Journeying is an excellent way to renew your relationship with Spirit and your own soul's gifts as well as strengthen the power of your intuition.

Join us as we explore the oldest known healing modality on the planet. We will use the ancient process of shamanic journey to discover our power animals and to gain insight about our earth walk at this time on the planet.

Energy Exchange \$50.00.

To Register for all please contact Cyndy at 610-274-3109 or email SnakeDancer@RhythmOfTheEarth.com or snakdancr@aol.com.

For more information please visit:

<http://www.RhythmOfTheEarth.com>

D. Sally in North Carolina:

I'm inviting you to:

WHAT: Open House for the Decorative Arts Program at AB Tech

WHERE: Ivy Building on the Main Campus of AB Tech

WHEN: Sunday, December 13, from 2-4 p.m.

We are in the final week of school and getting spiffed up to show off what we have learned. I hope you can come see what I have spent the past year doing!

The Ivy Building is off Victoria Rd. on the main campus of AB Tech. Once you turn onto Victoria (from either Biltmore Ave. or Meadow off Amboy Rd.) follow the signs to the Pines Building. Ivy is the large red brick building directly across from Pines. Let me know if you need more specific directions.

Hope to see you there!

PS. Happy Chanukah to all those who want to make it so . . . and to get you in the mood, there's this catchy tune penned by of Sen, Orrin G. Hatch--Republican who's also Mormon:

<http://tinyurl.com/ycmfo4k>

THE REST OF THE STORY:

The above song first (performed by Rasheeda Azar) appeared on TABLET, an online magazine of Jewish lifestyle and culture . . . known around the Senate as a prolific writer of Christian hymns and patriotic melodies, Hatch, 75, said this was his first venture into Jewish music. It will not be his last.

"Anything I can do for the Jewish people, I will do," he said in an interview before heading to the Senate floor to debate an abortion amendment. "Mormons believe the Jewish people are the chosen people, just like the Old Testament says."

To read more, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/yd8l4kv>

In addition, see Section 7C for more information on the holiday.

Also, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan , , , and that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To subscribe to this newsletter, please put SUBSCRIBE in the subject line of an email and send to bginbc@aol.com . . . in the unlikely event you wish to unsubscribe, just put UNSUBSCRIBE in subject line and send to the same address.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#687

11.30.2009

In this issue:

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I were most appreciative of the photo our friend Marilynne in North Carolina took of us dancing at the engagement party we attended last week:



It somewhat tided us over for the week, in that we spent a rare Thanksgiving holiday apart . . . in fact, it was the only time we have ever been separated for this holiday--and we have decided that it will probably be our last.

She visited her sister and brother in New Jersey, and I stayed home to take care of the cats . . . hey, it's a tough life, but somebody had to do it.

B. Also, I had to spend much of the time finishing my sabbatical report that I recently submitted to Bucks County Community College . . . it contained the results of the smoke cessation programs that I ran last spring . . . I'm pleased to report that we were able to help several folks quit completely and/or reduce their consumption of cigarettes--as can be seen in the following chart:

Program	Enrolled	Attended at least one session	Completed all sessions	Smoking status after program			
				Non smoker	Smoking less	No change in smoking	completed with positive change
BBCCC	20	17	11	6	4	1	90.9%
HBCCC	25	20	14	6	8	0	100%
BCT	17	13	9	2	6	1	88.8%
HCT	25	22	15	8	6	1	93.3%

SPECIAL THANKS:

* To Patti DiLenno, hypnotist extraordinaire, for being the hypnotist who did such a fantastic job in conducting all the hypnosis sessions; and

* To Sue Hinkle, a former student and Bucks graduate, who did an equally fantastic job in helping lead the book discussion sessions and also made many of the follow-up phone calls.

Also, I'd be remiss if I didn't express my appreciation to the following other individuals for their role in making my sabbatical project the success that it was: Elaine Bilk, Tobi Bruhn, Matt Cipriano, Justine Cieslak, Adrienne Clark, Matt Conturso, Mike DiFiori, Jean Dolan, Monica Hester, Jean Holmes, Bridget Hughes, Natalie Kaye, Mary Kuna, Staci O'Brien and Carol Shapcott.

If you'd like a copy of the whole report, put the word REPORT in the subject line of an email and send it to bginbc@aol.com.

ALSO, DON'T FORGET:

If you'd like me to hypnotize you to help you quit smoking or for any purpose, give a holler . . . I'm continuing to do such work in person in the Asheville area, but also via phone or Skype for those living elsewhere.

C. In addition, I spent much of the week recovering from flu-like symptoms . . . I went to the doctor and she said that because I did not have a high fever, she could tell it was not the flu . . . rather, she called it the "crud" . . . I later found out that's a term used at least by folks in North Carolina when they can't come up with some other name for an illness . . . when pressed, my doctor said I had an upper respiratory illness--aka a cold.

My doctor recommended that I take Claritin-D and a prescription nose spray . . . they worked, somewhat, but dried me up . . . I eventually did better by switching to a sugar-free menthol cough drop and Vicks 44 for a cough that I had developed, along with

a nightly application (THANKS, Cynthia!) of Vicks Vapor Rub . . . I put this on my chest, as well as on my feet . . . the latter locale is one of these old wife's tales that did seem to help.

D. CONRATULATIONS to:

* Matt Cipriano, Director Student Life; Jean Dolan, Assistant Director, Public Relations; Karen Goeller, Director, Enterprise Systems; and Linda McCann, Director, Library Services at Bucks. These individuals have made major contributions to the life of the College and recently received well-deserved Administrative Special Recognition Awards.

* Kohlepp Investments for being named as a 2009 Five Star Wealth Manager by PHILADELPHIA MAGAZINE For more information, please click:

<http://video.fivestarpromotional.com/philwm2009/edkohlhepp>

* Mark Sfirri, who has been selected to receive the James Renwick Alliance 2010 Distinguished Educator Award. The honorees were selected for their reputation for excellence and innovation in education, their influence on students in their field, and for their contributions to American education in the craft field. He will be honored on Monday, December 7, at a reception in the Hicks Art Center Gallery at Bucks County Community College from 12:00-1:00 p.m. Light refreshments will be served.

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

This week, it goes to Robin James--a pharmacist at my local CVS on Smokey Park Highway in Candler, NC . . . in recovering from my aforementioned cold, I sought some over-the-counter stuff that could help me . . . Robin was not only available, but she also came out from the counter and walked me directly to the aisle to show me what she thought would work best . . . she also answered all my question in a patient and thorough manner . . . I did not feel rushed by her and appreciated the good advice that she gave me (it seemed to help, too) . . . as I was ringing-up my transaction, she encouraged me call CVS to answer the few evaluation questions that were mentioned on my receipt . . . I don't usually do so, but did this time because of her encouragement and the fact that she said that the Candler store has even had some \$1,000 winners . . . I didn't win a cash prize; however, if I win the big prize, methinks that will be even better!

2. FYI

I get a lot of forwarded email and much of it is spam . . . or items of dubious value . . . from time to time, though, some gems sneak through . . . such as this one:

XEROX IS DOING SOMETHING COOL AGAIN THIS YEAR

If you go to this web site:
<http://www.LetsSayThanks.com>

you can pick out a thank you card and Xerox will print it and it will be sent to a soldier that is currently serving in Iraq. You can't pick out who gets it, but it will go to a member of the armed services. How

AMAZING it would be if we could get everyone we know to send one!!!

It is FREE and it only takes a second. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the soldiers received a bunch of these? Whether you are for or against the war, our soldiers over there need to know we are behind them. This takes just 10 seconds, and it's a wonderful way to say thank you. Please take the time and please take the time to pass it on for others to do. We can never say enough thank you's. Thanks for taking to time to support our military!

AS ALWAYS:

I checked on the validity of the above; i.e., by sending it on to you . . . I urge you to do the same by clicking:

<http://www.snopes.com/politics/military/letssaythanks.asp>

FYI, part 2

* Mel in Colorado:

Have you lost a pet lately? Then you know how painful it is. I am hosting a teleseminar this coming Monday evening Dec. 7, at 8 PM EST. In one hour, I can help you move forward "from mourning to morning." I have been a Rabbi and Grief Specialist for 35 years, and I invite you to join me. For more information, go to:

<http://tinyurl.com/yca72wk>.

* Jaclyn in Pennsylvania:

If you're going to buy a Christmas Tree this year and are looking for a way to give back to the community, stop down to Snowball's Christmas Tree Lot on Route 413 across from Wal-Mart in Bristol (near Rt. 13). In addition to running a food and coat donation, these guys also donate a portion of the proceeds to charity. They're very knowledgeable about choosing and caring for your tree and are sensitive to budgets, selling Douglas and Frasier Furs starting at \$20. Mention BLAINESWORLD for \$5 off your tree!

Snowballs is located ON Route 413, across the street from the side entrance to the Wal-Mart Complex, approaching Route 413. Snowballs is located between Route 413, Western Drive and Old Rodgers Road and is visible from Route 413.

For more information, please call Brian at 215.919.6469, email us at snowballstrees@gmail.com, join our Facebook fan page (search "Snowball's Christmas Tree Lot") or follow us on twitter at twitter.com/snowballstrees.

* Jean in Pennsylvania:

A good free newsletter you may want to subscribe to: WYLIE'S WRITING TIPS . . . for instance, it advises the best length of a tweet to be only 129 characters . . . for more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/pqjsf>

* Risa in New Jersey (NOT my daughter):

HWPEN LOVE TO WALK TEAM

Sunday, December 6th at 9 a.m. (meet at 8 a.m.)
Livingston Mall, Livingston, NJ

Join me to raise awareness and support for Arthritis.

Team page for registration

Inquires: 973.761.5758 or email me at risa@risaolinsky.com

* Laura in New Jersey:

Does anyone have any idea of how to suggest a good book for a movie to a producer such as Sandra Bullock? I read "The Morning Gift" by Eva Ibbotson, which is a very funny book about a British professor who marries a young German Jewish woman to get her out of Nazi Germany and then lets her live on her own with her parents and their funny relatives who had already gotten out. I think it would make a great movie.

Also, since you seem to know what is on the TV schedule . . . I have heard that there is going to be a competition of a cappella sing groups on TV and have no idea of what channel or when. I don't want to miss it. Can you research that for me?

MY RESPONSE (AT LEAST TO THE SECOND QUESTION):

This new show airs on December 14 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/yd9zqxp>

* Pat in Pennsylvania:

Well I have to admit you two seem to be full-fledged locals now. And I am equally impressed at how you two have gotten involved in the community and how you write about so many people of the different people you have met down there!! Laughing here . . . it's almost like you are the mayor. Ha!!!

I started to think about how not too long ago you two made the rounds of checking out places to live/retire. And gosh, can you imagine if you went to one of the other places you visited to live? I do not get the feeling you'd be having as much fun as the two of you are having now, right? So keep it up!

ACTUALLY:

We're having more fun than Pat commented on!

* Leslie in North Carolina:

I just briefly read your newsletter and noticed that you found Kayak. I have used it. I use it like Google to find prices and schedules of all flights searching the route I would like to travel. However, I have the American Express Delta rewards program. I try to fly Delta most of the time in order to get the rewards. (In fact it only cost us\$120 for both of us to fly last August from Asheville to NY). I usually find that Delta is competitive with the other airlines. In fact,, Delta is a bit cheaper from NY to Asheville than US Airways.

* Lana in Ohio:

Just an FYI about telemarketers: there is a national do not call list and one can sign up, I believe, at the post office for the appropriate form. There is also

a website:

<https://www.donotcall.gov/>

* Robin in Pennsylvania:

Go to Zen Habits:

<http://zenhabits.net/>

Read: How We Can Help Alleviate World Poverty in Three Easy Steps

Act.

I know times are tough for many right now, but as little as \$25--an amount most of us spend without thinking on two movie tickets and not much more--can make a HUGE difference.

Won't you join me in taking this small step to making a difference in the world?

3. New perspective

Students in a high school history class were discussing the qualifications to be president of the United States. It seemed to be pretty simple: the candidate must be a natural-born citizen of at least 35 years of age. However, one girl in the class immediately started in on how unfair was the requirement to be a natural-born citizen.

In short, her opinion was that this requirement prevented many capable individuals from becoming president. The other students in the class were just taking it in and letting her rant, but everybody's jaw hit the floor when she wrapped up her argument by asking, "What makes a natural born citizen any more qualified to lead this country than one born by C-section?"

GETTING SERIOUS (FOR JUST A MOMENT):

As you may know, some have raised similar concerns about President Obama; i.e., that he is not a natural-born citizen . . . here's what I have found out:

<http://www.snopes.com/politics/obama/citizen.asp>

4. Reviews

A. Enjoyed PIRATE RADIO (aka BOAT THAT ROCKED), a quirky comedy about a group of British DJs who challenged Rock and Roll listening habits in the 1960s . . . though there were a whole host of groups making headlines at the time (think Beatles, Rolling Stones, etc.), the BBC would not give them air time . . . so some stations challenged this monopoly by playing music from the middle of the Northern Atlantic . . . this drove the government crazy . . . Philip S. Hoffman, Bill Nighy (always one of my favorite actors), Rhys Ifans and Kenneth Branagh are all excellent, along with many others in the large cast

that were new to me . . . the best part of the movie, however, was the soundtrack . . . it featured music from such performers as The Kinks, Martha Reeves and the Vandellas, Cat Stevens, Moody Blues, Dusty Springfield, The Who and two songs from arguably the greatest rock group of all time, The Turtles . . . rated R.

TO LISTEN TO CLIPS FROM ALL 32 SONGS:

<http://tinyurl.com/ye6u6nc>

AND FOR THE REAL STORY:

After I saw PIRATE RADIO, I wanted to find out if any of it was true . . . apparently so; see for yourself by clicking:

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=120358447>

B. UP is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #661 follows:

UP is the a gem of a film for just about anybody . . . adults will like it, but so will their kids and grandkids . . . it is the animated story of a 78-year-old balloon salesman (Ed Asner in fine form) who gets to fill his lifelong dream of a great adventure when he ties thousands of balloons to his house and flies away to South America . . . but only en route does he discover there's a stowaway, an annoying 8-year-old scout who can only get a merit badge if he helps a senior citizen.

There's a five-minute portion toward the beginning of UP that traces the salesman's life with his wife . . . it is as touching as anything I've seen in the movies for quite some time . . . whatever you do, when you see it, make sure you see the 3-D version . . . you'll have to pay more, but it will be worth it . . . rated PG.

C. Allen Carr's EASY WAY TO STOP SMOKING is, by far, the best book I've ever read on that topic . . . it has helped several people that I know kick the urge to smoke.

So I was curious to see if the author could be of similar help to people with weight issues . . . I therefore obtained another book he has written. ALLEN CARR'S EASYWEIGH TO LOSE WEIGHT, in attempt to see if it made as much sense as his other effort.

Though perhaps not quite as good, I still think it has a lot to offer . . . Carr goes through each of the reasons that people tend to overeat, then quite clearly and logically points out why they make little sense . . . he also states that:

* You can eat as much of your favorite foods as you want to, as often as you want, and be the exact weight that you want to be, without having to diet or undergo special exercise or even having to use willpower or discipline.

How is this possible? The key is as follows:

* Because our brainwashed minds have confused ideas about the reasons why we eat, we try to clear our plates at each and every course of the meal. If you stick to the principle of eating when you are hungry and stopping when you have satisfied that hunger, you will not only enjoy every meal, but you

will have no weight problems. However, I would emphasize that I said stop eating when you have satisfied your hunger, and not your gluttony. Does this still make you feel deprived? Just think about it. Is this really a restriction? Why would you even want to eat if you weren't hungry? Get it clearly into your mind: Eating is pleasurable--over-eating is objectionable.

Carr then presents a series of simple, easy-to-follow instructions to make it possible to attain your ideal weight . . . as he asks:

* Wouldn't it be nice if you knew for certain the exact weight that you should be? You can! It's the weight you happen to be when, clad only in underwear, you can stare at your reflection in a full-length mirror and admire what you see. It's the weight you are when you wake up each morning completely rested, bursting with energy, looking forward to each new day with genuine joie de vivre.

I don't know if I'll quite ever get to that point; i.e., being able to wake up each morning feeling that way . . . however, I certainly plan to try . . . this book gave me some great ideas to use along the way.

D. I've long admired Barbara Walters as a television journalist . . . however, until I heard AUDITION, her autobiography that she both wrote and read, I knew little about her.

This was a most enjoyable book that I'd recommend to anybody interested in finding out more about what makes Walters tick . . . I learned that she lived a nomadic childhood, often moving because her father Lou Walters would be involved in various nightclub ventures throughout the country.

She then became perhaps the most successful female newscaster of all time, largely because she had to stand up to such counterparts as Frank McGee and then Harry Reasoner . . . it wasn't easy at times; however, she persevered and eventually won the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Science.

There are a lot of details about her encounters with such celebrities as Judy Garland, Golda Meir, Richard Nixon, Fidel Castro . . . but to Walters' credit, none of it feels gossipy . . . rather, it's almost as if you're sitting down with her over coffee and watching the TV show she now co-hosts, THE VIEW.

I particularly liked her advice about the right ways and the wrong ways to ask touchy questions. When dealing with a heinous killer, for instances, Walters advises against asking, "How could you be such a monster?" Far better to do it this way: "There are people who think you are a monster. How do you respond to that?"

In addition, I got a kick out of reading about her reaction to Gilda Radner's caricature of her as "Baba Wawa" on SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE . . . though audiences found it "hysterically funny," she at first found the spoof "extremely upsetting" . . . only when her daughter told her to "lighten up" did she realize she was losing all perspective . . . Walters later met Gilda Radner and told her she thought the caricature was funny, and when Radner died of ovarian cancer, Walters sent a simple note to her husband, Gene Wilder . . . it read: "She made me laugh. I will miss her. Baba Wawa."

5. TV alert

A. STEVEN SEGAL LAWMAN features the action-film vet as a real-life Louisiana sheriff's officer deputy . . . the show premieres on Wednesday at 10 p.m. on A&E.

B. Rob Riggle (onetime correspondent on THE DAILY SHOW) hosts a night of comedy on LIVE AT GOTHAM ON Friday at 11 p.m. on COMEDY CENTRAL.

C. DEBBIE MACOMBER'S MRS. MIRACLE stars Doris Roberts and James Van Deer Beek in a holiday tale about a brokenhearted widower who gets a little assistance with his motherless twins from a truly divine housekeeper . . . Saturday at 8 p.m. on HALLMARK.

D. ROBIN WILLIAMS: WEAPONS OF SELF-DESTRUCTION has the stand-up comedian returning to stand-up stage . . . Sunday at 9 p.m. on HBO.

6. Turkey season

A game warden was driving down the road when he came upon a young boy carrying a wild turkey under his arm. He stopped and asked the boy, "Where did you get that turkey?"

The boy replied, "What turkey?"

The game warden said, "That turkey you're carrying under your arm."

The boy looks down and said, "Well, lookee here, a turkey done roasted under my arm!"

The game warden said, "Now look, you know turkey season is closed, so whatever you do to that turkey, I'm going to do to you. If you break his leg, I'm gonna break your leg. If you break his wing, I'll break your arm. Whatever you do to him, I'll do to you. So, what are you gonna do with him?"

The little boy said, "I guess I'll just kiss his butt and let him go!"

7. Websites

A. If you live in Asheville or plan to visit in the near future, please click:

<http://www.halfpriceasheville.com/intro.php>

You'll find half price gift certificates for some of the area's best establishments . . . only a limited number of gift certificates for each establishment are provided, so you have to be fast . . . but check back frequently because the offers frequently change.

In addition, if it's restaurant coupons you want, make sure you look for them at the following website:

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

You've heard me mention this one in the past, but it's worth mentioning because of many new readers . . . and because you may have forgotten to check it in the past . . . I just did and found 31 restaurants within 15 minutes of my North Carolina home . . . if you live anywhere near Newtown, PA, there are over 83 restaurants.

And once you get on the mailing list, look for special offers . . . you can buy sometimes buy coupons for as low as \$2 that will enable you to save you \$25!

B. Since I'm sure you sooooo much enjoyed my recent medical update (see also Section 1B), here's something else that I thought you'd like to see: your very own Disease Trading Cards:

<http://www.cdc.gov/gcc/exhibit/cards.htm>

I did you NOT about the above . . . there are three sets to download, print and trade with your friends . . . offer to trade your Campylobacter jejuni for a Strep A Infection . . . perhaps best of all: all the cards are richly illustrated.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

In case you're lying awake nights and wondering what happens to your email address if you give it to me (as a subscriber to BLAINESWORLD), click "Newsletter" to the left and then "Privacy Statement."

8. Computer tip

If you're on Facebook or LinkedIn . . . or any other similar type social networking site, for that matter, BEWARE of what you put in your comments . . . you never know who might be reading; e.g., potential employers . . . or in the case of this one women, her insurance agent: Facebook Page Costs Woman Her Benefits

A Canadian woman on sick leave for depression says she lost her benefits after her insurance agent found photos of her apparently having fun on Facebook.

For the rest of the article, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/yb8q356>

IF YOU'RE NOT YET SCARED OFF:

Do invite me to be your Facebook friend if we've not already contacted there . . . to find me, please click:

<http://www.facebook.com/blainegreenfield>

9. Water

A fleeing Taliban, desperate for water, was plodding through the Afghan

desert when he saw something far off in the distance. Hoping to find water, he hurried toward the oasis, only to find a little old Jewish man at a small stand, selling ties..

The Taliban asked, "Do you have water?"

The Jewish man replied, "I have no water. Would you like to buy a tie? They are only \$5."

The Taliban shouted, "Idiot! I do not need an over-priced tie. I need water! I should kill you with my bare hands but I am weak from thirst and must find water!"

"OK," said the old Jewish man. "It does not matter that you do not want to buy a tie and that you hate me. I will show you that I am bigger than that. If you continue over that hill to the east for about two miles, you will find a lovely, well-respected restaurant. It has all the ice cold water you need for free. Shalom."

Muttering, the Taliban staggered away over the hill. Several hours later he staggered back, almost dead. "Your f****ing brother won't let me in without a tie!"

10. A quote I like

We do not quit playing because we grow old, we grow old because we quit playing.--Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. (1809-1894), American poet, physician and essayist

11. Thought for the day

The thimble (a touching parable)

One day, a seamstress was sewing while sitting next to a river, and she dropped her thimble into the water. When she cried out, the Lord appeared and asked, "My dear child, why are you crying?"

The seamstress replied that her thimble had fallen into the water and that she needed it to help her husband in making a living for their family. The Lord dipped His hand into the water and pulled up a golden thimble set with pearls.

"Is this your thimble?" the Lord asked.

The seamstress replied, "No, sir."

The Lord again dipped into the river. He held out a silver thimble ringed with sapphires.

"Is this your thimble?" the Lord asked.

Again, the seamstress replied, "No, sir." The Lord reached down again and came up with a leather thimble.

"Is this your thimble?" the Lord asked.

The seamstress smiled and replied, "Yes."

The Lord was pleased with the woman's honesty and gave her all three thimbles to keep, and the seamstress went home happy.

Some years later, the seamstress was walking with her husband along the river bank, and her husband fell into the river and disappeared under the water. When she cried out, the Lord again appeared and asked her, "Why are you crying?"

"Oh Lord, my husband has fallen into the river!"

The Lord went down into the water and came up with George Clooney.

"Is this your husband?" the Lord asked.

"Yes!" cried the seamstress.

The Lord was furious. "You lied! That is an untruth!"

The seamstress replied, "Oh, forgive me, my Lord--it is a misunderstanding. You see, if I had said 'no' to George Clooney, you would have come up with Brad Pitt. Then if I said 'no' to him, you would have come up with my husband. Had I then said 'yes,' you would have given me all three. Lord, I'm not in the best of health and would not be able to take care of all three husbands, so that's why I said 'yes' to George Clooney."

And so the Lord let her keep him.

The moral of the story: Whenever a woman lies, it's for a good and honorable reason, and in the best interest of others.

12. Advance planning department

A. Michael in Pennsylvania:

The College's Book Discussion Group, one of the longest-running public book groups in the county, wraps up its fall series on Thursday December 10 with *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows.

According to Powell's Books, a charming series of letters make up this short novel set in post-WWII Europe. The correspondents, drawn together by their love of books and affection for each other, collectively tell a moving tale of endurance and friendship in the shadow of war.

The informal talk gets underway at 7:30 p.m. in the Rollins Center (Room 114) at Bucks County Community College in Newtown, PA. The group will also select titles for the spring semester, including its next meeting on January 14. For more information, contact Michael Hennessey at 215.968.8164 or via email: hennesse@bucks.edu.

B. Marie in New Jersey:

Marie invited you to "Holiday POPS Concert - 2009" on Friday, December 11 at 8 p.m.

Where: Nicholas Music Center (Douglass Campus, Rutgers Univ.,

New Brunswick)

C. Marjorie in Pennsylvania:

FREE 45-Minute WEBINAR

December 15, 2009
12 p.m.

Presented by Senior BRODY Facilitator Amy Glass

Topic: Meeting the Generations:
Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials

Professionals in any role can succeed by understanding and communicating better with the various generations, to create stronger and more effective business relationships.

Register by clicking:
<http://tinyurl.com/ylz5o7m>

D. John in Pennsylvania:

Here's some real advance notice:

Triplets at the Temperance House, Newtown, PA,
Saturday, January 30, 2010, starting at 9 p.m.

Plan ahead. That's two months from now. Be there--no excuses!

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To subscribe to this newsletter, please put SUBSCRIBE in the subject line of an email and send to bginbc@aol.com . . . in the unlikely event you wish to unsubscribe, just put UNSUBSCRIBE in subject line and send to the same address.

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19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#686

11.23.2009

In this issue:

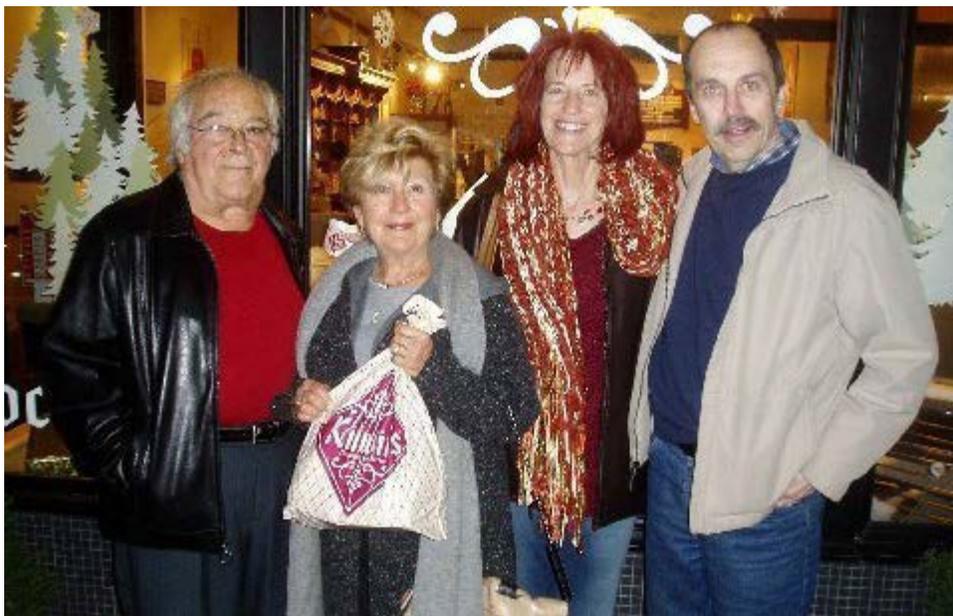
1. Reflections
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 5. TV alert
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-

1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had quite some week . . . we were first joined by several of our neighbors for dinner at our local Applebee's at 275 Smokey Park Highway in Asheville . . . the servers there are always friendly, and we like the salads . . . we've also gotten to know Denise Rhodes, one of the managers--and always like it when she comes to check on how we're doing . . . for more information, please call 828.670.9101.

Up next was the annual meeting of our development's board of directors . . . that went on for quite some time; however, it was good to find out what's happening.

The next night, we were joined by her Cynthia's cousins Barbara and Howie for dinner . . . that's the four of us in front of our second stop that evening; Kilwin's:



We later heard some fantastic news; i.e., the Kilwin's window (you can see it behind us) won the Judges' Favorite award in the Asheville Downtown Association's annual Holiday Window Display Contest . . . it features cutout photos of their staff and customers, and OK, if you really want to see it up close:



You can see the owners, Tom and Marcy Gallagher, in the middle (he's holding her up in the air) . . . and right behind Marcy, why that's us!

Should you want to read more about the contest, please click:

<http://www.citizen-times.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=200991118062>

B. Later in the week, we attended the first annual Small Business Fair of the Biltmore Lake Association . . . that's us again with our friend and neighbor Julia Rosa:



Julia runs a natural/organic baby products online store, All Natural Baby . . . for more information, please click:

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

SPECIAL THANKS to Kilwin's and Applebee's for their generous donation

of coupons that were distributed to all who attended.

And KUDOS to David Berry, Biltmore Lake's Recreation Director, for all his hard work in making the event the success that it was.

David is also to be commended for his role in helping put together this year's Lecture Series for our development . . . on Friday night, resident Fred Teach did a fine job telling others about all that the Center for Creative Retirement has to offer . . . for more information about the Center, please click:

<http://www.unca.edu/ncccr/>

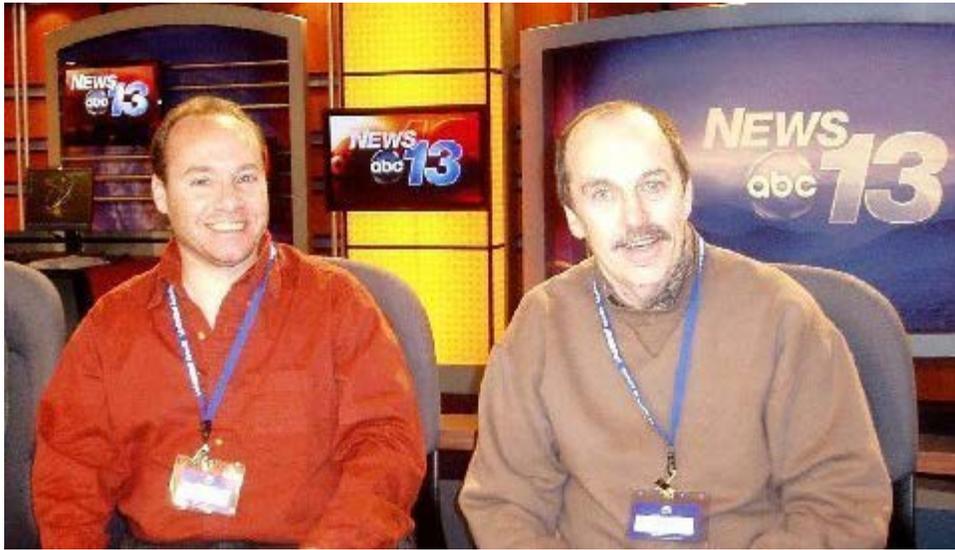
C. That same evening, we then went to the engagement part of our friends Leslie Niven and James Lang . . . that's the four of us:



It was a blast . . . but then again, how could it not be given the fact that our favorite local band (Buster) performed . . . if you'd like to find out more information about Buster, please click:

<http://www.bustertunes.com>

D. Lastly, I had another great Leadership Asheville session . . . we literally went all around town in a day dubbed "Live, Work and Play in Asheville . . . we started off with a very interesting presentation from Jack Cecil, president of Biltmore Farms, in which we learned all about the history and development of the area . . . next stop on our agenda was a tour of WLOS . . . that's a fellow classmate, Mark Goldstein, with me at the news desk:

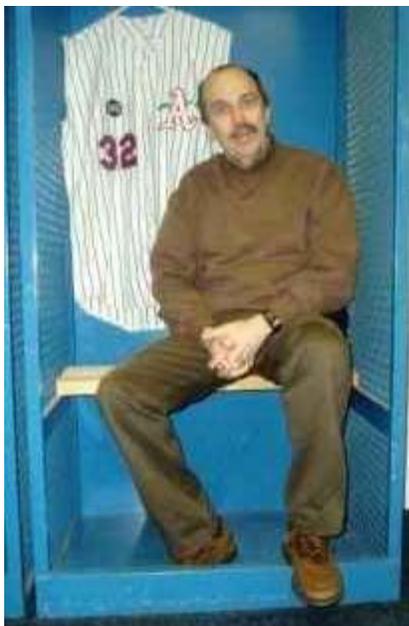


I did pick up one valuable tip as a result of this visit . . . to see local news, I've switched to WLOS (Channel 3 if you have Charter cable) . . . it's the only local station that broadcasts out of Asheville.

From there, we went to Progress Energy before stopping for a delicious lunch at Fiore's Ristorante Toscana . . . Anthony Cerrato, the owner, was a most gracious host; for more information, please click:

<http://www.fioresasheville.com>

In the afternoon, we visited the Diana Wortham Theatre, the Pack Square Park and our day concluded with a visit to McCormick Field--home of the Asheville Tourists:



Despite the lateness of the day, Chris Smith--the team's assistant general manger--kept our interest with his engaging account of what minor league baseball is all about . . . in addition, we were impressed with how much the Tourists do to help build a better community . . . he then surprised us with a Tourists' cap on the way out . . . so though you don't see me with it on in the above picture, don't be surprised if you see me wearing it around town.

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

This week, it goes to Gary Shuford--the manager of a place called the Ice Cream Garden that Cynthia and I somehow stumbled upon while wandering around Biltmore Village.

Gary was friendly, as well as helpful, and made our first visit to his place a memorable one . . . he also dishes out generous portions, which is always a plus . . . and they have some unusual flavors, plus a range of toppings (including chocolate sprinkles, something that surprisingly isn't to be found in a lot of places in this area).

To find the place, look for Legacies at 2 Boston Way, Asheville; 888.879.8886 . . . you'll see a sign with an ice cream cone in front; come around the back, and you'll find the Ice Cream Garden.

It's slated to be open throughout the winter, weather permitting.

2. FYI

During the week, Cynthia and I also got to hear a most informative presentation on "The #1 Relationship Booster: The Power of Appreciation" . . . it was delivered by Pripo Teplitsky, a licensed professional counselor, who shared his belief that heartfelt appreciation to another person is the quickest way to enhance the flow of positive energy in any relationship.

Not only did he effectively deliver his message, but he then had audience members actually practice the skills that support how to communicate this appreciation . . . this can be done verbally and/or in writing by completing such statements as the following:

I love how you . . .
I feel hopeful about us when you . . .
I appreciate the way you . . .
I am grateful how you . . .
I feel good when we . . .
Thank you for . . .
It makes me smile to see . . .
What I love about you is . . . etc.

What's most important: After you have expressed your appreciations to your partner, notice your improved feelings and inside be appreciative of the way you feel.

Should you want to learn more about this topic or Pripo's fine work, call him at HeartShare Counseling & Consulting Services . . . the number is 828.687.6571.

FYI, part 2

* Ange in Pennsylvania (with a REQUEST FOR HELP):

Can you ask your readers if they know of places or activities that cater to singles for New Year's Eve in the Yardley/Phila/South Jersey areas. Thanks.

* Marilynne in North Carolina:

My brother sent me the following link to all the national Black Friday sales, it's a pretty interesting site and includes all the usual suspects: Best Buy, Home Depot, Amazon, etc. The site has links to the actual ads that will be appearing this week; you can print them out.

I just discovered that the flat screen TV I bought at Best Buy last week will be \$50 less on BF. I'm told I can bring in my sales receipt on Friday and get a credit for the difference. If I can deal with the crowds . . .

Check it out You can also subscribe to the site, which according to my brother, is legitimate.

<http://bfads.net/>

* Verna in New Jersey:

READ THIS AND THEN RE-COPY IT TO YOUR OWN STATUS TO GET THE WORD OUT: If you get a notification that says a friend reported you to Facebook for being offensive or in violation of terms of service, do NOT click it. It's a virus.

TO THOSE READERS ON FACEBOOK:

If we haven't become "friends" yet, invite me to be one . . . you can reach me at Facebook via:

<http://www.facebook.com/blainegreenfield>

* Ruth in Pennsylvania:

Loves the interview I did with two-time Oprah guest:

<http://tinyurl.com/y8mk3k2>

MY TWO CENTS:

THANKS, Ruth, for sharing . . . these were fantastic, and I'm sure that others will enjoy them too!

* Scott in Pennsylvania (with another great FREEBIE):

The safest way to use your phone while driving. Zoomsafer, software for your mobile phone, helps you focus on the road and prevent distracted driving. For more information, please click:

<http://www.zoomsafer.com/what-is-zoom/zoom-products/zoomfree.aspx>

* Michael in Las Vegas:

MY two cents: I also have used

<http://www.cheapoair.com>

as well as

<http://www.travelocity.com>

for great air/hotel deals. "Wanna make your trip/vacation last longer?" . . . you

can see color pictures of the various hotels and start your imaginary journey well before you get there . . . the fun begins during your research. Once you start your journey, the trip is over before you know it.

3. Santa at the mall

My friend Artie loves playing Santa at the mall. But parents often have trouble getting young children to sit on his knee. It took a lot of coaxing for one little girl to perch there, so Artie got straight to the point.

"What do you want most of all for Christmas?" he asked.

She answered, "Down!"

4. Reviews

A. A few years ago, I read THE BLIND SIDE by Michael Lewis . . . it was one of my favorite books of the year . . . now, after seeing the movie version that has the same title. I'd have to say that it's going to go on my list of favorites for this year . . . it is the true story of Michael Oher, a homeless youngster from a broken home, taken in by the Touhys--an affluent white family, who help him . . . Sandra Bullock does her best work in quite some time as the mother of the Oher character (well-played by Quinton Aaron, a virtual newcomer) . . . rated PG-13, though appropriate for any boy over 9 . . . females will like this film, too.

B. Out on DVD is FUNNY PEOPLE . . . it's a supposed comedy about a comedian who has a near-death experience . . . I don't recall laughing or even smiling through the whole thing. . . Neither Adam Sandler nor Seth Rogen could save this turkey . . . rated R.

A much better rental would be MR. HOLLAND'S OPUS . . . Richard Dreyfuss is outstanding as a music teacher who takes a high school teaching job so he can pay the bills . . . so instead of composing, his true love, he winds up in the classroom for over 30 years where he changes the lives of many of his students--often neglecting his own child . . . rated PG . . . this is a film that the whole family will enjoy and should try to watch together.

C. Like everybody else, I was both amazed and thrilled in January, 2009 when Captain "Sully" Sullenberger brought a crippled US Airways flight onto the Hudson River, saving the lives of all the passengers and crew . . . I watched all the news accounts, yet it was not until I completed his excellent autobiography (HIGHEST DUTY, written with collaborator Jeffrey Zaslow) that I could truly appreciate the magnitude of the feat--as well as what a remarkable person Sullenberger is.

The book gives you all the details of the landing, as you might expect . . . one even made me laugh:

* When we go to the hotel on the night of the incident, we were still in our wet clothes. All our belongings, of course, were on the plane. A fellow pilot who had come to help us ran out to a convenience store and purchased toiletries for us. Because we had no dry clothing, he

also bought Jeff and me an identical wardrobe: black sweatsuits, black socks, and black, size-34 low-rise briefs. A week later I told him, "My wife liked those low-rise briefs. They're sexier than the whitey-tighties I normally wear." Jeff responded: "Your wife may like yours, but I'm a lot thicker around the middle than you are. Looks like they have us the same-size briefs. On me, it looks like a thong."

However, what moved me about the book was how Sullenberger wove the details of the flight around his personal life . . . the subtitle says it all: MY SEARCH FOR WHAT REALLY MATTERS . . . he made me truly appreciate what a pilot misses (for example, often half of his or her child's lives) and just what being in this profession entails:

* I am a man of routine, and there's a precision to my life that leaves Lorrie [his wife] rolling her eyes sometimes. She says I'm very controlled and regimented, and though she believes that is part of what makes me a good pilot, it also makes me hard to live with on occasion. Lorrie knows other pilots' spouses who describe them the same way. Like me, they'll come home after days away and try to take charge, annoying loved ones by reorganizing the dishes in the dishwasher, finding a more efficient way to stack everything. I guess the flying culture--all our training--is what makes us so organized. Or, as Lorrie suspects, maybe there's a certain type of personality attracted to the profession.

In addition, there were many life lessons that I came away after reading HIGHEST DUTY . . . yet it was what Sullenberger shared toward the end of the book that really got me thinking:

* I flew thousands of flights in the last forty-two years, but my entire career is not being judged by how I performed on one of them. This has been a reminder to me: We need to try to do the right thing every time, to perform at our best, because we never know which moment in our lives we'll be judged on.

If you know any pilots or folks in the airline industry, this is a great gift item for them . . . however, even if you're not personally interested in flying, get and read this book soon . . . it, like Sullenberger, is a real winner.

MORE ON THE SUBJECT (of real winners):

I don't ordinarily profile collaborators, but I will in this case . . . Zaslow, a columnist with THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, is rapidly becoming one of my favorite authors . . . the book he coauthored with Randy Pausch, THE LAST LECTURE, is a title you MUST read . . . it's as good as it gets . . . then, a year later, he followed it up with another bestseller--THE GIRLS FROM AMES . . . add these titles, too, to your holiday shopping list.

D. Some books are actually better in the CD version, such as ALWAYS LOOKING UP--written and read by Michael J. Fox . . . I say that because while I imagine it is a fine book to read, I do believe that you'd like it even more if you heard it like I did . . . that way, you get to actually hear Fox' voice, which will bring back memories of why you liked him so much (think FAMILY TIES, BACK TO THE FUTURE, etc.)

Yet this is not a book about his show business career, though there are bits and pieces about it that are thrown in . . . rather,

it is an update of his earlier book: LUCKY MAN . . . since that was published, the author has not regularly appeared on the screen . . . he instead has undertaken become an incurable optimist, becoming perhaps this country's leading activist for a cure for Parkinson's Disease.

I was touched to learn how Fox manages to get through his daily life, made increasingly difficult by his illness . . . yet you don't get the feeling he is complaining about what has happened to him . . . he just does what he has to do, yet a lot more as he has also gotten involved in both politics and the running of the Michael J. Fox Foundation.

There's also information about how his situation has affected his wife and children (in many ways, it seems, in a positive fashion) . . . and, of course, the trademark Fox wit shines through when he throws in such one-liners as this one:

* Keep the fight clean and the sex dirty.

5. TV alert

A. BIGGEST LOSER: WHERE ARE THEY NOW? has over 40 contestants from the past seven seasons return to show off their post-ranch bods . . . Wednesday at 8 p.m. on NBC.

B. Wednesday is the night for Sting is on GREAT PERFORMANCES at 9 p.m. on PBS (check local listings because PBS times and dates often vary), followed by PAUL McCARTNEY: GOOD EVENING NEW YORK CITY at 10 p.m. on ABC.

C. ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME CONCERT . . . Springsteen, Aretha, Simon and even Garfunkle are among the rock royalty performing at the Hall's 25th anniversary celebration . . . Sunday at 8 p.m. on HBO.

D. MEET THE NATIVES: USA starts with two episodes on Sunday at 9 p.m. on THE TRAVEL CHANNEL . . . this reality show is about five tribesmen from the Vanuatu island of Tanna who are given clothes and after being transported to the U.S., are introduced to the natives of various cities . . . according to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, "Their experiences--such as saloon-dancing in Montana, getting pedicures in Orange County and a "low-fro" at a barbershop in the Deep South--are fun to watch."

6. Rough times

Here is the best description of the current state of the economy that I've heard lately:

This is worse than a divorce. I've lost half my money and still have my wife!

7. Websites

A. In honor of the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday, please click:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kR0OrgKtgsM>

Crank up your speakers when doing so . . . and THANKS to Arlene in Pennsylvania for telling me about the above.

B. For the BEST way to deal with telemarketers I have ever heard, please click:

http://800notes.com/articles/Video.aspx/ZYW4XYBo8ADI_gjXHU9pA

Methinks if you used something similar, you wouldn't get many more telemarketing calls . . . however, that reduction may well be offset by all your friends and relatives calling you just to hear the message!

THANKS, also, to Janeen in Pennsylvania for sharing that one.

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

In case this is one of your first visits, make sure you check out the headings to the left for additional information . . . when you do, "follow" my eyes as you highlight the headings.

8. Computer tip

Last week, I mentioned Windows Search as an option for quickly finding documents, email, etc. . . . I use it from time to time, but I actually prefer Searchopia instead:

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

It's not nearly as fast as Windows Search, but it is much more thorough for finding a single word or series of words in any document you may have on your hard drive . . . it has been around for a long time; my only hope is that it will work with Windows 7 or a new version will come out (though I'm not holding my breath).

Give it a try. You won't be disappointed.

9. It's easy

The preacher, in his Sunday sermon, used "Forgive Your Enemies" as his subject. After a long sermon, he asked how many were willing to forgive their enemies. About half held up their hands.

Not satisfied, he harangued for another twenty minutes and repeated his question. This time, he received a response of about 80 percent. Still unsatisfied, he lectured for another 15 minutes and repeated his question. With all thoughts now on Sunday dinner, all responded except one elderly lady in the rear.

"Mrs. Hill, are you not willing to forgive your enemies?"

"I don't have any."

"Mrs. Hill, that is very unusual. How old are you?"

"Ninety three."

"Mrs. Hill, please come down in front and tell the congregation how a person can live to be ninety-three and not have an enemy in the world."

The little sweetheart of a lady tottered down the aisle, very slowly turned around and said: "It's easy, I just outlived the bit*hes."

10. A quote I like

You don't drown by falling into water. You only drown if you stay there.--Zig Ziglar, American author, salesperson and motivational speaker

11. Thought for the day

Twas the night of Thanksgiving,
But I just couldn't sleep.
I tried counting backwards,
I tried counting sheep.

The leftovers beckoned:
The dark meat and white,
But I fought the temptation
With all of my might.

Tossing and turning with anticipation.
The thought of a snack became infatuation.
So, I raced to the kitchen, flung open the door,
And gazed at the fridge, full of goodies galore.
Gobbled up turkey and buttered potatoes,
Pickles and carrots, beans and tomatoes.

I felt myself swelling so plump and so round,
Till all of a sudden, I rose off the ground.
I crashed through the ceiling, floating into the sky.
With a mouthful of pudding and a handful of pie.
But, I managed to yell as I soared past the trees...
Happy eating to all - pass the cranberries, Please.

May your stuffing be tasty,
May your turkey be plump.
May your potatoes 'n gravy have nary a lump.
May your yams be delicious.
May your pies take the prize.
May your Thanksgiving dinner stay off of your thighs!

Author unknown

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

12. Advance planning department

A. Cathy in Pennsylvania:

"This is so cool! This is so cool!" a thirteen-year-old boy repeated as he squeezed rounds from a real M-16, picking off "enemy combatants" in a video game while perched atop a real Army Humvee. "I just came to the mall to skateboard but everyone said this was pretty cool. . . . "

This is not what we want our children to learn! Stop the militarization of our youth.

At noon on Friday, November 27, the busiest shopping day of the year known as BLACK FRIDAY, join the noon vigil at the corner of Knights and Woodhaven Roads, to let thousands of shoppers on the busiest shopping day of the year know that we're not shopping the Mall, and are encouraging others to do the same, as long as it is home to the Army Experience Center. Walk with us to the Franklin Mills Mall to let store owners and Mall management know that they have the power to Close the Army Experience Center.

The Army has stated that they would not be building more of these centers. They have never said that there are plans to close this one!!!

Please see our website for more information on this very important event:

<http://www.cfpabuxmont.org>

B. My community, Biltmore Lake, has an upcoming event that I thought would be of interest; e.g., if you live anywhere near Asheville:

Resident Cynthia Greenfield (see also Section 1A) is offering a fun enjoyable FREE workshop:

Move Your Body (Journey Dance)

When: 7:00-8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 1

Where: Clubhouse

Move Your Body is a freeing movement experience. You start with a short meditation and yoga-like stretches to warm up. Then, using inspiring music from around the world, you are softly led into easy-to-follow movements. At times you follow, and other times you move intuitively on your own. You are encouraged to honor yourself at all times. It is a form of fun, joy, creativity, connection, community and self-acceptance. You end with a delicious relaxation exercise. The Move Your Body experience will leave you feeling renewed, empowered and invigorated.

Move Your Body includes and celebrates all types of bodies, people and energy levels. No yoga or dance background required. This is an experience that ALL Biltmore Lake residents, both men and women, will enjoy.

Instructor bio:

Cynthia Greenfield is a certified JourneyDance and Kripalu Dancekinetics instructor. She has extensive experience in the areas of yoga, meditation and breathing techniques. She moved to Biltmore Lake with her husband

Blaine a year ago, retiring from having been a guidance counselor. One of her joys now is to offer these movement experiences to the Asheville community.

Please RSVP by Monday, November 30th--either on the Intranet RSVP system or directly with Cynthia. Feel free to contact Cynthia with any questions: 828.633.1049 or cgreenfield1001@aol.com.

C. Mei in Pennsylvania:

A cast of 28 eager performers will multiply the laughs in "Exponential Journey: An Evening of Comedy Improv That Will Take You Here to There and Back Again"

December 4th (Fri) and 5th (Sat).
7 p.m. (both nights) at Bucks County Community College
275 Swamp Road, Newtown, PA in the Gateway Auditorium.

Admission is \$5 at the door. For more information, call the Department of the Arts at 215.968.8425.

The biannual comedy showcase is directed by Bill McLaughlin, himself a comedy veteran, who has taught improvisational performance at his alma mater for more than four years. He honed his comedy craft in Chicago under the tutelage of the famous Del Close, then spent the next 25 years performing improv in New York City.

D. Robin in Pennsylvania:

Just in time for holiday gift giving . . . beautiful unique hand-crafted gifts . . .

My dear friend Elaine Daniels will be selling her jewelry at an open studio sale from December 10-13.

Location: 919 S. 7th St., Philadelphia, PA.

Times: Thursday, 5-8 p.m., Friday, noon-8 p.m., Sat. & Sun., noon-6 p.m.

For more information: 215.588.4622 or 610.308.8695.

PS. Happy turkey day (aka Thanksgiving) to you and your families . . . and to help get you in the mood, please read Sections 7A and 11 . . . also, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan . . . and that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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To subscribe to this newsletter, please put SUBSCRIBE in the subject line of an email and send to bginbc@aol.com . . . in the unlikely event you wish to unsubscribe, just put UNSUBSCRIBE in subject line and send to the same address.

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#685

11.16.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I do miss our friends and relatives from "Up North" . . . so we get a kick out of seeing them when they honor us with a visit.

B. That's Ange in Pennsylvania (between us):



She came visiting, along with her friend Sharon in South . . . we did manage a brief walk around the lake, then went into town for lunch at Care Ello . . . the food is always good there, and so is the hospitality from the owner Lorne Richman . . . for more information, please call 828.252.8333.

C. Barry and Jody, also in Pennsylvania, then stopped by:



We all got to check out a restaurant we haven't been to before: Decades . . . I liked the trout almandine, and Cynthia said her prime rib was quite tasty . . . our server Mary was most attentive . . . and though we were only there for a few songs by the band that was appearing--Honey--we liked what we heard.

D. In addition, we caught the show GREATER TUNA at the Flat Rock Playhouse . . . this is a funny comedy in which two actors, Michael Edwards and Scott Treadway, play some 20 quirky residents of a town called Tuna, Texas . . . I think it was the first time that I had seen Edwards perform; hopefully, it won't be the last . . . his cliché-filled eulogy had us laughing out loud . . . Treadway, as always, did a great job . . . in particular, his Peter Fisk of the Greater Tuna Humane Society had us wishing that character had an even bigger role . . . I'm only disappointed that the show ended its limited run yesterday, so you won't be able to see it.

DON'T MISS:

Upcoming productions at this venue . . . we've seen several here and have never been disappointed . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.flatrockplayhouse.org/>

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

This week, it goes to Chris--a tech specialist with Bose

The other day, I had a problem with my Bose sound system. I called the company and was fortunate to reach Chris after just a few minutes. He quickly understood my difficulty, made several suggestions and within a short period of time, he helped get my system up and running again. Was I ever relieved!

MY TWO CENTS:

I bought my Bose system from Whitaker Brothers in Bristol, PA . . . this company is the BEST . . . it offers the design, sales and installation of Bose audio systems for your home, business or house of workshop . . . for more information, please call 888.785.1595 and ask for Craig or click:

<http://www.whitakerbros.com>

THANKS to Ed and Betsy in Pennsylvania for recommending that I get a shingles vaccination . . . I checked this out with my doctor, and he said it was something that I should get; i.e., if I wanted to avoid coming down with shingles (a very debilitating illness that primarily hits those over 59) . . . it is a skin rash caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox . . . if you've never heard of shingles or want more information, please click:

<http://www.medicinenet.com/shingles/article.htm>

FYI, part 2

* Barbara in Pennsylvania (with a REQUEST FOR HELP):

You outdid yourself on this newsletter! It was most interesting, as usual, but I must say it had a little more of something. I can't put my finger on it.

Also, on another topic, but one that has to do with the newsletter . . . I'm looking for a mahjong game . . . a "hand held" electronic game. I don't know where to get one or even if there is one to be had. I know my last resort is to buy a Nintendo DS and buy a mahjong game that plugs into that, but I would love to surprise my husband with his own "electronic" mahjong game of sorts so he wouldn't have to plant himself in front of the computer. Would you put this question in your next newsletter and see if one of your thousands of readers can help out?

* Chris in Pennsylvania:

Just wanted to let you know I particularly enjoyed this week's BLAINESWORLD.

I noted the excerpt about the upcoming Prisoner series. I remember seeing some of the original episodes as a child, and being scared to death by the bouncing/floating ball and the idea someone could be controlled/manipulated like that. I recently found out that Comcast is running the 1967 season on its On Demand channel for free (but only until 11/30), and have been watching them all again. What a classic!

* Bob and Leslie in New York (and North Carolina, too):

I just happened to hear something today as a call-in on one of the Sports Talk Radio shows here in NY. A young man, perhaps bemoaning the lot of the Mets, Knicks and the latest 4-game losing streak by the Giants, had written in that the absolute proof of intelligent life somewhere out there in space is the fact that nobody's come to visit us so far!

Maybe you can find a place for that thought in a future issue of BLAINESWORLD. In the meantime, I just wanted to say that we miss you guys, and the picture of the two of you in this issue looks great. Yeah, the background looks great too, but the best thing about where we live is the friends that we've made there. Hope to see you in late December or early January.

* MaryEllen in New Jersey:

I am older now and tend to be on time, but whenever I am with my adult children and we are stuck in traffic because of a motor vehicle accident and they are unhappy about the situation.

I always tell them, I would rather be sitting in the traffic than be involved in the accident. I still feel it is my job to point out to them how fortunate they are.

MANY THANKS to the several readers who wrote-in about the piece in last week's issue about my quitting Diet Coke:

* Bob in New Jersey:

I am now content drinking plain old spring water. I was hooked on seltzer, thinking it was healthy.

A PhD nutritionist took my seltzer away and explained how the phosphorous in carbonated beverages robbed the body of calcium. We all lose about 600 mg a day of calcium (hence the dose for calcium), but phosphorous, found in all carbonated beverages, rob even more calcium from us.

Just Google "Osteoporosis carbonated beverages" . . . see below for one result:

<http://jn.nutrition.org/cgi/content/abstract/102/9/1133>

* Kelly in North Carolina:

I just want to reinforce and encourage you in your choice to refrain from drinking any and all diet soda. This is a wise choice!

To your health!!

* Janet in New Jersey:

I am so glad you stopped Diet Coke. It is one of the most toxic diet sodas on the planet. My brother nearly died from it 10 years ago.

It does cause you to gain weight for many reasons and is addictive. Also, it breaks down systems of your body at an alarming rate

Good new hypnosis project for you: Get people off diet sodas. I am sure you have found out more. Enjoy long life and good health.

* Sharee in Florida:

I drink diet soda, probably one can a day at lunch. The rest of the time I drink flavored seltzer...not the kind that is presweetened (be sure to read the label).

I have trouble finding it in Florida so I drink Ritz or SYFO.

Not sure what you'll be able to find in Asheville . . . maybe all three! Since I grew up on Vintage, I can see a slight taste difference, but not enough to be a problem. You still have the carbonation, but not the sweet that seems to be the controversy with diet soda.

And I've just lost 51.4 pounds so far drinking this stuff (along with Weight Watchers and daily exercise).

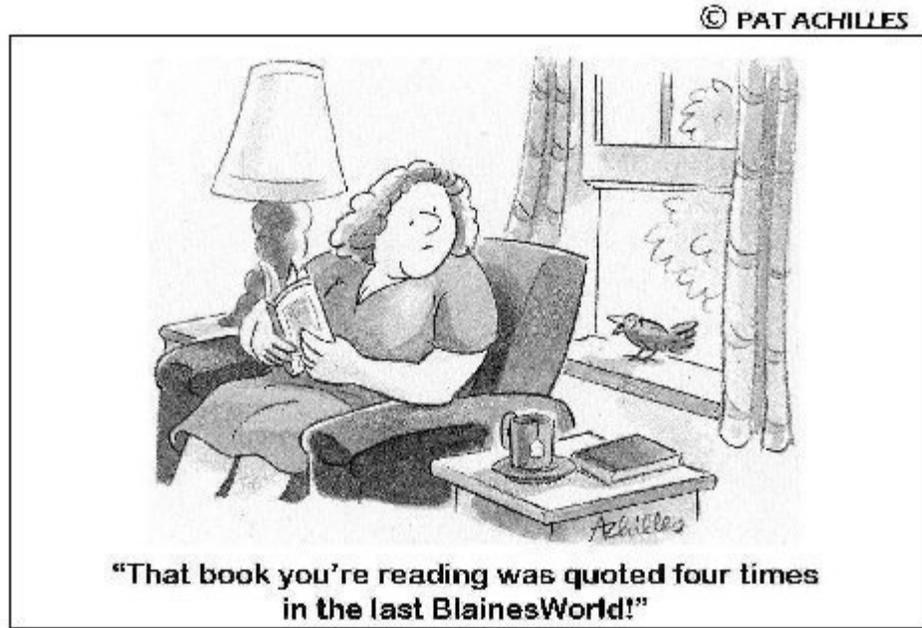
3. Charity request

My friend just had a call from a charity, asking her to donate some of her clothes to the starving people throughout the world.

Her response: "I told them to get lost . . . anybody who fits into my clothes isn't starving!"

4. Reviews

I'm sooooo glad to both hear and see that others take the time to read this section:



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

SPECIAL THANKS to Pat Achilles for providing the above . . . she does comics, greeting cards, artwork for children's books and so much more . . . she can be reached at 215.348.4837 or via email: patachilles@aol.com . . . you can also get a FREE weekly comic delivered to your email address by clicking:

<http://www.achillesportfolio.com/freecartoonsignup.htm>

A. MORE THAN A GAME is an inspiring documentary about five young basketball players from Akron, Ohio who stay together over seven years to get to pay in a national high school championship . . . what makes this particularly watchable is that future NBA superstar LeBron James was the leader of the team . . . if you're a basketball fan, this is a film you MUST see . . . but methinks that even if you're not, you will also enjoy it . . . rated PG.

SPOILER ALERT, though I'm not sure that's possible in a true story:

The closing credits describe what has happened to each of the players . . . I liked what it had to say about James: He did not go to college; instead, he found seasonal work in Cleveland.

B. MY SISTER'S KEEPER is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #668 follows:

MY SISTER'S KEEPER tells the story of a family forced to deal with the fact that one of its members is dying . . . as the storyline might indicate, it's a tearjerker . . . but one that also raises fascinating moral and ethical questions . . . I won't tell you more for fear that

I'll ruin the film for you . . . however, I will say that it moved me deeply . . . Cameron Diaz, Abigail Breslin, Alec Baldwin and Sofia Vassilieva (a young actress that I had not seen before) are all superb in their respective roles . . . the accompanying soundtrack was great, too . . . rated PG-13.

C. If I hear that Seth Godin (SMALL IS THE NEW BIG, MARKETERS ARE LIARS, etc.) has written a new book, I make it a point to read it as quickly as possible . . . what he has to say gets me to think, and it almost makes me wonder how I didn't think of that first.

Such is the case with Godin's latest, TRIBES . . . as he defines the term:

* A tribe is a group of people, connected to one another, connected to a leader and connected to an idea. . . . A group needs only two things to be a tribe: a shared interest and a way to communicate. . . . Tribes need leadership. Sometimes one person leads, sometimes more. . . . You can't have a tribe without a leader--and you can't be a leader without a tribe.

The author then gives several, eye-opening examples of tribes in action, but my favorite was Jerry Garica and the Grateful Dead . . . not only did the group gross more than \$100 million during its career, but it managed to succeed not by selling records (only one album ever made the Top 40), but rather by attracting and leading a tribe.

Another one that caught my attention was Jack, an "occasional restaurant" run by Danielle Sucher and Dave Turner in Brooklyn:

* They open the restaurant only about twenty times a year, on Saturday nights. By appointment. Go online and you can see the menu in advance. Then, you book and pay if you want to go.

Instead of seeking diners for their dishes, Danielle and Dave get to create dishes for their diners. Instead of serving anonymous patrons, they throw a party.

Danielle is the food columnist for the popular Gothamist Web site, and she and Dave run the food blog Habeas Brulee. That means they already interact with the tribe. It means that once the restaurant is up and running, it becomes the central clearinghouse, the place to hang out with the other tribe members.

If the food is daring and the service is generous, Jack can't fail.

What a great formula for restaurant success; in fact, for any business to follow . . . but as Godin notes, there are others who do the same that you probably never realized:

* Fox News didn't persuade millions of people to become conservative; they just assembled the tribe and led them where they were already headed.

I was inspired by TRIBES as I came to the realization that to be a leader, you don't always need to win an election . . . you just need to think about the opportunities out there for leading

your fellow employees, customers, investors or even readers of this newsletter . . . then go ahead and lead them.

D. Heard the revised and updated version of DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT HISTORY by Kenneth C. Davis . . . it presents what is little more than a CLIFFSNOTES approach to the subject, but if you can accept that up front, then you can sit back and enjoy the question-and-answer format.

I liked revisiting a wide range of events from Colonial America through the Bush administration and especially those that I personally lived through: Watergate, Clinton's impeachment, the bizarre election of 2000, the events leading up to September 11, etc.

As the author points out, what makes history come alive is when stories are told . . . Davis certainly tells a lot of them here, and it was fun to a history lesson wherein facts didn't need to be memorized.

The narration by Jeff Woodman with Jonathan Davis was workmanlike, though when they tried to do the voices of various historical characters, they all seemed to be the same.

5. TV alert

A. I still enjoy THE NEW ADVENTURES OF OLD CHIRSTINE, now in its fifth season . . . as USA TODAY notes, the show's virtues include "a great ensemble (including Wanda Sykes) . . . consistently good scripts; and at stage center, an Emmy-winning turn from Julia Louis-Dreyfuss, whose performances is as wildly amusing as it is outrageously brave" . . . Wednesdays at 8 p.m. on CBS.

B. WORLD MAGIC AWARDS features a ballroom full of magicians who perform tricks and compete for trophies . . . Thursday at 8 p.m. on MYNETWORK TV.

C. TERROR IN MUMBAI tells the story of the 10 young Pakistani men who reached Mumbai in a fishing boat last Nov. 26, and proceeded, methodically, on their mission of mass murder and the destruction of that Indian city's most famous landmarks . . . according to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, "There's not a moment in this stunning film—directed by Dan Reed, narrated by Mumbai-born Fareed Zakaria—that doesn't leave one rapt with wonder at its revelatory powers and wanting more . . . Thursday at 8 p.m. on HBO . . . for other times, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/yl22odd>

D. HAPPILY EVER FASTER premieres on Friday at 10 p.m. on TLC . . . you'll see stories from a Las Vegas wedding chapel catering to couples looking for quickie nuptials . . . this week, chapel planner Melody attempts to enlist William Shatner --aka Captain Kirk--as best man for a Trekkie wedding.

6. Times change

A guy goes into the confessional box after years of being away from church

As he steps in, he's struck dumb: There's a fully equipped bar with Guinness on tap. On the other wall holds a dazzling array of the finest cigars and chocolates.

Then he hears the door on the other side open and the priest comes in.

"Father, forgive me," he says, "for it's been a very long time since I've been to confession. But I must first admit that the confessional box is much more inviting than it used to be!"

"Get out you fool!" the priest hisses. "You're on my side!"

7. Websites

A. Perhaps the best way to find a flight on the Internet is to click:

<http://www.kayak.com>

This website, briefly mentioned in BLAINESWORLD #438, seems to have more search features that reach more airlines than anything else out there . . . the key is that Kayak doesn't sell flights directly, so the company isn't beholden to the airlines . . . if you check it out, I'd be curious to your reaction.

B. It's that time of the year again, and if you're actually into mailing out holiday cards, here's a website to check:

<http://christmascardsfree.net/>

You'll find dozens of PDF-based card designs here to print out on your color printer . . . new designs are added frequently, so check back if you don't see just what you want now.

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

In my "other life," I hosted a radio show . . . actually, I hosted radio shows on two separate occasions for different stations . . . to read more, please click "Radio" to the left of the homepage.

You can even listen to a past show by then clicking that option on the left.

8. Computer tip

Windows Search is an option that lets you instantly find documents, email, attachments and more . . . plus, it give you plus one-click access to move, delete, copy, burn, attach or drag and drop files where you need them . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/products/winfamily/desktopsearch/default.mspx>

In addition, you can find individual words within the above . . . for example, I was recently trying to find a quote attributed to Ambrose Bierce . . . so within seconds after typing-in the word "Bierce," I found that it had appeared in BLAINESWORLD #439:

Speak when you are angry and you will make the best speech you will ever regret.--Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914), American newspaper columnist, satirist, essayist, short-story writer and novelist

9. Test of three

Keep the following philosophy in mind the next time you hear a rumor or you're thinking about repeating one:

In ancient Greece (469-399 BC), Socrates was widely lauded for his wisdom. One day the great philosopher came upon an acquaintance, who ran up to him excitedly and said, "Socrates, do you know what I just heard about one of your students?"

"Wait a moment," Socrates replied. "Before you tell me, I'd like you to pass a little test. It's called the Test of Three."

"Test of Three?"

"That's correct," Socrates continued.

"Before you talk to me about my student, let's take a moment to test what you're going to say. The first test is Truth. Have you made absolutely sure that what you are about to tell me is true?"

"No," the man replied, "actually I just heard about it."

"All right," said Socrates. "So you don't really know if it's true or not. Now let's try the second test, the test of Goodness. Is what you are about to tell me about my student something good?"

"No, on the contrary . . . "

"So," Socrates continued, "you want to tell me something bad about him even though you're not certain it's true?"

The man shrugged, a little embarrassed.

Socrates continued, "You may still pass though because there is a third test--the filter of Usefulness. Is what you want to tell me about my student going to be useful to me?"

"No, not really . . . "

"Well," concluded Socrates, "if what you want to tell me is neither True nor Good nor even Useful, why tell it to me at all?"

The man was defeated and ashamed and said no more.

This is the reason Socrates was a great philosopher and held in such high esteem.

It also explains why Socrates never found out that Plato was banging his wife.

10. A quote I like

We don't need more to be thankful for, we just need to be more thankful.--sign in front of New Morgan Hill Baptist Church in Candler, NC (right around the corner from where we live)

11. Thought for the day

Red marbles

I was at the corner grocery store buying some early potatoes. I noticed a small boy, delicate of bone and feature, ragged but clean, hungrily appraising a basket of freshly picked green peas.

I paid for my potatoes but was also drawn to the display of fresh green peas. I am a pushover for creamed peas and new potatoes. Pondering the peas, I couldn't help overhearing the conversation between Mr. Miller (the store owner) and the ragged boy next to me.

"Hello Barry, how are you today?"

"H'lo, Mr. Miller. Fine, thank ya. Jus' admirin' them peas. They sure look good."

"They are good, Barry. How's your Ma?"

"Fine. Gittin' stronger alla' time."

"Good. Anything I can help you with?"

"No, Sir. Jus' admirin' them peas."

"Would you like to take some home?" asked Mr. Miller.

"No, Sir. Got nuthin' to pay for 'em with."

"Well, what have you to trade me for some of those peas?"

"All I got's my prize marble here."

"Is that right? Let me see it," said Miller.

"Here 'tis. She's a dandy."

"I can see that. Hmmmmm, only thing is this one is blue, and I sort of go for red. Do you have a red one like this at home?" the store owner asked.

"Not zackley, but almost."

"Tell you what. Take this sack of peas home with you and next trip this way

let me look at that red marble," Mr. Miller told the boy.

"Sure will. Thanks Mr. Miller."

Mrs. Miller, who had been standing nearby, came over to help me. With a smile she said, "There are two other boys like him in our community, all three are in very poor circumstances. Jim just loves to bargain with them for peas, apples, tomatoes or whatever. When they come back with their red marbles, and they always do, he decides he doesn't like red after all, and he sends them home with a bag of produce for a green marble or an orange one when they come on their next trip to the store."

I left the store smiling to myself, impressed with this man. A short time later, I moved to Colorado, but I never forgot the story of this man, the boys and their bartering for marbles.

Several years went by, each more rapid than the previous one. Just recently I had occasion to visit some old friends in that Idaho community and while I was there, I learned that Mr. Miller had died.

They were having his visitation that evening and knowing my friends wanted to go, I agreed to accompany them. Upon arrival at the mortuary, we fell into line to meet the relatives of the deceased and to offer whatever words of comfort we could.

Ahead of us in line were three young men. One was in an army uniform and the other two wore nice haircuts, dark suits and white shirts--all very professional looking. They approached Mrs. Miller, standing composed and smiling by her husband's casket. Each of the young men hugged her, kissed her on the cheek, spoke briefly with her and moved on to the casket.

Her misty light blue eyes followed them as, one by one; each young man stopped briefly and placed his own warm hand over the cold pale hand in the casket. Each left the mortuary awkwardly, wiping his eyes.

Our turn came to meet Mrs. Miller. I told her who I was and reminded her of the story from those many years ago and what she had told me about her husband's bartering for marbles. With her eyes glistening, she took my hand and led me to the casket.

"Those three young men who just left were the boys I told you about. They just told me how they appreciated the things Jim 'traded' them. Now, at last, when Jim could not change his mind about color or size . . . they came to pay their debt.

"We've never had a great deal of the wealth of this world," she continued, "but right now, Jim would consider himself the richest man in Idaho."

With loving gentleness she lifted the lifeless fingers of her deceased husband. Resting underneath were three exquisitely shined red marbles.

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

12. Advance planning department

A. Ted and Kimberly in North Carolina:

We would like to invite you and your friends to our final "Beginner's Only" Jitterbug Dance Class and Party for 2009 at the Asheville Ballroom. Details are listed below--no prior dance experience, nor partner, is necessary--just come planning to have a lot of fun!

Friday, November 20th
Beginning Jitterbug Class at 7 p.m.
"Beginner's Only" Dance Party: 8-10 p.m.

Class Taught and Party Hosted by: Ted and Kimberly Ross
Location: The Asheville Ballroom & Dance Centre (991-B Sweeten Creek Rd., Asheville)

Learn to dance the swinging "Jitterbug" and practice your ballroom dancing in a fun, safe and supportive atmosphere at this "Beginner's Only" Class and Dance Party! Refreshments and sodas will be provided and Professional Dance Instructors will be at the party to assist students with their dancing questions. Line dances will also be taught and included in the party.

No partner is necessary for the class or party.
\$10 for Class and Party (Special \$7 Rate for ages 17 & under)

B. My community, Biltmore Lake, has three upcoming events of interest . . . they are targeted to residents, but if you'd like to be my guest to attend any one and/or all of the events, just drop me an email to that effect . . . put INVITATION TO (whatever specific events or events) in the subject line and send it to bginbc@aol.com . . . as always, if you're a member of the community, please RSVP via the Intranet.

* Biltmore Lake resident Fred Teach, an enthusiastic member of the North Carolina Center for Creative Retirement (NCCCR), will speak on Friday, November 20th in the Clubhouse at 7:00 p.m..

The North Carolina Center for Creative Retirement (NCCCR) is an award-winning, internationally-acclaimed learning community dedicated to promoting lifelong learning, leadership, community service, and research. NCCCR's goal is to enable its members to thrive in life's second half.

The Center embraces an unusually comprehensive array of programs in the arts and humanities, the natural world, civic engagement, wellness, life transition and retirement relocation planning, intergenerational co-learning, and research on trends in the reinvention of retirement.

* Biltmore Lake Small Business Fair

Saturday, November 21, 2009
10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon
Clubhouse

Have you been looking for a new contractor, chiropractor or interior decorator, but just moved in to the neighborhood? Or have you become discouraged when looking in the Yellow Pages or online?

Here is your opportunity to meet your neighbors who own their own businesses or work for a local company! Only businesses owned or run by Biltmore Lake residents will be participating in the event.

The idea behind the Small Business Fair is to get Biltmore Lake consumers in touch with Biltmore Lake business owners and representatives and possibly make a few new connections or contacts. All attendees receive

a door prize just for attending!

If you own your own business and live in Biltmore Lake, spaces are still available. Please contact David in the Recreation Office at 670.6103.

* Biltmore Lake resident Cynthia Greenfield (see also Section 1A) is offering a fun enjoyable FREE workshop:

Move Your Body (Journey Dance)

When: 7:00-8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 1

Where: Clubhouse

Move Your Body is a freeing movement experience. You start with a short meditation and yoga-like stretches to warm up. Then, using inspiring music from around the world, you are softly led into easy-to-follow movements. At times you follow, and other times you move intuitively on your own. You are encouraged to honor yourself at all times. It is a form of fun, joy, creativity, connection, community and self-acceptance. You end with a delicious relaxation exercise. The Move Your Body experience will leave you feeling renewed, empowered and invigorated.

Move Your Body includes and celebrates all types of bodies, people and energy levels. No yoga or dance background required. This is an experience that ALL Biltmore Lake residents, both men and women, will enjoy.

Instructor bio:

Cynthia Greenfield is a certified JourneyDance and Kripalu Dancekinetics instructor. She has extensive experience in the areas of yoga, meditation and breathing techniques. She moved to Biltmore Lake with her husband Blaine a year ago, retiring from having been a guidance counselor. One of her joys now is to offer these movement experiences to the Asheville community.

Please RSVP by Monday, November 30th--either on the Intranet RSVP system or directly with Cynthia. Feel free to contact Cynthia with any questions: 633.1049 or cgreenfield1001@aol.com.

C. Deborah in New Jersey:

Sign up now for these upcoming certain sell-outs:

Thanksgiving morning Power Yoga Workshop

with Denise Bonnaig on Thanksgiving morning, Nov. 26, 9:30-11:45 a.m.

FREE INTRO to Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction

Monday after Thanksgiving: Nov 30, 7:30-9 p.m.

Healing Crystal Bowls

with Jay Schwed on Sat., Dec. 5, 7-9 p.m.

Restorative Yoga with Healing Crystal Bowls

with Jay Schwed on Sun., Dec. 6, 2-4 p.m.

For more information, please click any of the above links
or call 609.924.7294.

D. Lorraine in New Jersey:

Comprehensive QUICKBOOKS

Bring your bills

Bring your customer list

Set up (or Improve) your bookkeeping set-up

GET IT DONE IN 2 DAYS

Take your accounts back to your office, learn on our software, save and
then take home to your software. Software not included.

2 sessions

December 8 & 15

9:00 a.m.-5 p.m.

The College of NJ, Ewing, NJ

\$295

includes breakfast and lunch

For more information and/or to register, call 609.771.2947.

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers
back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel
and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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you wish to unsubscribe, just put UNSUBSCRIBE in subject line and
send to the same address

Blaine Greenfield
19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
Phone : 828.633.1049

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#684

11.9.2009

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-

1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I love walking around the lake that surrounds our community . . . it's especially picturesque now when you can see the leaves falling . . . see below for just one of the many views that we see:



B. We are starting to get active in the Center for Creative Retirement (see also Section 12D) . . . Cynthia is teaching a dance course there that ends this coming week . . . and I am taking a hypnosis course that is being taught by Jeanene Fisher . . . it is helping me pick up some reminders for the work that I do in this field; for example:

* Hypnosis can only help you become the best you can be.

***** OFFER REMAINS *****

If you'd like to have me hypnotize you, give a holler . . . I can help you lose your baggage without even going to the airport . . . you can stop smoking, lose weight or drop any other habit you'd like to shake . . . this can be done in person or if you're not near Asheville, via Skype if you have access to a webcam . . . for more information, please put HYPNOSIS in the subject line of an email and send it to bginbc@aol.com.

C. On Saturday night, the Center hosted a lecture that we attended on "The Scientific World-View and Vipassana Meditation" . . . it was conducted by Dr. Paul R. Fleischman, author of several books and an individual who has been honored by the American Psychiatric Association for his contribution to the study of spirituality and religion in medicine . . . among his observations:

- * This form of meditation is based on reality.
- * You observe the reality of the sensations of the reality of your own body.
- * You can't observe your mind. It would be like having your finger touch itself.
- * If you meditate, almost all you think about is a waste of time.
- * Meditation is much more like riding a bike than learning math.

I was impressed that this form of meditation is being taught for free; however, I think I'll take a pass on learning it because to do so requires 10 full days of instruction.

D. I'm blessed to be part of a great Leadership Asheville team, which includes Dena Gettleman, Susan Gerrett, Hayley Roper and Jeremy Jordan . . . we met the other night for dinner at Dean's house, at which time we began planning our project . . . it involves developing a new set of community indicators for the Asheville community with respect to whether there's a welcoming and inclusive environment.

The project will keep us busy, but we're all hoping to learn from it . . . furthermore, we're hoping that future meetings will feature the good food that we had that night . . . Susan prepared a delicious mango salad, and Dena's lentil soup was most tasty . . . here's her recipe for it, which she graciously provided:

Lentil Soup

1 bag of lentils
chopped celery
sliced carrots
one onion, chopped
3 or 4 slices of bacon sliced (optional)
spices Marjoram and Basil, salt/pepper
a package of sliced hotdogs

Boil all together for about 1/2 hour except for the hotdogs. Put them in after the soup is cooked.

Dena served the soup with bread from Earth Fare (Greenlife has it, too) . . . it comes in a brown paper wrapper and has the word "Seed" stamped on it . . . I'm not a big bread eater, but I made an exception that night . . . and am glad I did . . . now it has me wanting some more, even as I type this paragraph!

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

This week, it goes to Scott Bradshaw--golf coach and a physical education professor at Bucks Community College.

Scott's golf team recently placed first in Eastern Pennsylvania Collegiate Conference League Tournament and then finished second in the state championship . . . he has been coaching for some seven years and manages to keep his teams competitive every season . . . in fact, the golfers have often gone to Nationals in the spring and done well there too.

In his spare time, Scott somehow manages to serve as the college's assistant athletic director, and he is also completing his doctorate . . . and that's in addition to helping raise his family.

Scott Bradshaw is also a fine teacher, well-respected by both his students and colleagues.

2. FYI

THANKS to Mark in New Jersey for a recommendation that he has repeatedly made to me; i.e., that I should stop drinking diet soda . . . I had been consuming more and more of Coca-Cola Zero (a tastier alternative to Diet Coke) and while doing so, found myself actually gaining weight and becoming bloated.

So as of last week, I went "cold turkey" and stopped drinking all diet sodas . . . it's too early to discern if I will be noticing any long-term benefits, but I do know that I feel less bloated and have lost a few pounds.

For more information, please click:

* On why diet sodas may actually cause weight gain:

<http://tinyurl.com/ttj7x>

* On why carbonated beverages cause bloating (flatulence, too):

<http://www.healthhype.com/causes-of-bloating-and-gas-flatulence.html>

* And lastly, on Mark's contention that drinking diet sodas is "bad" for you, click either or both of the following:

<http://health.yahoo.com/experts/eatthis/22630/the-truth-about-diet-soda/>

<http://www.seriousseats.com/talk/2007/08/is-drinking-diet-soda-really.html>

NOTE:

This last point is controversial; for another viewpoint, please click:

<http://www.snopes.com/medical/toxins/aspartame.asp>

All things considered, though, I'm going to stay away from diet sodas and continue to drink more water.

FYI, part 2

* Allen in Pennsylvania:

You can read a couple of poems, including my little elegy for Ezra Pound at:

<http://tinyurl.com/yae2ov2>

* Monica in North Carolina:

Here's a coupon for 30% off at all Gap, Gap Outlet, Banana Republic, Banana Republic Factory Store and Old Navy stores from November 12-15 . . . you can use it as many times as you like.

<http://www.gapinc.com/giveandget/lis/>

* Kathy in Florida:

If you are a member of the AAA Auto Club, if you show your card at Outback Steakhouse, they will give you a free bloomin' onion. Great deal!

* Alyson in Colorado:

Yesterday we saw MEN WHO STARE AT GOATS. Besides the fact that I got to be with my #2 heartthrob GC for a couple of hours, I found it sweet and at times, hilarious. Friend we were with recommended A SERIOUS MAN . . . next!

* Rebecca in New Jersey (on A SERIOUS MAN):

Loved it. Hilarious and poignant. Michael Stahlberg is terrific.

* Nicholas in Vermont:

FREE Shipping Day is back with more retailers. Find out more by clicking:

<http://tinyurl.com/yzaehyn>

* Tom in New Jersey graciously allowed me to share one of his recent Facebook postings:

Vote today! Here is my heresy of the day: I respect all candidates, even those with whom I disagree, for their sense of service and willingness to try to make a difference. Data and decades of evidence show that most people never participate. How do we increase the number of people involved, participating, engaging, serving, volunteering, sharing talents, and leading when needed? Encourage, listen, learn, debate.

* Arlene in Missouri:

Avon, the leading home selling cosmetics company, allows you to shop online and pay no shipping at any time, if you know the correct code. They have products at great value and many times lower priced than the discount stores. How would you like to have all your personal products like shampoo and body wash, etc., and have them delivered free to your door? Please visit my website:

<http://arlenehiggins.avonrepresentative.com/>

and use promotional code FSANY to receive free shipping every day.

* Shelley in Pennsylvania:

We also saw Leonard Cohen in Philadelphia at the Tower Theater . . . what a great show. I was pleasantly surprised how energetic he was, dancing and singing, getting down on his knees, getting up and skipping across the stage. Just a wonderful time! I was a bit hesitant about going, but my better half told me it would be lots of fun. How right he was!

* Marty in Pennsylvania:

Just thought I would second your endorsement of the Leonard Cohen concert. We saw him in Tampa maybe two weeks ago and he was great, along with that superb array of musicians behind him.

* Scott in Pennsylvania:

FREE Zero Calorie Steaz:

<http://www.steaz.com/promotion/FreeZeroCalorie/>

FREE portrait at Target with no sitting fee:

http://sites.target.com/site/en/spot/page.jsp?title=ptstudio_four_coupon

FREE subscription to BOATING LIFE:

<http://www.boatinglife.com/freesubform/blfreesubform.jsp?key=13GABC>

3. Dinner choices

The husband was sitting on the sofa, watching TV when he heard his wife's voice from the kitchen: "What would you like for dinner love chicken, beef or lamb?"

He said, "Thank you, I'll have chicken."

"Screw you. You're having soup. I was talking to the cat."

4. Reviews

A. Michael Jackson's THIS IS IT is a behind-the-scenes look at the performer as he prepared for his series of sold-out concerts that would have taken place in London in the summer of 2009 . . . it shows him rehearsing a number of his songs and gives a rare behind-the-scenes look at what putting together such a show entailed . . . I found it interesting, though I did not feel as emotionally involved as I thought would be the case . . . the scenes featuring individual discussions or sessions with performers were fascinating, and I was also amazed at the fact that he seemed to be using teleprompters . . . rated PG.

B. Out on DVD is THE TAKING OF PELHAM 1 2 3, director Tony Scott's remake of the 1974 original . . . Denzel Washington stars as a New York City subway dispatcher whose life is thrown into turmoil when he must deal with the terrorist demands of a John Travolta-led gang . . . I found

this to be a very suspenseful film until the end and then it seemed to fall apart . . . nevertheless, I'd still recommend it for the performances of both leading characters . . . rated R.

C. 212: THE EXTRA DEGREE by Sam Parker is a short book--make that, a very short one--that has a lot of meat in its relatively few pages.

You may have seen its basic premise; e.g., in an email that's been widely circulated on the Internet (without giving proper credit to Parker):

* At 211 degrees, water is hot.

At 212 degrees, it boils.

And with boiling water, comes steam.

And with steam, you can power a train.

One degree.

Applying one extra degree of temperature to water means the difference between something that is simply very hot and something that generates enough force to power a machine--a beautifully uncomplicated metaphor that ideally should feed our every endeavor--consistently pushing us to make the extra effort in every task, action and effort we undertake. Two-twelve serves as a forceful drill sergeant with its motivating and focused message while adhering to a scientific law--a natural law. It reminds us that seemingly small things can make tremendous differences. So simple is the analogy, that you can stop reading right now, walk away with the opening thought firmly planted in your mind and benefit from it for the rest of your life.

I like how Parker then expands this premise through a series of thought-provoking facts, including this one:

* Two of auto racing's premier events are The Daytona 500 (stock car) and the Indianapolis 500 (formula one). Each takes roughly three to three and half hours to complete. In the 10-year period between 1997 and 2006, combining all 20 races, the winner took the checkered flag by an average margin of 1.71 seconds and took home \$1,426,003 in first place prize money. The average prize for the second place finisher was \$716,464--a difference of \$709,539 - roughly half of the amount banked by the winner.

The author also offers a series of action steps you can take, such as:

* Eliminate one half hour of television watching each day and get 182.5 hours each year to allocate elsewhere (equivalent to four and half weeks at work).

And he concludes with several reflections that will get you thinking about life . . . I particularly liked the following:

* Complaining once less a day chokes off 365 seeds of negativity a year.

As the holidays approach, methinks 212 would be the perfect stocking stuffer for almost anybody on your list--including your children and grandchildren, as well as nieces and nephews, who

could all gain from Parker's valuable insights.

D. I don't usually read or listen to a book twice, but maybe it is time to revisit that policy . . . after all, I've lately found that it is a fun thing to do with movies that I haven't seen for quite some time . . . I rarely remember much of the dialogue or plot, other than the fact that I may have enjoyed it at one time.

Such was the case with *RUNNING FROM THE LAW* by Lisa Scottoline . . . for some reason, it was one of those rare occasion that I didn't have a book in my car, so I went to my local library and found this title that looked vaguely familiar.

Thinking that maybe it was the author that I recognized and had liked, I began listening and found myself again immersed in this tale about Rita Morrone--a lawyer who takes on the defense of a distinguished federal judge accused of sexual harassment.

When the judge's young secretary is then found murdered, he becomes a prime suspect . . . there's a very quick-paced plot here, as well as a fine ending . . . and the fact that the story is set in Philadelphia (near my old stomping grounds of Bucks County) added to my enjoyment.

I also liked the narration of Karen Allen--the actress who starred in one of my all-time favorite films, *STARMAN*.

After the fact, I found out that this was the author's first hardcover novel . . . I now plan to go find some of her other efforts . . . my only disappointment is that this appears to be the only one that featured the Morrone character . . . it would have been fun to read about her antics in another book.

5. TV alert

A. *LOPEZ TONIGHT* runs Monday through Thursday on TBS at 11 p.m. . . . expect George Lopez, the Mexican-American stand-up to mine the immigration debate for material . . . for example: "There's 43 million of us here and now they're going to build a wall? That's like putting a condom on after sex."

B. Gina Gershon (so fine in such films as *SHOWGIRLS* and *BOUND*) does bad things in an adaptation of true-crime author's *THE BEST OF EVERYTHING* . . . Saturday at 8 p.m. on LMN; concluded the next night at the same time.

C. *THE PRISONER* is a six-part reimagining of the 60s sci-fi classic about a nameless guy, played by Jim Carviele . . . Sr. Ian McKellan also stars . . . premieres Sunday at 8 p.m. on AMC.

D. Part 1 of 2 of *COLLISION* airs on *MASTERPIECE CONTEMPORARY* on Sunday at 9 p.m. on PBS (Part 2 is at the same time next Sunday) . . . TV GUIDE calls it "a terrific example of an unconventional and original story, weaving suspense, irony, mystery and emotional turmoil in the aftermath of a deadly multicar pileup" . . . because PBS times and dates often vary, check local listings.

6. Inspection

A deputy sheriff stops at a dairy farm and talks with the old farmer who is the owner.

He tells the farmer, "I need to inspect your property for illegally grown marijuana."

The old farmer says, "Okay, but don't go in that field over there."

The officer verbally explodes saying, "Mister, I have the authority of the Federal Government with me!"

Pointing to the badge on his chest, he proudly says, "See this badge? This badge means I am allowed to go wherever I wish on any land. No questions asked or answers given. Have I made myself clear!!? Do you understand?"

The old farmer nods politely and goes about his chores.

Later, the old guy hears loud screams and spies the deputy running for his life and close behind is the a huge breeder bull. With every step, the bull is gaining ground on the officer. The officer is clearly terrified.

The old farmer immediately throws down his pitch fork, runs to the fence and yells at the top of his lungs:

"Your badge! Show him your badge!"

7. Websites

A. If you missed Bill Cosby getting this year's Mark Twain Award, the entire show can be viewed by clicking:

<http://video.pbs.org/video/1317746583/>

It is one of the best specials I have ever seen . . . several classic comedy routines are shown, but my two favorites are him at the dentist and his giving instructions to a bunch of boys playing touch football

B. Beware of hanging out at coffee shop, particularly if you see Tom Green around . . . see for yourself by clicking:

<http://media.mtvnservices.com/mgid:cms:mvideo:cmt.com:40319>

Make sure you are alone when you watch this because your laughter might well distract others!

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

To find out more what this website is all about, your best bet is to read the statement at the very top of the homepage . . . doing so will

enable you to find out much of what goes through my mind!

8. Computer tip

THANKS to Mark in North Carolina for sending this warning about Facebook scams:

<http://tinyurl.com/yhyw6sv>

It seems that if you play games such as Mafia Wars, FarmVille, Restaurant City, etc., the information that you provide can be used by others--especially if you have a cellphone . . . if you or your children play such games, make sure you read this article that originally appeared in TIME magazine.

***** DEFTLY CHANGING SUBJECT *****

In the unlikely event you're not already my Facebook friend and would like to be, please click:

<http://www.facebook.com/blainegreenfield>

I believe you can request to be my friend there . . . or if not, just send an invite to be your friend.

9. Two beggars

Two beggars are sitting side by side on a street in Rome--one has a cross in front of him, the other one the Star of David. Many people go by, look at both beggars, but only put money into the hat of the beggar sitting behind the cross.

A priest comes by, stops and watches throngs of people giving money to the beggar behind the cross, but none to the beggar behind the Star of David. Finally, the priest goes over to the beggar behind the Star of David and tells him, "My poor fellow, don't you understand? This is a Catholic country; this city is the seat of Catholicism. People aren't going to give you money if you sit there with a Star of David in front of you, especially when you're sitting beside a beggar who has a cross. In fact, they would probably give to him just out of spite."

The beggar behind the Star of David after listening to the priest, turns to the other beggar with the cross and say, "Moishe, look who's trying to teach the Goldstein brothers about marketing!"

10. A quote I like

The young do not know enough to be prudent, and therefore they attempt the impossible -- and achieve it, generation after generation.---- Pearl S. Buck (1892-1973) American writer

11. Thought for the day

Little things

As you might remember, the head of a company survived 9/11 because his son started kindergarten.

Another fellow was alive because it was his turn to bring donuts.

One woman was late because her alarm clock didn't go off in time.

One was late because of being stuck on the NJ Turnpike because of an auto accident.

One of them missed his bus.

One spilled food on her clothes and had to take time to change.

One's car wouldn't start.

One couldn't get a taxi.

The one that struck me was the man who put on a new pair of shoes that morning, took the various means to get to work, but before he got there, he developed a blister on his foot.

He stopped at a drugstore to buy a Band-Aid. That is why he is alive today.

Now when I am stuck in traffic, miss an elevator or turn back to answer a ringing telephone . . . all the little things that annoy me . . . I think to myself:

This is exactly where God wants me to be At this very moment.

Next time your morning seems to be going wrong , the children are slow getting dressed, you can't seem to find the car keys, you hit every traffic light, don't get mad or frustrated. It May be just that God is at work watching over you.

May God continue to bless you with all those annoying little things. And may you remember their possible purpose.

Amen.

Author unknown

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

12. Advance planning department

A. Jonas Gerard paints live this weekend during Asheville's River Arts District Studio Stroll . . . this is an extraordinary event that you'll have to see to believe . . . you watch Jonas complete several pieces right before your eyes while he sings, dances, explains his philosophy about both painting and life, and answers your questions . . . Saturday and Sunday, both days at 2 p.m. . . . for more information, please click:

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

For more information about the Studio Scroll, please click:

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

B. Natalie in Pennsylvania:

A few tickets remain for this exciting event:

Bucks County Community College's Student Life presents John Smitherman on Saturday, November 14, at 7:30 p.m. in the Gateway Auditorium, Newtown Campus in Pennsylvania. Tickets are \$10.00 and can be purchased online at:

<http://www.bucks.edu/tickets>.

For information, contact Natalie Kaye, 215.968.8015.

John Smitherman who's being hailed as "the next Mario Lanza" was most recently seen at the Bristol Riverside Theatre. He puts on an amazing performance and has brought together a group of very talented musicians, including a drummer, bassist, pianist, sax, trumpet and trombone players.

C. Robin in Pennsylvania:

More than 50,000 Americans who have memory concerns or want to have a point of comparison for the future are expected to take advantage of free, confidential memory screenings at more than 2,000 community sites nationwide on November 17. An annual initiative of the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, National Memory Screening Day is the focal point of the organization's efforts to promote early detection of memory problems, including Alzheimer's disease (It is estimated that missed diagnoses of dementia are greater than 25 percent of the cases and may be as high as 90 percent). Memory screenings can reassure the healthy individual, promote successful aging and can be a first step toward a proper diagnosis if scores are below normal. Aging baby boomers especially are prime to take advantage of this free community resource. For more information, please click: <http://nationalmemoryscreening.org>

D. My community, Biltmore Lake, has three upcoming events of interest . . . they are targeted to residents, but if you'd like to be my guest to attend any one and/or all of the events, just drop me an email to that effect . . . put INVITATION TO (whatever specific events or events) in the subject line and send it to bginbc@aol.com . . . as always, if you're a member of the community, please RSVP via the Intranet.

* Biltmore Lake resident Fred Teach, an enthusiastic member of the North Carolina Center for Creative Retirement (NCCCR), will speak on Friday, November 20th in the Clubhouse at 7:00 p.m..

The North Carolina Center for Creative Retirement (NCCCR) is an award-winning, internationally-acclaimed learning community dedicated to promoting lifelong learning, leadership, community service, and research. NCCCR's goal is to enable its members to thrive in life's second half.

The Center embraces an unusually comprehensive array of programs in the arts and humanities, the natural world, civic engagement, wellness, life transition and retirement relocation planning, intergenerational co-learning, and research on trends in the reinvention of retirement.

* Biltmore Lake Small Business Fair

Saturday, November 21, 2009

10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Clubhouse

Have you been looking for a new contractor, chiropractor or interior decorator, but just moved in to the neighborhood? Or have you become discouraged when looking in the Yellow Pages or online?

Here is your opportunity to meet your neighbors who own their own businesses or work for a local company! Only businesses owned or run by Biltmore Lake residents will be participating in the event.

The idea behind the Small Business Fair is to get Biltmore Lake consumers in touch with Biltmore Lake business owners and representatives and possibly make a few new connections or contacts. All attendees receive a door prize just for attending!

If you own your own business and live in Biltmore Lake, spaces are still available. Please contact David in the Recreation Office at 670.6103.

* Biltmore Lake resident Cynthia Greenfield (see also Section 1A) is offering a fun enjoyable FREE workshop:

Move Your Body (Journey Dance)

When: 7:00-8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 1

Where: Clubhouse

Move Your Body is a freeing movement experience. You start with a short meditation and yoga-like stretches to warm up. Then, using inspiring music from around the world, you are softly led into easy-to-follow movements. At times you follow, and other times you move intuitively on your own. You are encouraged to honor yourself at all times. It is a form of fun, joy, creativity, connection, community and self-acceptance. You end with a delicious relaxation exercise. The Move Your Body experience will leave you feeling renewed, empowered and invigorated.

Move Your Body includes and celebrates all types of bodies, people and energy levels. No yoga or dance background required. This is an experience that ALL Biltmore Lake residents, both men and women, will enjoy.

Instructor bio:

Cynthia Greenfield is a certified JourneyDance and Kripalu Dancekinetics instructor. She has extensive experience in the areas of yoga, meditation and breathing techniques. She moved to Biltmore Lake with her husband Blaine a year ago, retiring from having been a guidance counselor. One of her joys now is to offer these movement experiences to the Asheville community.

Please RSVP by Monday, November 30th--either on the Intranet RSVP system or directly with Cynthia. Feel free to contact Cynthia with any questions: 633.1049 or cgreenfield1001@aol.com.

PS. Please remember all our soldiers on Veterans Day on Wednesday . . . to learn more about the holiday, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/yhz8uhp>

Also, use the day to pray for the victims and loved ones that were lost in the horrific killings at Fort Hood . . . and, as always, join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan . . . and that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE INFORMATION

To subscribe to this newsletter, please put SUBSCRIBE in the subject line of an email and send to bginbc@aol.com . . . in the unlikely event you wish to unsubscribe, just put UNSUBSCRIBE in subject line and send to the

Blaine Greenfield
19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
Phone : 828.633.1049

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#683

11.2.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I joined a bunch of our neighbors for dinner at Pastabilities; 828.258.2686--an Italian restaurant in Asheville . . . our food was excellent (we both ordered salads and chicken parmesan), as was the service from our server Leigh . . . best of all was the fact that they have entertainment every Thursday night . . . the regular performer was a guitar player/singer by the name of Tony Ballew . . . he had us when he began playing "Runaway," one of my all-time favorites, followed by arguably the greatest rock song of all time, "Happy Together" . . . you could also sing along, if you wanted to do so.

The next night, we had an early Halloween celebration at our friends Carol and Brian's home . . . we didn't know we were supposed to dress-up, but all was OK when they dug-up various parts of assorted costumes for us to wear . . . for dinner, we had salad and chili . . . though I'm ordinarily not a big fan of the latter dish, I found it most tasty . . . we then all enjoyed the many and varied desserts that all the guests brought.

B. On Saturday, we joined other friends for dinner at P.F. Chang's in Asheville; 828.681.2975 . . . fortunately, we got there early, so it wasn't mobbed as it usually is . . . I liked my chicken with vegetables dish, and Cynthia felt the same way about her salmon.

From there we went to the Brevard Little Theatre for a production of BELL, BOOK AND CANDLE . . . it's billed as a bewitching, romantic comedy, but all who attended were disappointed . . . there was no chemistry between the leading characters, and as somebody in the audience said at intermission, "Somebody should go backstage and pinch" the actress who had the key role . . . I won't mention her by name because she should be given credit for trying . . . yet this was one of the few shows we've seen lately that just didn't click for us.

Something else we did see previously at the theatre was quite good, so I'm sure we will give it another chance when the new season opens after January . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.brevardlittletheatre.com>

C. The highlight of our week was the sold-out Leonard Cohen concert we attended at the Asheville Civic Center . . . that's him in the center of the stage:



(THANKS to Marilynne in North Carolina for graciously sharing this photo.)

In contrast to the aforementioned play, this event exceeded our expectations Cohen, a very young 75, was fantastic . . .but so were the six musicians who accompanied him, as well as the three backup singers . . . the event ran for well over two hours and then he came back for another 45 minutes of more songs--and more standing ovations . . . we especially got a kick out of how Cohen danced around on stage . . . it was up there among the best concerts we've ever attended.

You may not know him by name, but you'll be familiar with his work . . . to see for yourself, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/aejud>

or

<http://tinyurl.com/5n3n2k>

And the for background on that song ("Suzanne"), you might want to read:

<http://tinyurl.com/ycwku9s>

D. CONGRATULATIONS to Monica Fly . . . she competed in the recent Sydney World Masters Games, capturing a gold medal in synchronized diving and a bronze in the 1-meter springboard . . . all totaled, there were over 28,000 competitors from more than 100 countries who competed in 28 sports . . . you have to love the competition's slogan: "Fit, Fun and Forever Young" . . . that's Monica!

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

This week, it goes to Sarah Sparboe Thornburg--the Asheville attorney with McGuire, Wood & Bisette that we have been working with to update our wills and other legal documents.

We have been impressed with both her friendliness and competence, as well as the speed in which she has been able to turn things around. She has also been able to answer our many questions with respect to the changes we needed to make (in order to comply with North Carolina law).

Sarah can be reached at 828.254.8800 or for more information, please

click:

<http://www.mwbavl.com/attorney?id=16>

In addition, I would be remiss to not mention Hayley Roper--my Leadership Asheville classmate . . . she is also an attorney in the above firm and the person who gave me the recommendation to contact Sarah . . . Hayley specializes in employment and labor law . . . for more information about her, please click:

<http://www.mwbavl.com/attorney?id=26>

2. FYI

When hypnotizing clients, I always conclude with information on self-hypnosis.

Does it work? I emphatically contend YES, but try it for yourself by following these simple guidelines:

Self-Hypnosis

1. You need a 3X5 card or a business card, which you can easily carry with you at all times. You are to write the suggestion you've prepared for yourself which meets the criteria of being Positive, Simple, Believable, Measurable--and it should carry a Reward. Always state your suggestion in the present tense.

Example:

I am feeling relaxed and comfortable. With every breath, I am becoming more relaxed and more comfortable.

2. Sit down in a comfortable chair and choose a spot opposite you, slightly above eye level. Hold the card in front of the spot and read the suggestion to yourself 3 times.

3. Make sure the words on the card are believable to you and allow yourself to imagine accomplishing what is written on the card. Use your imagination.

4. You've written your suggestion on a card . . . chosen your spot . . . read the suggestion to yourself 3X . . . now, drop the card and take your first deep breath. Exhale. Take your second deep breath. Exhale. Now, take your third deep breath . . . hold it . . . close your eyes . . . and count backward from 3 to 1. Exhale and go deep into self-hypnosis.

5. Now allow the suggestion to repeat over and over in your subconscious mind. At the same time, imagine that you are carrying out your suggestion.

6. You'll find that at times the words start to break up and become fragmented. That's perfectly okay. The important words or phrases will come through to you.

7. Do this for approximately 25 times (or 2-3 minutes). You should then

feel it's time to stop and wake up. At this point, just count forward:
1 ... 2 ... 3 ... open your eyes and go about your business, feeling refreshed
and relaxed in every way.

8. Give yourself time to allow the suggestion to take hold. It can take up to 21 days
to start getting the benefits related to your suggestion.

CONSIDER:

* Using an alarm or timer to make sure you don't do Step #7 for any more
than 5 minutes.

* Doing self-hypnosis at least once a day (but not right before you go
to bed). Two times a day would be ideal.

* Posting your suggestion 3-5 places around your home and/or work;
e.g., on your bathroom mirror, on the refrigerator, car dashboard, desk, etc.

***** REMINDER *****

If you'd like to have me hypnotize you, give a holler . . . I can help you
lose your baggage without even going to the airport . . . you stop smoking,
lose weight or drop any other habit you'd like to shake . . . this can be
done in person or if you're not near Asheville, via Skype if you have
access to a webcam . . . for more information, please put HYPNOSIS
in the subject line of an email and send it to me: bginbc@aol.com.

FYI, part 2

* Natalie in Pennsylvania:

Bucks County Community College's Student Life presents John
Smitherman on Saturday, November 14, at 7:30 p.m. in the Gateway
Auditorium, Newtown Campus in Pennsylvania. Tickets are \$10.00 and
can be purchased online at:

<http://www.bucks.edu/tickets>.

For information, contact Natalie Kaye, 215.968.8015.

John Smitherman who's being hailed as "the next Mario Lanza" was most
recently seen at the Bristol Riverside Theatre. He puts on an amazing
performance and has brought together a group of very talented musicians,
including a drummer, bassist, pianist, sax, trumpet and trombone players.
John has performed the title roles in The Student Prince, Phantom of the
Opera, and Jekyll & Hyde and has appeared in well over 100 different roles
on both the professional opera and musical theatre stages, including such
roles as Sid in The Pajama Game, Curly in Oklahoma, Johnny Brown in
The Unsinkable Molly Brown, Tony in West Side Story, Danny Zuko in
Grease. John will be performing songs made famous by Mario Lanza,
Perry Como, Tony Bennett, Tom Jones, etc. with music from Showboat,
South Pacific, and Phantom of the Opera.

John has assembled an outstanding group of musicians to accompany him,
including a pianist, bassist, drummer, trumpet, trombone and sax player.
He will rock the house.

* Molly in New Jersey:

Southern Regional DECA Competition is looking for judges! Jan.8th from

8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.. at the Crowne Plaza in Cherry Hill.

1300 High School Students competing in various marketing competitions.
Contact Mkervick@verizon.net.

* Risa in New Jersey:

Saw THIS IS IT, and it was sooooo good!

* Kimberly in North Carolina had the same opinion about this film:

We loved "This is It" and would recommend seeing it. . . . Very inspirational. Michael Jackson was truly a gifted artist with tremendous vision, passion and love. It inspired us to be the best we can be in all we do.

That being said, if you go, make sure you stay until the very end--after ALL the credits have rolled since there are some good bits that many in the audience did not see because they left as soon as the credits started to roll.

* Joe in Las Vegas:

Here's my newest article on focusing on your strengths with an animal flair. Couldn't have done it without you!

<http://tinyurl.com/yas8bqx>

* Catherine in Pennsylvania also wrote an article I thought readers would like to see:

<http://tinyurl.com/ybqa7uv>

* Jason in Pennsylvania:

I never thought I would get involved with a Hot Sauce website, but since I started developing the Sweat 'N Spice site, I've enjoyed great BBQ sauces, fresh ground spices, and of course hot sauces. See:

<http://www.sweatnspice.com>

for great reviews of the latest (or dare I say hottest) sauces and an extensive list of products from the extreme to the mild. Use coupon code BW-LAUNCH-25 and save 25% on all purchases until Nov. 15th. Warning : These seasonings and sauces are addictively delicious. Ruth and I are addicted to the Dean Jacob's Misquite Grill All Natural Seasoning and have it on Mexican food, eggs and vegetables. Enjoy!

3. It's never too late

Here's one guy who lived by the credo, "It's never too late to make a sale," as evidenced by his obituary:

Dimmick, Chuck P. Passed away suddenly on April 18,2009, while attending a NASCAR race to watch his favorite driver, Jeff Gordon. Chuck was a loving husband and devoted father. Chuck was the director of marketing for the Lund Cadillac group. We are sure he would want you to know that 0.9% financing is still available on all new 2008 Hummer H2s.

4. Reviews

A. AMELIA was a very flat biography of aviation pioneer Amelia Earhart, the first woman to fly across the Atlantic . . . I felt very little interest in her marriage to promoter and publishing magnate George P. Putnam, and if you blinked, you would have missed the affair she had with longtime friend and lover Gene Vidal . . . Hilary Swank, doing what seemed to be a Katharine Hepburn imitation, and Richard Gere had little chemistry as Earhart and Putnam, respectively . . . Ewan McGregor was wasted in the Vidal role . . . only toward the end of the film--about the attempt to take a solo flight around the world--did the action come alive . . . rated PG.

B. MANAGEMENT is now out on DVD . . . it's a quirky romantic comedy about a man with little ambition and lots of heart who falls in love with a traveling saleswoman . . . you wonder about the attraction, but somehow you'll be touched by it . . . Jennifer Aniston is fine in one of the leading roles, yet it is Steve Zahn (usually a sidekick) who steals the film . . . like me, you probably missed it when in the theaters; however, MANAGEMENT makes for a good rental . . . rated R.

C. Sometimes, I'll be attracted to a book just by its title . . . such was the case with THE MAN WHO LOVED BOOKS TOO MUCH by Allison Hoover Bartlett . . . the subtitle further intrigued me: THE TRUE STORY OF A THIEF, A DETECTIVE AND A WORLD OF LITERARY OBSESSION.

Reading it, I became enthralled with the story about John Gilkey--a thief who stole not for money but for love--the love of books . . . equally fascinating was how the author's account of how Ken Sanders (the self-appointed "bibliodick") would stop at nothing to catch him.

I also liked how Bartlett informed me about a world I knew little about . . . one in which:

* If you collect what you love and enjoy, and always buy the best you can afford, and buy copies in the best condition available, your books will always prove to be a good investment.

In addition, I learned about how rare books get priced:

* Much of a book's value depends on literary fashion, and tastes change. Supply and demand also affect value. The first printing of Hemingway's In Our Time, for example, was very small (1,225 copies), in contrast to the fifty-thousand-copy print run of The Old Man and the Sea. Pricing reflects that. Further factors include whether there's a dust jacket (if not, the value is negligible), and if those jackets are price-clipped, worn, torn, or soiled. Modern first editions in poor shape can be worth as little as ten percent of a "perfect" copy.

And perhaps most interesting was a look into the mind of the criminal himself, as when he was being interviewed about his thought on whether what he had done was right or wrong:

* "In terms of a percentage basis," he said, "it's not like I'm one hundred percent wrong. I'd say it's more like sixty

percent wrong and forty percent right. I mean, sure, that's their business, book dealers, but they should make books more accessible to people that like them."

Seeming to anticipate my reaction to this, he added, "That's the kind of warped thinking I have." But just as quickly, he returned to his self-centered logic. "I mean, how am I supposed to build my collection unless I'm like, this multimillionaire?"

THE MAN WHO LOVED BOOKS TOO MUCH might not motivate you to become a collector, but it will certainly give you a deeper appreciation for that particular hobby.

D. Do you suffer from minglaphobia, a secret terror of large parties?

If so, then THE ART OF MINGLING--written and read by Jeanne Martinet--is the book for you . . . you'll learn dozens of field-tested tricks, tips and lines and maneuvers that will help you in any size gathering.

I thought I knew a good deal about the subject, but even I was reminded of some useful things from listening to the CD version, including these tidbits:

- * Your primary goal at any gathering should be enjoyment.
- * Pretend to be happy wherever you are. An amazing thing will happen. You will actually feel that way.
- * Practice your mingling skills on the socially challenged; e.g., a party misfit who appears lost.
- * A good question that works as an opening line: How'd you get here? (Ask with a smile.)
- * Never, never use: What do you do for a living? It could be a real dead end.
- * Offer to help others get food and drink.
- * You never have to mingle with a drunk unless you want to. To remove yourself a simple "excuse me" is fine.
- * Avoid political discussions. You're not there to solve the world's problems.

Only one thing bothered me about Martine's book--her belief that it's OK to lie . . . I think that such a practice should be avoided, if at all possible.

5. TV alert

A. In BROKE AND FAMOUS: WILLIE AMES, the former child star (EIGHT IS ENOUGH) works toward getting his house out of foreclosure and his electricity back on by working with financial planner and life coach Sarano Kelley . . . Thursday at 10 p.m. on VH1.

B. BY THE PEOPLE: THE ELECTION OF BARACK OBAMA documents Obama's historic rise to become the first African American president of the United States, examining American politics and culture through

the prism of his candidacy . . . Friday at 6 p.m. . . for other times during the week and in the future, please click:

C. ANN RULE'S TOO LATE TO SAY GOODBYE stars Rob Low in the true story of a marriage gone deadly wrong . . . I read the book, and if it's anywhere near as good, the movie should be riveting . . . Saturday at 8 p.m. on LIFETIME MOVIE NETWORK.

<http://tinyurl.com/ygn5fdr>

D. THE WANDA SYKES SHOW debuts on Saturday at 11 p.m. on FOX . . . panelists play off the week's news stories on a lounge-type set with a bar . . . here's a sample joke from a test show: "This is my home away from home. But just don't tell my wife about it because right now, she thinks I'm out in the garage putting together a high chair."

6. Quick thinking

A man boarded a plane with six kids. After they got settled in their seats, a woman sitting across the aisle from him leaned over to him and asked, "Are all of those kids yours?"

He replied, "No. I work for a condom company. These are customer complaints."

7. Websites

A. To find out what's great and not so great about your area, please click:

<http://www.yelp.com>

You'll find real reviews by real people, many quite informative.

NOTE:

Above might take you to San Francisco or some other city, but when the website loads, just type-in whatever area you want to learn more about it.

I did this for Asheville and naturally found some favorable reviews for the chocolate and ice cream at Kilwin's:

http://www.yelp.com/biz/kilwins-asheville_

B. If you've ever had a colonoscopy or know somebody who has one, you'll get a kick out of clicking:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ql1go72c5H8>

Make sure you have your sound on!

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

By the way, you're not the only person viewing this website . . . in fact, check the counter at the bottom left of the homepage determine just how many others have viewed it.

8. Computer tip

Be EXTREMELY WARY of any mail that begins: Did you get my invite? . . . this warning applies even if you know the person who it seemingly comes from . . . I recently got a bunch of such email, all inviting me to be a friend with somebody who is registered with a firm called Desktop Dating . . . in each instance, I checked with the person the invite came from--and not once did the person give approval for Desktop Dating to send out such an email.

Checking further, I found out that the above is a scam . . . for more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/ylz7za9>

What apparently happens: Once Desktop Dating gets you to register, your address book gets "captured" and everybody in it gets sent bogus invites to join . . . another company that sends out similar spam is My Yearbook.

9. Saving the economy

You've read much about the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 . . . but do you understand this very exciting program? If not, I'll explain it to you:

Q. What is an Economic Stimulus payment?

A. It is money that the federal government has or will give back to taxpayers; e.g., via tax cuts in 2009.

Q. Where will the government get this money?

A. From taxpayers.

Q. So the government is giving me back my own money?

A. Only a smidgen.

Q. What is the purpose of this payment?

A. The plan is for you to use the money to purchase a high-definition TV set, thus stimulating the economy.

Q. But isn't that stimulating the economy of China?

A. Shut up.

Below is some helpful advice on how to best help the U.S. economy by spending your stimulus check wisely:

* If you spend the stimulus money at Wal-Mart, the money will go to China or Sri Lanka

* If you spend it on gasoline, your money will go to the Arabs.

- * If you purchase a computer, it will go to India, Taiwan or China.
- * If you purchase fruit and vegetables, it will go to Mexico, Honduras and Guatemala .
- * If you buy an efficient car, it will go to Japan or Korea.
- * If you purchase useless stuff, it will go to Taiwan.
- * If you pay your credit cards off, or buy stock, it will go to management bonuses and they will hide it offshore.

Instead, keep the money in America by:

1. Spending it at yard sales or
2. Going to ball games or
3. Sending it on prostitutes or
4. Beer or
5. Tattoos.

(These are the only American businesses still operating in this country.)

Conclusion:

Go to a ball game with a tattooed prostitute who you met at a yard sale and drink beer all day.

10. A quote I like

There is only one corner of the universe you can be certain of improving, and that's your own self.--Aldous Huxley (1864-1963), English novelist

11. Thought for the day

It's OK to quit
by Veraunda Jackson*

1. Quit arguing with people about the same old foolishness! Respect their position and keep it moving!
2. Quit telling people your secrets when you know they are not going to keep them! And if you keep telling them, then quit getting mad when they tell your secrets!
3. Quit trying to pull people on your journey who don't want to travel with you. Either they believe in you and value you . . . or they don't!
4. Quit complaining about things you can't and won't change!
5. Quit gossiping about other people! Minding our own business should be a full-time job!

6. Quit blaming each other for things that in the big picture aren't going to matter three weeks from now! Talk solutions . . . and then implement them!
7. Quit eating things you know are not good for you! If you can't quit . . . eat smaller portions!
8. Quit buying things when we know we can't afford them! If you don't have self-control, then quit going to the stores! Quit charging things, especially when you don't NEED them!
9. Quit staying in unhealthy relationships! It is not okay for people to verbally or physically abuse you! So quit lying to yourself! It is not okay to stay in the marriage for the children! Ask them and they will tell you that they really would prefer to see you happy and that the misery you and your spouse/partner are living with is affecting them!
10. Quit letting family members rope you into the drama! Start telling them you don't want to hear it! Quit spreading the drama! Quit calling other relatives and telling them about your cousin or aunt! Go back to #5 . . . minding your own business should be enough to keep you busy!
11. Quit trying to change people! IT DOESN'T WORK! Quit cussing people out when you know that they are just being the miserable and jealous people that they are!
12. Quit the job you hate! Start pursuing your passion. Find the job that fuels your passion BEFORE you quit!
13. Quit volunteering for things that you aren't getting any personal fulfillment from anymore! Quit volunteering for things and then failing to follow through with your commitment!
14. Quit listening to the naysayers! Quit watching the depressing news if you are going to live in the doom and gloom of it all!
15. Quit making excuses about why you are where you are or why you can't do what you want to do!
16. Quit waiting on others to give you the answers . . . and start finding the answers for yourself! If what you are doing isn't working for you . . . then quit it!
17. Quit settling and start making your dreams a reality! Quit being afraid and START LIVING YOUR LIFE! CREATE THE LIFE YOU WANT! If you want something different than what you have had in the past . . . you must quit doing what you have done before and DO something different! JUST QUIT IT . . . and START DOING something to create the experience you want!

* Reprinted with the gracious permission of Veraunda I. Jackson, Esquire . . . she is a motivational speaker and author . . . you may visit her website at:

<http://www.ehapinc.com>

* Triplets are back! Catch us at the Temperance House, 5 S. State St., Newtown, PA, on Friday, November 6 from 6:00-7:30 p.m.--just in time for Happy Hour! Rock and Roll!

* Laugh with Mr. Rubberface and others . . . one click will find your funny-bone in any of the Delaware Valley Comedy Clubs:

<http://www.comedycabaret.com/main.html#showtimes>

* Forum on Afghanistan in Swarthmore, PA

Delaware County Wage Peace and Justice, CFPA's affiliate in Delaware County, PA, is holding an excellent Forum on Afghanistan: Which Way Out? on Sunday afternoon, November 8. After a screening of Robert Greenwald's documentary Rethink Afghanistan, there will be a panel that includes David Wildman of the Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church and Peter Lems of the American Friends Service Committee, both of whom have traveled to Afghanistan repeatedly; and Joanna Nathan, Former Senior Analyst for the International Crisis Group in Kabul (2005-2009). Free and open to the public. Click for more details:

<http://tinyurl.com/yhyq6na>

* Princeton Center for Yoga & Health presents a different kind of sex education

Yoga & Sex

Saturday, 11/7, 6-9 p.m. with Kristin Boccummi

Discover how yoga enhances sex on mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual levels and the importance of overall sexual health. Learn about philosophy and lovers in Hindu mythology, how yoga can enhance sensuality and sexual experiences, enjoy a yoga practice of asanas with benefits for sex, an introduction to tantric yoga and explanation of the Karma Sutra.

Hatha Yoga & the Power of Sexual Energy

Sunday, 11/7, 3:15-5:45 p.m. with Andrew Reece

Explore the concept of sexual energy as an important gift to your Hatha Yoga practice, and learn how to use it as a storehouse for energizing heart, mind, body and spirit.

For more information, call 609.924.7294 or click:

http://tinyurl.com/ya2odek_

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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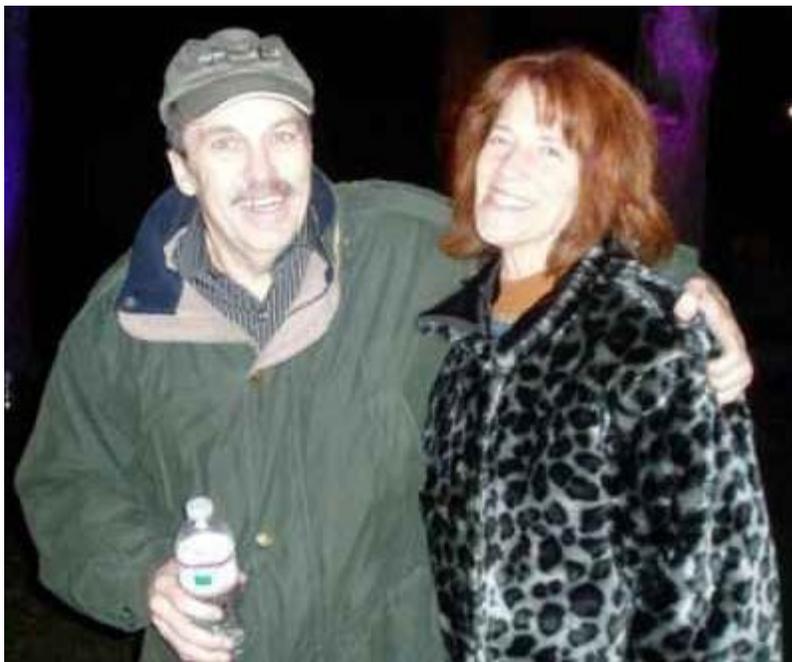
10.26.2009

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1. Reflections

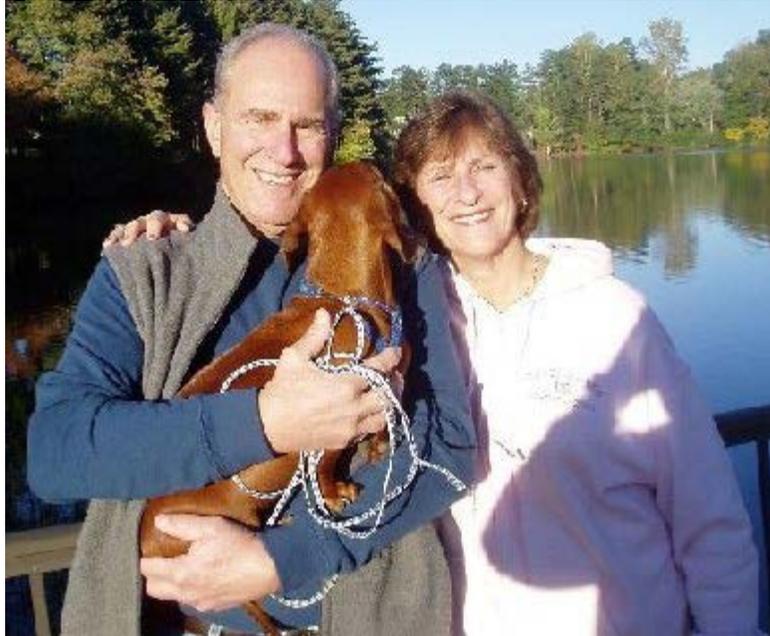
A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I joined many of our new-found friends at our community's Laktoberfest . . . there was plenty of good food and camaraderie, as well as music by a talented local group called The Cheeksters . . . we even managed to get in some dancing:



B. On another night, we went with all the neighbors from our street to Early Girl Eatery . . . Cynthia liked her sweet potato black bean cakes, and I enjoyed my house granola topped with fresh fruit . . . we also liked the fact that the restaurant (like many other places in North Carolina) gives separate checks to each group at a table . . . for more information, please call:

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

And during the week, we enjoyed a short visit from the Peytons--friends from "up North" . . . that's a picture of them, along with their dog Rusty, on the bridge right behind our home:



C. Donna in New Jersey (see also Section 7A), my longtime friend, emailed me this provocative question: Are you a Yankee fan or a Phillies fan?

Actually, since the playoffs began, I had been rooting for both teams . . . I grew up in New York and followed the Yankees, but then taught and lived in Pennsylvania--so I also started following the Phillies . . . now that the World Series is upon us, what I'm really hoping for are seven well-played, nail-biting games . . . I wouldn't mind if either team won, but since the Phillies won last year, I'd like to see the Yankees take it all this time.

For fans of either team, you might want to read the following articles from THE WALL STREET JOURNAL:

* Philadelphia's Best Team Ever?

<http://tinyurl.com/yll6yuk>

* Yanks Are Four Games From Ending World Series Drought

<http://tinyurl.com/yz93z5e>

D. CONGRATULATIONS to:

* Kilwin's, our favorite place for ice cream--and chocolate, too . . . the local Asheville paper featured the store in this article:

<http://tinyurl.com/yfkwmph>

If the guy in the picture on the right looks familiar, it's because he is our friend Dave Blumlo.

* Bob Butcher's band, Buster, for having won 2nd place in the "Best Band You Haven't Heard of Yet" category in Mountain XPress' Best of Issue.

The group will be playing at the Margaritagrille (Main Street in Hendersonville, NC) on the following dates:

Friday, October 23

Friday, November 13 and 27

Friday, December 4 and 18

Stop by to hear some great rock and roll. In the meantime, for more information about Buster, please click:

<http://bustertunes.com/>

Go to music at the top, and you'll be able to hear the group in action. The code to get into the fun stuff is: gotanygrapes.

* And to Phil Murphy for delivering a fine presentation as part of Biltmore Lakes' Lecture Series . . . he gave useful do-it-yourself tips, many of which can be found at his website:

<http://www.go2guy.biz/resources.html>

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

This week, it goes to Monica Hester--the person who helps me with various activities (including proofing this newsletter). In addition, she is the person you may well have spoken to on the phone.

Monica first began working for me shortly after I moved to Asheville.

She has been a godsend. She is efficient, friendly, extremely organized and full of common sense, as well as a great resource for what's available in the community.

In her "spare" time, Monica spends as much time as can with her family, which includes two boys, two pets (a dog and a gecko) and one husband . . . she also volunteers at her boys' school.

2. FYI

I always learned a lot about beauty and art at Penland, but I learned much more that year from jeweler Ken Bova, a faculty member. One day he pulled from his wallet a piece of well-folded old paper. On it he had listed goals he developed while considering an earlier career change:

1. Have fun.
2. Make Money
3. Provide for the future.
4. Contribute to the field.

5. Meet new people.
6. Travel.
7. Have leisure time.
8. Learn.
9. Teach what I learn.

"What I've learned is that if some project or opportunity meets four or more of these criteria, it is always successful in some way. Three or less and it's usually a bust," he explained. "For example, if some event allows me to make money, travel, and learn, but that's all, I come home feeling So what? I made no new friends, didn't have fun, didn't contribute anything, and just spent four days traveling to someplace I didn't really get to know. I feel my energy was misplaced."

The clarity I had found at Penland made me think about how I was--or wasn't--tying together vision, goals, and action, so once I got home, I created my own criteria for making decisions:

1. Gut. Do I feel heaviness or lightness when I think about saying yes?
2. Fun. Will doing this help me consciously enjoy life, savor it, and live it fully?
3. Learn and teach what I learn. Will I grow intellectually, emotionally, physically and spiritually, and be able to pass on that learning?
4. Relationships. Will I make new friends and be reminded of the value of my current and long-term relationships?
5. Commitment to family. Can I minimize time away from home or take my family with me?
6. Contribute to the field. Do I believe this project adds to the general knowledge of my art and chosen discipline?
7. Meaning. Will doing this make a difference in my life or in the lives of others?
8. Make money and provide for the future. Does this allow me to value my work, time, and energy and help me be financially responsible?
9. Real. Will I be saying things that need to be said and that I truly believe?
10. Kindness. Will doing this truly help someone?

Now I make sure a potential project meets at least four, hopefully six, of these criteria. You'll have your own criteria. Write them down. If a project, job or opportunity doesn't meet your criteria, perhaps you should save your energy, vision and passion for creating another kind of art.

We're all asked to do a lot of things. We probably say yes to things that we wish we hadn't. Here's your four-part challenge: (1) Create your list. (2) Fold it up into a tiny square. (3) Put it in your wallet. (4) When someone calls and asks you to embroider 400 handkerchiefs with a full-color flag of Albania or make 900 brownies in the shape of book mobiles for a librarian convention, put them on hold, pull out your list to decide if those activities meet your

criteria . . . and enjoy having more spare time for the things that do pass the test.

SOURCE:

LIFE IS A VERB (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11) by Patti Digh

FYI, part 2

THANKS to the many readers who submitted ideas to a recent question on what was the best way to swallow pills . . . among the responses:

* Kandi in Arizona:

I had the same problem you are having. Now, I break my vitamin pill in half and take one half with breakfast and one half with dinner. My doctor gave me that tip. Also, I look for liquid vitamins/nutrients whenever possible, like the omega 3's or I try to find sub-lingual (dissolves under the tongue) as a nice alternative to taking a bunch of pills. I take liquid calcium/magnesium, and I take sublingual Vit. B12. I know you can get the fish oil, omega 3s in liquid form. You can then add it to your salads, protein drink or whatever works for you.

There are many alternatives to taking meds and vitamins in pill form. Ask any compounding pharmacist. They specialize in custom making prescriptions for people and animals that cant/won't swallow the medicines. They make reams, shampoos, gels, suppositories, sublingual trophies, transdermal patches, liquid syringe drivers, clicker pumps, etc . . . even lollipops to deliver just about any kind of medicine into your system. They can also make it several different flavors to disguise the taste of the medicine if need be. Tuna for cats, apple for horses, grape for kids, etc. Many compounding pharmacies carry the alternative type of "over the counter" vitamins, minerals, nutrients, or will order them for you. It's expensive to have something compounded, but they can give you good suggestions on how to remedy your swallowing dilemma with your over the counter vitamins.

* John in Pennsylvania:

Can't help with the actual swallowing problem: however, I would strongly suggest taking the liquid fish oil of the best, toxin free, fish oil on the market. If you follow any of the top anti-aging and heart doctors in the country--Dr. Steven Sinatra, Dr. Mehmet Oz, Dr. Ron Rothenberger, etc.--they all recommend Carlson's Fish Oil. Tastes great (lemon or orange flavored). Take one to two teaspoons/day. At two teaspoons per day, a bottle should last 90 days. Problem with many of the capsules is they contain high levels of mercury and other toxins. Carlson's is from Norway and has the absolute highest standards of purity. I buy mine from amazon.com for the best prices:

<http://tinyurl.com/yg6u762>

* Pat in Pennsylvania:

I recently had a colonoscopy done and all was fine. However I was getting pain when I swallowed. Not in my throat but down at the stomach level just below my ribs. It was a weird, dull kind of pain . . . so they did the camera test down my throat.

And it seems they found that I contracted a massive bacterial infection in

my intestinal tract. They said I had ingested this through food or something I drank. They gave me a packet of four pills to take 2Xs a day for two weeks. I went back today for a follow-up test with the camera, and they said all is fine. When they first showed me about this condition, they also showed me pages and pages of other patients who had this similar illness. Something called Helicobacter pylori, They said it' all over and lots have been getting it. It's not an illness where I can say I had major pain. Some bloating, but what really brought this out was the pain when I swallowed. For more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/y1rlad7>

* Bruce in New Jersey:

As far as Mr. Curious is having trouble swallowing . . .

The first thing he must do is check with his doctor to make sure there is nothing neurologically wrong causing the swallowing difficulty. Unfortunately, my late sister did have a problem and just ended up with the wrong doctor with the surgery she needed. However I'm not saying Mr. Curious will need surgery, It may be something as simple as buying a liquid solidifier to retrain the throat to swallow correctly.

* Barbara in Pennsylvania:

On the easy way to take any pill or pills . . . eat something and get it well mashed and right before swallowing, put the pill or pills in your mouth and get it or them inside the mush and your throat will open to allow all to pass.

I could "never" take any pill when I was a child. My mother had to smash it and put it in applesauce. Then as the years passed, there were capsules that couldn't be smashed so putting (it or them) in food or a cookie or a bite of cake "makes the medicine go down: . . . quite easily I must add!

* Marilyn in Arizona:

My cousin told me that she uses tomato juice or V8 juice because she was having problems with large pills and for some reason the juice helped them slide down easier. An added benefit: You get extra vegetables with the V8 juice.

Another thought that I use is to consciously relax . . . almost like a meditation or relaxation . . . because when I think about all the pills and size I feel my throat closing, but since I have started the relaxation and breathing process first I don't seem to have the problem.

3. What's important

With Bible in hand, my friend Jim read to his high school religion class, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife."

Jim paused for the message to sink in. He then asked, "From this Scripture, what do we learn is important in marriage?"

A student blurted out, "Cleavage."

4. Reviews

A. COUPLES RETREAT got poor reviews, but I found myself surprisingly enjoying it . . . it's about four couples who embark on a journey to a tropical island resort . . . they soon discover that they are required to participate in couples therapy and thus have less time to jet ski, go to the spa, etc. . . . Vince Vaughn had the original idea of the film . . . he also stars in it and as always, is funny playing the cool (in his own way) guy that must deal with such problems as a shark bite that's little more than a scratch . . . his perennial sidekick, Jon Favreau, also had me laughing . . . I'll perhaps most remember it because of the location: Bora Bora . . . it was beautiful and now Cynthia wants to go there . . . rated PG-13.

B. Out on DVD is WHATEVER WORKS, written and directed by Woody Allen . . . it's a comedy about an eccentric New Yorker played by Larry David who meets a young girl, Evan Rachel Wood, and how their relationship becomes convoluted as a result of entanglements with other friends and family members . . . these include characters played by Patricia Clarkson and Ed Begley Jr., both of whom are quite funny in their respective roles . . . I enjoyed the film, but then again, I'm an Allen fan (and of David's work, too) . . . if you like either or both of these individuals, you'll like WHATEVER WORKS . . . otherwise, stay away . . . rated PG-13.

C. I recently had the pleasure of hearing Patti Digh, author of LIFE IS A VERB (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11), speak about her book . . . she told how she came up with the idea for it when her stepfather died just 37 days after being diagnosed with cancer . . . it got her thinking:

* If I had thirty-seven days left, would I spend my time cleaning the attic, purging computer files, or attending committee meetings? Would I have passed on my stories to my children and friends, or would I spend those days regretting not having time to do so? Am I living fully now, or am I waiting until after the kids leave for college or my annuity matures or the Colts move back to Baltimore? It will be too late then.

So she eventually started blogging, coming up with funny and often moving life stories that illustrate the six core practices that you need to follow to live without regrets--regardless of how many days you have left:

* Say yes. How can you live a "yes, and" rather than a "yes, but" kind of life?

Be generous. How can you give (and receive) something more valuable than money or things?

Speak up. How can you stand tall, yet give up your attachment to being right?

Love more. How could adoration (of yourself and others) revolutionize your life?

Trust yourself. How can you choose who you spend your time with?

Slow down. How can you pay attention and stand still in a world moving

at warp speed?

Day shows you how to accomplish each of these by a series of interesting action steps at the end of each chapter . . . with respect to joy:

* Put on some music and dance like a five-year-old for two minutes.

Then get out your journal and write for three minutes (without pause, without raising your pen from the page or checking for spelling or grammar and all those other things that inhibit the flow of ideas) in response to the following question: What brings me joy?

After three minutes, read what you have written.

Now for three minutes, write a brief description of the dance that would best demonstrate that joy. Be as detailed as you can in describing the physicality of that dance. How would you move in the world to express that joy?

Then write for two minutes on this question: What keeps me from dancing that dance?

She also accompanies that with a specific movement activity; for example:

* For the next thirty-seven days, when you find yourself about to proclaim the unworthiness of someone's outfit or way of being in the world, stop. When words that reflect judgment are on the tip of your tongue (How silly! How ugly! How inappropriate!), pause for three seconds. Reframe those words of judgment into positives (How joyful! How unique! How colorful!), and say to yourself: What a wonderful way of being in the world! What an interesting cultural norm! I really must find out more about that! Practice being curious, not judgmental.

Reading LIFE IS A VERB was a real joy for me . . . I had to stop often and think about the many points that Digh was making and, also, I had to pause to enjoy the artwork in the book . . . that's a story in itself . . . the author asked the readers of her blog to submit artwork for possible inclusion, initially only planning to use 37 pieces . . . it turns out that she was so impressed that she used the 120 submissions that she received.

D. Heard KITCHEN PRIVILEGES, a memoir written and read by Mary Higgins Clark.

For those few who don't recognize the name, she's a prolific author of suspense novels--many of which I've enjoyed . . . yet I was curious as to what made her tick; hence, my interest in this book.

She grew up during the Depression . . . when her father died, Mary's mother opened the home to boarders and placed a sign next to the front door that read: "Furnished Rooms. Kitchen Privileges."

Her family struggled to make ends meet . . . and she did, too, when her first husband died leaving her a widowed mother of five young children . . .determined to make a career for herself, she turned to writing.

And that was the best part of the book . . . I found myself

pulling for her, even as she went some six years and forty rejections before getting her first story published.

My only regret is that I would have liked to have seen more of her life after she became a successful writer . . . this book only takes readers through her first bestseller, WHERE ARE THE CHILDREN? . . . a follow-up effort is definitely needed.

5. TV alert

A. THE LEAGUE is a new comedy about fantasy football, which follows a group of armchair quarterbacks as they try to tackle life . . . Thursday at 10:30 p.m. on FX.

ON SAME CHANNEL:

Turn-in at 10 p.m. to watch IT'S ALWAYS SUNNY IN PHILADELPHIA, one of my favorite comedies . . . you can even watch past episodes online by clicking:

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

B. TELL THEM ANYTHING YOU WANT: A PORTRAIT OF MAURICE SENDAK is a documentary about celebrated children's author and illustrator Maurice Sendak. Best known for his book WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE, the endearing and often cantankerous Sendak tells his story--one that offers a glimpse of the genius and hardships that helped shape the books that have influenced generations of children . . . Friday at 8 a.m. on HBO2.

***** MR. CURIOUS HERE *****

You see the WILD THINGS film? Is it something that you liked and do you think other adults would? If you saw it with a child, I'd also be interested in the person's reaction.

C. UGLY BETTY promises to have a funny episode when Betty writes about the worst jobs in New York . . . to do so, she dresses up as a giant wiener and performs an outrageous Bollywood musical number. . . Friday at 9 p.m. on ABC.

D. Watching FEARFEST will enable you to spend Halloween with hours and hours of creepy classic, ranging from the original HALLOWEEN to a digitally restored NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD . . . Saturday on AMC, beginning at 7:30 a.m.

6. What's the difference?

A lawyer runs a stop sign and gets pulled over by a sheriff's deputy. He thinks that he is smarter than the deputy because he is a lawyer from New York and is certain that he has a better education than any cop from the south. He decides to prove this to himself and have some fun at the southern deputy's expense.

"What for?" says the lawyer.

The deputy says, "You didn't come to a complete stop at the stop sign."

Then the lawyer says, "I slowed down, and no one was coming."

"You still didn't come to a complete stop," says the deputy. "License and registration, please."

The lawyer says, "What's the difference?"

"The difference is you have to come to complete stop, that's the law. License and registration, please!" the deputy repeats.

Lawyer says, "If you can show me the legal difference between slow down and stop, I'll give you my license and registration, and you give me the ticket. If not, you let me go and don't give me the ticket."

"That sounds fair. Please exit your vehicle, sir," the deputy says.

At this point, the deputy takes out his nightstick and starts beating the living hell out of the lawyer and says, "Do you want me to stop or just slow down?"

7. Websites

A. THANKS to Donna in New Jersey (see also Section 1C) for sharing this clip on identify theft:

<http://www.wimp.com/goodsamaritan/>

Even if you think you know what you're doing, methinks you'll learn from this . . . I know I did.

B. If you don't know what double talk is, you'll get a kick out of viewing:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0cdyKjI7hbE>

This reminds me of my all-time favorite comedian who did this, a guy by the name of Al Kelly . . . anybody (other than my brother) ever hear of and/or see him?

If you'd like to listen to Kelly on Milton Berle's radio show, please click and wait until about the 8-minute mark:

<http://tinyurl.com/yfsfynh>

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

If you'd like friends and/or relatives to join you as a subscriber to BLAINESWORLD, just have them go to the bottom of the homepage and look for the "Special Offer" . . . or here's another way . . . forward this entire newsletter (so they can see what they'll be getting) and tell them if they'd like their own FREE subscription, send an email to: bginbc@aol.com and put SUBSCRIPTION in subject line.

8. Computer tip

Posting on Facebook, Twitter, etc. can be dangerous . . . for example, did you know that a recent study by Harris Interactive found that 45% of the employers they questioned are using social networks to check out job candidates before hiring them? That's a pretty significant percentage. But here's an even more surprising number: 35% of those employers decided not to offer a candidate a job because of what they found on an applicant's social networking page.

Also, social networking is a dream come true for identity thieves--millions of people sharing endless amounts of personal information right out in the open. According to PC World, 33% of social network users have at least three pieces of information posted that could lead to identity theft.

For a lot more useful information on this topic, click the source document:

<http://tinyurl.com/yfq8fad>

9. Clunker math (make sure you see MY TWO CENTS at the end)

A bored statistician has been busy again.

A vehicle at 15 mpg and 12,000 miles per year uses 800 gallons a year of gasoline. A vehicle at 25 mpg and 12,000 miles per year uses 480 gallons a year. So the average clunker transaction will reduce U.S. gasoline consumption by 320 gallons per year.

"They" claim 700,000 vehicles, so that's 224 million gallons/year. That equates to a bit over 5 million barrels of oil, which is about 1/4 of one day's U.S. consumption. And 5 million barrels of oil costs about \$350 million dollars at \$75/bbl.

So this means: We all contributed to spending \$3 billion to save \$350 million. How good a deal was that?

There's even better news on the horizon. The same folks who came up with the clunker program are busy tackling our health care problems!

MY TWO CENTS:

While the above is funny (at least to me), it's mostly false . . . to understand why, please click: <http://www.snopes.com/politics/gasoline/clunkers.asp>

10. A quote I like

We all deserve to have fun, live large, and be ridiculed by less imaginative people existing under the erroneous assumption they get extra credit for being prudent and safe. If I recall correctly, the death rate for people who play it safe and for people who live boldly is the same: 100 percent.--Patti Digh in LIFE IS A VERB (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11)

11. Thought for the day

You can tell I REALLY liked LIFE IS A VERB (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11) by Patti Digh, as evidenced by the fact that the following passage makes it four times I've cited the book in this week's newsletter:

One afternoon a few weeks after Emma started first grade, I picked her up from school and drove to my husband's bookshop to say hi. When we pulled up, John ran out to see us, leaning in the car window to give her a kiss. "How was school today, buddy?" he asked.

"I had my first test today!" she exclaimed brightly. (How wonderful, I thought. A whole lifetime of testing has opened up for you!)

What was our first question to her?

"How'd you do?" (Yes, let's get straight to the bottom line.)

"I got 30 percent!" she proudly shouted, a huge grin on her pixie face. The body language between me and John was unmistakable. Oh my Lord, we were both thinking, she's an idiot. She'll never pass first grade, we'll have to hire tutors her whole life, she won't get into college . . .

My first impulse was to say, You must feel terrible, but by some miracle I stopped myself. Instead I asked, "How did that make you feel?"

"I got some right!" she burst out without hesitation, so proud of her accomplishment.

Wow. What a fantastic way of looking at the world.

I'm not suggesting we aim for 30 percent, but why don't we stop to celebrate the successes we do have?

12. Advance planning department

* BuxMont Coalition for Peace Action is proud to sponsor renowned author David Swanson, whose latest book is Daybreak--Undoing the Imperial Presidency and Forming a More Perfect Union, at a speaking engagement on November 4, 2009, 1:00 p.m. at Bucks County Community College in Newtown, PA. For more information, please send an email to: cfpabuxmont1@aol.com.

* Jack Dorsey, Twitter Creator, Co-Founder and Chairman at Talk,Taste, Twitter . . . a Networking Reception, then presentation By INVITATION ONLY

Sponsored by:

The NJ Small Business Development Center & The Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce

Wednesday, November 4 from 3-5 p.m. (reception only)

The College of NJ, Ewing NJ

\$20

Light hors d'oeuvres will be served.

To register: www.sbdcnj.com

or call 609.771.2947

Then we'll move to Kendall Hall
5:00 p.m. for Dorsey's keynote presentation

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED by Nov 3
No Walk-ins Accepted. No Exceptions

* Linda in Pennsylvania:

Please join us for an informal discussion of Jodi Picoult's book, *My Sister's Keeper*, on Thursday, November 5th at 12:30 p.m. in the Lower Bucks Campus Library in Bristol, PA. The book discussion is sponsored by the Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Library.

* Janet in New Jersey:

JOIN US IN A WEEKEND EXPERIENCE OF SELF DISCOVERY AND
SOUL CONNECTION AND PURPOSE

Nov. 7 & 8 (10 a.m.-5 p.m.)

Soul Shamanism 101, Waking Up to Soul, Self, Purpose

Oasis for the Soul, 18 Bank Street Morristown, NJ

Sign up and pay in full by 10/31, receive discounted rate of \$275, two or more together only \$220 each. \$325 for all after 11/1.

Please join Shaman Janet StraightArrow for this life-changing class. Times are challenging and sometimes confusing, but together with Janet, you will connect to your inner self in ways that will help you see the blessings in every situation and the answers to your questions. For more information and/or to register, please click:

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

* Caren in Pennsylvania:

The Bucks County Community College Print Club will be holding a printmaking workshop for the college community to create "paper prayers" in conjunction with the annual exhibition in the library gallery. The workshop will take place in Hicks 106 from 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 7, 2009.

The club will provide paper, ink, miscellaneous materials and refreshments. Open to anyone!

* Kohlhepp Investment Advisors (the fine folks who handle my investments) invite you to a FREE seminar:

Financial Crisis: One Year Later

When: Thursday, November 12, 2009

Where: Spring Mill Manor, 171 Jacksonville Road, Warminster, PA

Time: 7-9 p.m. (presentation begins at 7:30 p.m.)

One year after the financial crisis, we'll take a look at the past year and talk

about what's ahead.

You are invited to bring a friend or another couple with you. Seating is limited so we ask that you please RSVP no later than Friday, November 6th by calling 215.340.5777.

Light refreshments and dessert will be served.

We look forward to seeing you there!

PS. Happy Halloween . . . to celebrate the occasion (kids and grandkids will like this, too), put on your sound and please click:

<http://www.pyzam.com/tictactoe>

Also, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan . . . and that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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To subscribe to this publication, please send an email to: bginbc@aol.com and put SUBSCRIBE in subject line . . . if you wish to unsubscribe, just send an email to same address and put UNSUBSCRIBE in subject line.

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BLAINESWORLD
10.19.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had another eventful week, but that seems to be par for the course.

* On Tuesday, we got together with a bunch of our neighbors to meet with our development's Board about a proposed increase in our monthly assessment . . . it was a cordial meeting and the result was that we managed to brainstorm a way to help reduce what we will be paying . . . afterward, we all went to Stone Ridge Tavern for dinner . . . this is one of our favorite local restaurants . . . I ordered and enjoyed the filloia, and Cynthia liked her salmon . . . our server, Jeremy, was most attentive . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.thestoneridgstavern.com>

* On Saturday, we were joined by our friend Suzanne for dinner in Waynesville at Bogart's . . . that night, I had a delicious hamburger and Cynthia had a ribeye, which she said was good . . . for more information, please click:

<http://bogartswaynesville.com>

Around the corner, we found a place for ice cream: Scoops (828.452.1873 . . . I would definitely recommend the coconut almond (with chocolate) . . . it was delicious.

However, the high spot of our evening was a performance of the musical JANE EYRE at the Haywood Arts Regional Theatre . . . my only regret is that you won't be able to see it, in that it concluded its limited run the next day.

This was a good a production as we've seen lately . . . everybody in the large cast of 30 was outstanding, as was the live orchestra . . . I can't mention everybody; however, special recognition should go to Emily Warren and Tony Lance who handled the two leading roles with distinction . . . and comic relief was provided by Lyn Donley and Bryan Nichols . . . kudos to Art O'Neill and Melodie Galloway for their roles, respectively, as director and musical director . . . I wish I could also cite the work of the costume designer by name, but unfortunately, I couldn't seem to find him or her located in the playbill.

JANE EYRE was the second show we've seen at this theater . . . I'm sure we will see many others . . . for more information, please click:

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

* On Sunday, we went to HardLox--Asheville's Jewish food and heritage festival in the afternoon . . . what a delight it was to be able to get such delicacies as a corned beef sandwich on real rye and some noodle pudding.

At night, we joined friends Ted and Kimberly for dinner at the Flying Frog Cafe . . . this is a unique restaurant that features a comfortable seating arrangement and small portions (intentionally) of an eclectic range of continental, German and Indian cuisine . . . the idea is to combine a variety of tastes into one meal that comes out to be fairly reasonable from a price standpoint . . . my chicken schnitzel was good; Cynthia said the same thing about her veal schnitzel . . . our salads were similarly tasty . . . for more information, please click:

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

Ice cream at Kilwin's topped the evening off just right!

B. THANKS to Warren Fluharty, our decorator, who has again come through with another fantastic finishing touch for our home: he helped choose pictures of our family, then had the pictures framed and hung in the hallway . . . you'll have to visit to see how great they look, but in the meantime, see below for a rough idea.



(l-r, top row: my mom; my dad; Cynthia's mom and dad; Cynthia's sister Joyce, her mother and Cynthia; her brother Allen and his son Adam; bottom row: my brother Ken; my nephew David; Cynthia's niece Rachel; my daughter Risa; and Cynthia's nephew Benjamin)

Another framed picture has my father in the middle, flanked by two shots of my mother:



Should you want to contact Warren, he can be reached at 828.273.1101 . . . you won't ever go wrong working with him . . . he's great!

C. I attended a second program of Leadership Asheville 28 . . . there were several informative sessions, but I particularly enjoyed the media panel in the morning . . . from Jerri Jameson, news director of WWNC. I learned that it is important that you show how a story will affect the head, heart or wallet.

In the afternoon, Carol Rovello, president of Strategic Workplace Solutions, ran us through several interesting communication exercises . . . this one really struck home . . . she read the following four words: I won for you, and asked us to write them down . . . she then asked if we were sure of the spelling . . . after

everybody checked, Carol pointed out that this could have been the way to write the words: eye 1 4 ewe . . . the point: communication, while seemingly simple, can be sooooo tricky.

Gerry Goertz, president and CEO of Leadership Asheville, concluded the day by asking this very thought-provoking question: What have been some of our best and worst team experiences? I was surprised that many others shared my reaction: i.e., the best and worst happened within the same organization. Gary then challenged us to think about what will be necessary to make our team this year a high-performing one.

D. CONGRATULATIONS to Steve Jacobs . . . his restaurant, Jake's Eatery (one of my favorites), was just named 2009's Best of Bucks For Breakfast and Brunch by the BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES . . . for more information about Jake's, please click:

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

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

This week, it goes to Vilasi Venkatachalam (see also Section 12B) . . . Cynthia nominated her, so I'll let Cynthia tell you why:

Every now and again, if you are lucky, you meet someone who becomes a dear, dear friend and guide in your life. Vilasi is my spiritual and practical "therapist" and friend. I call her when I feel stuck in my life, and she reminds me of the most simple, profound messages that jolt me back into the reality that I am so happy to be alive and that any negative conversations are not a reality at all.

Today, she told me that Nirvana (or happiness) is like sitting on your glasses. You can't attain it or see them because they are right there all along--right under your butt! Simple, but every time I thought about this, I became deliciously happy in the moment . . . as opposed to getting caught up in any of one of those silly conversations we get into that involve some sort of control, worry or fear.

Vilasi will spend hours listening, and totally "getting" what you are saying. More importantly, she reminds me that I am not any of that, but something more . . . and that when I take responsibility for my life . . . and leave others to take responsibility for theirs . . . miracles happen.

Thank you for your presence in my life, Vilasi.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Vilasi is a biochemist-nutritionist and registered dietitian. Her focus is on bringing back healing foods, traditions, relationships and spaces to the business of living. Doing so, she uses ethnobotany and anthropological studies to bring back ancient wisdom and traditions. She can be reached at 908.358.3908 or via email, vilasi.venkatachalam@gmail.com.

2. FYI

Starting to feel older? New studies are showing that your attitude can be critical.

Even the views that younger people hold about aging can affect how they age, according to some intriguing research from Yale University and the National Institute on Aging . . . you can read more by clicking this very interesting article from THE WALL STREET JOURNAL:

<http://tinyurl.com/y24h05j>

NOTE:

I believe that this will only be available to non-subscribers of the Online Journal for seven more days.

FYI, part 2

Due to space limitations this week, I only have room for three emails . . . look for more next week, including several responses I received to the question I raised about how to handle swallowing large pills.

* Rachel (Cynthia's niece) in New York:

This coming January I will be running a marathon in support of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Over the next four months, I will be training with Team In Training to complete 26.2 miles to help raise funds to stop leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin lymphoma and myeloma from taking more lives. I'm asking you to help by making a donation to my fundraising campaign.

Please use the link in this email to donate online quickly and securely, plus learn more about my progress. You will receive a confirmation of your donation by email and I will be notified as soon as you make your donation.

<http://pages.teamintraining.org/hyc/miami10/rltchman>

Each donation helps accelerate finding a cure for leukemia, lymphoma and myeloma. More than 823,000 Americans are battling these blood cancers. I am hoping that my participation in Team In Training will help bring them hope and support.

On behalf of The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, thank you very much for your support. I greatly appreciate your generosity.

* Tom in New Jersey, one of my favorite NJ/PA actors:

The Big Announcement You Have All Been Waiting For!! (Especially you, Blaine!)

As many of you know, I have been most fortunate throughout my life, doing things that I enjoy, I managed Comic Book/Baseball Card Stores during the day and had a semi-amateur-professional theatrical career on the evenings and weekends. This cozy arrangement kept me very happy within our local Delaware Valley area, and I never sought to take my performing to the next level. I had worked in several Actors Equity shows but never had the ambition to become a card-carrying union member because of all the great roles I got to do on local stages.

Then something funny happened, reality intruded. My well-paid job in the collectibles industry was down-sized and shipped to Chicago. Having no experience in anything with anything else, except theatre, the last three years have been a little rough trying to find a full-time job to replace it (every performer needs one of those nowadays). Well, to make a long story short, while I have been looking for that job, I decided that I would have to limit "Show Biz" to just the paying gigs. I would only audition for Equity theatres, so that eventually I could qualify for the higher pay and benefits.

Much to my surprise, I found success at the next level, getting my foot in the door at the Montgomery Theatre, the Media Theatre, the Kimmel Center and most recently understudying at the Arden Theatre in Philadelphia in "Something Intangible", winner of 7 Barrymore Awards. After 23 years and 100+ shows since Riverfront Dinner Theatre became the first to give me money for singing for my supper, I find myself on the verge of that little card that says I am officially an "Actor". Kind of ironic because I know from those years, that people who share their talent just for the love of it probably deserve a nobler title!

Blaine asks, "What's next, Tom?" Well, since the Arden show several months ago, finding that daytime job and other personal responsibilities have kept me off the audition circuit, but I am finalizing plans for something that will be bigger than just another show. You also know that I do cabaret and singing gigs in the local area. With encouragement from Bob Egan and Marie Hill, I have been developing my very own cabaret act.

To start it off big, this premiere will feature a full band, a host of musical guest stars, food, wine and surprises, all in the cabaret atmosphere of the Off-Broadstreet Theatre in Hopewell, NJ. The evening is set for next Fall. Bob and Julie announce their new schedule in January and soon after, I will have the actual date and the real publicity will start. The idea for this show is not just to help me pay my initiation dues for Actors Equity, but to celebrate all the great times we have had over the years. It will feature friends I've performed with at the Riverfront Dinner Theatre, LaSalle Summer Theatre, the Off-Broadstreet Theatre, the Media Theatre, Bristol Riverside Theatre and other surprise guests, and I am hoping for lots of publicity.

The reason I am sending out this advance notice is to try to figure out if I need to book one night or two. I promise this will be a show to remember and I am anticipating a large response. I hope everyone will come out and help me move on to the "2nd Act" of my life.

Here is what you will see:

A Monday and/or Sunday Night in September, October or November

The Off-Broadstreet Theatre in Hopewell, NJ

THE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC IN ONE EASY LESSON ACCORDING TO TOM ORR

Featuring the songs of Stephen Foster, Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Cole Porter, Woody Guthrie, Rogers and Hammerstein, Harry Chapin, Bruce Springsteen, the Beatles and others.

Written, Produced, Directed and Performed by TOM ORR
With: Musical Guests TBA

PLEASE let me know if you have ideas or suggestions. This is already being scripted, but it is a work in progress. It will change as I confirm who will be performing. I hope that every one of my dear friends will be a part of it some way. My assistant producer and I are looking for volunteers for every aspect, including organization and publicity. It's a year away, and I am already getting excited and nervous. I thought I lost my stage-fright years ago!

LET TOM KNOW:

If you'd like to be invited to this event and/or if you have any suggestions for him . . . he can be reached at tom@actorr.com.

* Michele in Pennsylvania:

I just finished writing my first Blog. Please view it when you get a chance and give suggestions. Here is the link:

<http://www.michellefisherwartz.blogspot.com>

3. My kind of will

Guy dies. His lawyer reads the will to surviving family members:

"And thus, as my last will and testament, I leave all my belongings to myself in my next life."

4. Reviews

A. DEPARTURES won the Oscar for Best Foreign Film of 2008 . . . you'll see why if you can find it in an art-type theater near you; otherwise, you'll have to wait for its DVD release . . . it's the moving story of a cellist (Masahito Motoki) who loses his job when the orchestra is dissolved . . . he answers an ad entitled "departures," thinking it is for a travel agency--only to discover that it is really for somebody who prepares deceased bodies for entry into the next life. . . . though his wife and others hate the job, Motoki begins to find both joy and beauty in it . . . I particularly enjoyed it because it gave me insight into a way of life I knew nothing about . . . not rated, but methinks appropriate for anybody over the age of 12.

B. THE PROPOSAL is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #665 follows:

THE PROPOSAL is a cute romantic comedy, starring Sandra Bullock as a high-powered book editor who faces deportation to her native Canada . . . to get out of the mess, she turns to her unsuspecting assistant, Ryan Reynolds, who she's tormented for years . . . It was predictable in spots and the second half dragged, yet overall I'd recommend it if for no other reason than to watch Betty White prove that she hasn't lost a step at 87 . . . make sure you stay for the credits at the end . . . rated PG-13.

C. Paul McKenna, the self-help guru and bestselling author of I CAN MAKE YOU THIN, has written his next book with an equally compelling title: I CAN MAKE YOU SLEEP . . . its subtitle says it will help you OVERCOME INSOMNIA FOREVER AND GET THE BEST REST OF YOUR LIFE.

That's a powerful statement to make, but after reading the book, I think it may well be true . . . and, in fact, I'm now trying some of the exercises that are contained.

They are easy to do . . . they make a lot of sense, too . . . for example, there's:

* Systematic Relaxation

Read through this exercise first before you do it, and remember: only do it where you can safely relax completely, such as in bed.

1. Use your most comfortable, tired, drowsy voice and simply say each of the following to yourself as you do it.

Now I relax my eyes
Now I relax my jaw
Now I relax my tongue
Now I relax my shoulders
Now I relax my arms
Now I relax my hands
Now I relax my chest
Now I relax my stomach
Now I relax my thighs
Now I relax my calves
Now I relax my feet
Now I relax my mind

2. At this point you may find it helpful to go through the whole process again several times to deepen the relaxation.

Like every other skill you learn in life, this gets easier, and you get better at it, with practice. So every night practice speaking to yourself with a contented, happy, tired, drowsy voice that yawns, so that it becomes a natural, automatic part of falling asleep easily.

In addition, there were many other techniques spread throughout the book . . . one of my favorites was the following:

* Go to bed only when you are sleepy.

It is as simple as that. If you aren't sleepy, don't go to bed. However tired you might want to be, or think you ought to be, don't go to bed unless you actually feel sleepy. Stay up and read, get on with all the jobs and tasks you've been putting off and go to bed only when you feel really sleepy. You have already been surviving on not much sleep and you won't get any more by trying to force it. When your body needs it, it will let you know. This means you should never say things like, "I'd better go to bed now as I need my sleep," if you don't feel sleepy. Only when you feel sleepy is it correct to decide to go to bed. When you first start using this system you may find that you are up much later than usual. Don't worry, that is perfectly normal. After a few days of going to bed late and getting up half an hour earlier, you will find that your natural sleepiness begins to show up earlier in the evening.

And I liked how McKenna urged readers to be careful with what they say to themselves.

* Saying "I'm an insomniac" is defining yourself by your past. That's like saying, "I can't run because I'm a person who stands still." If you define yourself by what you have done in the past, you will repeat the past. If you define yourself as someone who is free to make choices in the present you can change your future. What you've said about yourself in the past is a story you tell yourself. You can change the story you tell yourself.

There's an excellent guided hypnosis CD that accompanies I CAN MAKE YOU SLEEP, which by itself would be worth the purchase price.

D. Heard OUR ICEBERG IS MELTING by John Kotter and Holger Rathgeber . . . this is a short, yet insightful fable about a group of penguins faced with a potentially devastating problem.

Though I don't usually like animal stories that show what humans are like, for some reason this one struck home . . . I could relate to the characters in the story, Fred, Alice, Louis, Buddy the Professor

and NoHo, particularly because they were so similar to individuals I have encountered in my life . . . you'll recognize them as well.

You'll also be able to relate the story to change that needs to take place in your company or organization, and how to implement these "Eight Step Process of Successful Change" that were originally developed by Kotter at the Harvard Business School.

Set the Stage

1. Create a Sense of Urgency
2. Pull Together the Guiding Team

Decide What to Do

3. Develop the Change Vision and Strategy

Make It Happen

4. Communicate for Understanding and Buy In
5. Empower Others to Act
6. Produce Short-Term Wins
7. Don't Let Up

Make It Stick

8. Create a New Culture

One added bonus I gained from the CD version was that it contained an informative discussion with both authors on ways to put the ideas from the book into practice.

5. TV alert

A. SCHMATTER: RAGS TO RICHES TO RAGS, a documentary on New York's garment industry, airs on Thursday at 10 a.m. on HBO . . . according to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, this film "manages to be ebullient , affecting and rich in footage, reflecting decade after decade of the industry's history and that of New York . . . for additional times it will be shown, please click:<http://tinyurl.com/yzcqalw>

B. THE JEFF DUNHAM SHOW has the popular ventriloquist in a new comedy series, featuring such characters as Walter, Peanut and Achmed the dead terrorist . . . Thursday at 9 p.m. on COMEDY CENTRAL.

C. WHITE COLLAR has its series premiere on Friday at 10 p.m. on USA . . . it pairs a con artist with an FBI agent, working together to catch elusive criminals . . . it should be watchable. If just for the fact that Tiffani Thiessen (of SAVED BY THE BELL and BEVERLY HILLS 90210 fame) is one of the stars.

D. EXTREME SWEETS is a show that checks out sweets across the country, including candy cocktails in Hershey, PA; worm-covered caramel apples on the California coast; and a sweet so spicy that host Adam Gertler has to sign a waiver to try it a Hollywood candy shop . . . Saturday at 9 p.m. on FOOD NETWORK.

6. Charter flight

With his request approved, the ABC News photographer quickly used a cellphone to call the local airport to charter a flight. He was told a twin engine plane would be waiting for him at the airport.

Arriving at the airfield, he spotted a plane warming up outside a hanger.

He jumped in with his bag, slammed the door shut, and shouted, "Let's go!"

The pilot taxied out, swung the plane into the wind and took off. Once in the air, the photographer instructed the pilot, "Fly over the valley and make low passes so I can take pictures of the fires on the hillsides."

"Why?" asked the pilot.

"Because I'm a photographer for ABC Cable News," he responded. "And I need to get some close-up shots."

The pilot was strangely silent for a moment. Finally he stammered, "So, what you're telling me is . . . you're NOT my flight instructor?"

7. Websites

A. Barbra Streisand gave a concert in New York City in September for 100 of her luckiest fans . . . here's her performing "If you go away," one of my favorite songs:

<http://tinyurl.com/yldz6q3>

Crank up the volume: It may be a bit low.

B. And continuing on the musical theme, here's the worst cover of a Beatles song--ever:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BVPugOWeZIA>

On this one, you may want to crank down the volume!

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

If you ever miss an issue (or want to see a past one), make sure you check Newsletter to the left and then Archives . . . when you do, you'll notice there's also a way to Search Newsletters at the top . . . this is for something that you may want to look up . . . for example, if you want to comfort a friend who gets fired from his or her job, type-in "getting fired" . . . when I did, I came up with this quote from BLAINESWORLD #497:

Getting fired is nature's way of telling you that you had the wrong job in the first place.--Hal Lancaster in THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

8. Computer tip

THANKS to Doug in Pennsylvania for sharing this one:

Need a (FREE) antivirus utility for your home computer?

Microsoft Security Essentials is a free utility that provides real-time protection to identify and eliminate harmful viruses and other malware from your PC. Go to the "How-To Geek" and check it out:

<http://tinyurl.com/yfj33k>

MY TWO CENTS:

I'm now using the above utility . . . it's working great, and the price can't be beat . . . for your own copy, please click:

http://www.microsoft.com/security_essentials/

9. Camping in the desert

The Lone Ranger and Tonto were camping in the desert. After they got their tent all set up, both men fell sound asleep. Some hours later,

Tonto wakes the Lone Ranger and says, "Kemo Sabe, look toward the sky. What you see?"

The Lone Ranger replied, "I see millions of stars."



"What that tell you?" asked Tonto.

The Lone Ranger ponders for a minute then says, "Astronomically speaking, it tells me there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Astrologically, it tells me that Saturn is in Leo. Timewise, it appears to be approximately a quarter past three in the morning. Theologically, the Lord is all-powerful and we are small and significant. Meteorologically, it seems we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What's it tell you, Tonto?"

"You dumber than buffalo dung. It means someone stole our tent."

TO ALL READING THE ABOVE:

I'm hopeful that individual subscribers can see the illustration as I sent it out, i.e., with the stars moving. If you're reading this missive via Facebook, you will only be able to see the stars as static. Too bad. If you'd like to be added to my FREE mailing list so you get copies mailed to you directly, just send me a note to bginbc@aol.com and put SUBSCRIPTION in subject line.

10. A quote I like

You are not here merely to make a living. You are here in order to enable the world to love more amply, with grater vision, with a finer spirit of hope and achievement.

You are here to enrich the world, and you impoverish yourself if you forget the errand.--Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924), 28th President of the United States

11. Thought for the day

Instead
by P. E. Calleja

Do not think of what you do not have;
Instead, appreciate what you have and can still have.

Do not think of things lost;
Instead, value what you still have and may yet find.

Do not cry over spilled milk;
Instead, rejoice in what was left.

Do not think of what you are not;
Instead, be humble with what you are and can still become.

Do not think of what others say you are;
Instead, concern yourself with what you affirm to be.

Do not think of the hours and days past;
Instead, look eagerly to times that are yet to come.

Do not think of what you failed to do;
Instead, think of those that you were able to do and can still best do.

Do not think of mistakes committed;
Instead, count the things you did right.

Do not think much of the pain you have caused;
Instead, plan for ways to make amends.

Do not think of the sufferings you now bear;
Instead, look to the comfort when relief draws near.

Do not consume yourself with thoughts of what could have been;
Instead, marvel at what has become and will become.

Do not be anxious to attain greater happiness;
Instead, content yourself with the little things which bring you bliss.

Do not aspire to fill your cup at once;
Instead, have the patience to do it little by little.

And if by chance you fall, do not fret over the empty part on top;
Instead, celebrate the space filled up.

Do not condemn nature when it is at its worst;
Instead, think of the times when it was at its best.

Do not blame luck for things you miss;
Instead, learn from things in which you have been remiss.

Nor should you curse luck or others for life's misfortunes;
Instead, accept them as part of life.

I say then, Live fully, die a little,
Learn much but question less.

Have just enough but give much more,
Be contented each time to crave much less.

Doubt less and affirm a lot,
Understand more, and be understood less.

Worry a little but hope you must,
Accept all, resist the least.

For all things happen,
In due time they must.

12. Advance planning department

A. Friday, October 23rd

Beginning Night Club Two-Step Class at 7 p.m.
"Beginner's Only" Dance Party: 8-10 p.m.

Class Taught and Party Hosted by: Ted and Kimberly Ross
Location: The Asheville Ballroom & Dance Centre (991-B Sweeten Creek Rd., Asheville)

Learn to dance the "Night Club Two-Step" and practice your ballroom dancing in a fun, safe and supportive atmosphere at this "Beginner's Only" Class and Dance Party!
Refreshments and sodas will be provided and Professional Dance Instructors will be at the party to assist students with their dancing questions. Line dances will also be taught and included in the party. No partner is necessary for the class or party. \$10 for Class and Party (Special \$7 Rate for ages 17 & under)

Also:

* Saturday, October 24th

Beginning Quickstep Workshop taught by Ted & Kimberly Ross from 4-6 p.m. at The Asheville Ballroom & Dance Centre.
\$20 per person for this 2-hour workshop.

Learn the fundamentals, styling and technique of the exciting "Quickstep."

* "Silver" Level Rumba

Ted & Kimberly Ross teach this class for intermediate to advanced social ballroom dancers. In this "Silver" level class, you will learn more elaborate movements and technique to further enhance your American Style Rumba. This 6-week series starts Tuesday, October 27th at 7 p.m. at The Asheville Ballroom & Dance Centre.

* "Silver" Level Foxtrot

Ted & Kimberly Ross teach this class for intermediate to advanced social ballroom dancers.

In this "Silver" level class, you will learn more elaborate movements, syncopation and technique to further enhance your American Style Foxtrot. This 6-week series starts

Wednesday, October 28th at 8 p.m. at The Asheville Ballroom & Dance Centre. \$60 for 6-week series.

B. Mind, memories and moods: Foods that heal with registered dietitian-nutritionist and biochemist Vilasi Venkatachalam (see also BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD after Section 1D)

The cornerstone of all her endeavors is using healing traditions or principles in the modern context. During this program, Vilasi will present an overview of the following: Discover the healing secrets of food; understand the effects of food on hormones, feelings, moods and memories; learn about anti-aging memory enhancing foods and how to double their healing effects; explore the myth and mystique of aphrodisiac foods; and understand the science behind their healing potential. Finally, attendees will be able to create their own personal portfolio of healing foods and an integrative nutrition profile.

Tuesday, October 27 at 7:00 p.m.
North County Branch Library
65 Halstead Street, Clinton, NJ

This program is FREE and open to the public.

Reservations can be made by calling 908.730.6135 or by visiting our webpage's Events Calendar at:

<http://www.hclibrary.us>

C. Nova's Galaxy Art Show and Sale to support victims of crime.

Over 80 art and crafters from the Bucks County area.

Bucks County Courthouse, Doylestown, PA

Free

November 6, 10 a.m.-10 p.m.

November 7, 10 a.m. -5 p.m.

November 8, 10 a.m. -4 p.m.

Make sure you stop by and say "hello" to Harry Mathason's daughter Lisa. She designs necklaces and stuff will be shown.

Information: 215. 343.6543 or via the Internet:

<http://www.novabucks.org>

D. Final Chilipepper Craft Show
50% off everything

Saturday, Nov 14th, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sunday, Nov 15th, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Holy Ghost Prep, 2429 Bristol Pike, Bensalem, PA (in field house)

Liquidation sale!

On November 30, Chilipepper Candles will close for business.

Thank you all for your support throughout the years!

For more information, call Maria at 215.968.5364 or email: maria@chilipeppercandles.com

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors . . . make it a great week, too!

.....

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Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#680

10.12.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I joined our neighbors for a belated celebration of her birthday . . . we first went for pizza at Mellow Mushroom and then for ice cream at Kilwin's . . . we also went to a 20th anniversary party at Jubilee! (a community of faith that's both vital and creative) . . . the event featured the World Beat Band, several funny stories told by members and a special once-in-a-lifetime performance by the "Jubidales" . . . and we went with friends to Forest Blue, a restaurant where everybody's meal came out just right . . . my smothered tilapia was excellent, as was Cynthia's hickory salmon . . . our sever, Meg, was both friendly and efficient . . . for more information, please click:

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

B. I continue to be amazed by all that Asheville has to offer . . . for example, I've recently attended:

* A session on EFT, an easy to learn and remarkably effective technique for relieving and enabling anxiety, guilt, cravings, anger, phobias and self-defeating patterns . . . it is based on balancing the energy meridians and is an effective self-help tool that offers lasting change . . . Dr. Gary Schwartz did a fine job of providing an overview to a subject that I will likely want to learn more about . . . for more information, please click:

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

* A discussion of Nordic crime fiction, led by Sallie Hightower at the Center for Creative Retirement's Book SIG . . . she enthusiastically described several books that she had read and made recommendations for future reading.

C. KUDOS to the following three individuals:

* Kitty Getlik, artistic director of the Kelsy Theatre at Mercer County Community College (West Windsor, NJ) for receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award from the New Jersey Association of Community Theaters, one of the

coveted Perry Awards the association hands out annually . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.mccc.edu/~humphrew/whatsnew/getlikperryaward.htm>

I bet that's right up there with the BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD that Kitty previously received, back in October of 2005!

IF YOU CAN:

Catch a performance sometime at Kelsey . . . you won't be disappointed . . . for the current schedule, please click:

<http://www.kelseyatmccc.org/schedule.shtml>

* Norm Kent, a high school friend and Florida lawyer, who helped a girl get her baseball back . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.cnn.com/2009/US/10/09/florida.baseball.lawsuit/index.html#cnnSTCText>

* George Komalesky, Vice President at Paist & Noe, Inc. in Richboro, PA, for being reelected as president of the Foundation Board of Directors at Bucks County Community College for the 2009-10 fiscal year. This is a very time-consuming task, and George does it extremely well.

D. MR. CURIOUS HERE (and in need of help):

All of a sudden, I'm having difficulty swallowing my rather large vitamin pill . . . I'm also having hard a time with an equally large capsule of fish oil . . . Internet research has come up with some ideas for me to try, but I'd be interested in hearing from you as to what you do . . . thanks, in advance, for any help that you might be able to provide!.

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

This week, it goes to Dave and Judy Blumlo.

Cynthia and I first got to know them as a result of my cousin Ruthie . . . she had been best friends with them when they lived in Florida, and she suggested that we all get together here in Asheville.

So as a result of that suggestion, they subscribed to BLAINESWORLD . . . shortly thereafter, Dave contacted us about speaking to L'Chaim--a group he heads with Judy . . . it meets monthly at Congregation Beth HaTephia and provides a wide range of informative programs . . . I spoke a few months ago on Networking; Cynthia conducted a terrific JourneyDance session on Sunday . . . that's her in the middle, flanked by participants Kelly McKibben on the left and Karen Mazza on the right:

In addition, both Dave and Judy serve as volunteer ambassadors for Kilwin's Ice Cream . . . you'll often see them driving their van around with a big sign on the side that showcases the Asheville and Black Mountain locations (owned by their daughter Marcy and her husband Tom).

BELATED CONGRATUATIONS:

Dave and Judy recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary . . . here's hope they have many more healthy, happy ones together.

2. FYI

In my first book, HANDBOOK TO A HAPPIER LIFE, I wrote about a technique I call "Morning Questions." The premise is quite simple. Most people, when they wake up in the morning, begin their day with what I like to refer to as "stupid questions." They ask themselves questions that typically have to answer and only serve to make them feel bad. For example, asking, "Why do I have to get up so early?" will do nothing to help you feel good about your day.

On the other hand, asking yourself questions like, "What am I looking forward to today?" or "What am I grateful for in my life?" will shift your attention, and hence, your emotions, in a positive, more empowering direction.

I challenge you to make up a series of two or three questions that, when answered, will help you begin your day on a positive note. Instead of jumping out of bed first thing in the morning, give yourself a minute or two to ask and answer these questions. Do this for thirty days and then decide if, in fact, you feel better and want to keep doing it.

SOURCE:

DON'T LET AN OLD PERSON MOVE INTO YOUR BODY (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11) by Jim Donovan

FYI, part 2

* Scott in Pennsylvania (sharing these great offers)

[FREE OUST \(full size!\)](#)

Fall has officially arrived, and the holidays are just around the corner. Gear up for the upcoming season with Oust® Air Sanitizer II—for a fresh-smelling home that is ready for entertaining.

[WomensHealth ~ Free 2010 Calendar \(US\)](#)

Also available in Spanish.

[Download your free Going Greener Guidebook](#)

* Pat in California:

In BLAINESWORLD . . . that Lou Woodruff was conducting the orchestra and Betsy Sell playing in it? They are both such super people . . . and I didn't know this side of them!

MY TWO CENTS:

Yes, I was referring to the two folks that Pat mentions, and I agree with her that they are both super people . . . the good news is that their show, THE PRODUCERS, hasn't started yet . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.kelseyatmccc.org/producers.shtml>

* Janet in New York:

As a result of an email conversation I had recently with a friend I became aware of a website that offers daily motivational statements, quotes, etc. They are not "religious" . . . they are simply positive, affirmation type remarks that could be helpful to people. Since I know you carry a number of such statements in your newsletter, and are probably always looking for more, I am sending a link so you can see for yourself. I know you sometimes want to know where things came from; the statements all carry an attribution.

<http://motivationinaminute.com>

No Horse gets anywhere until he is harnessed. No Steam or gas ever drives anything until it is confined. No Niagara is ever turned into light and power until it is tunneled. No life ever grows great until it is focused, dedicated, disciplined.--Harry Emerson Fosdick, D.D.

The price that must be paid for mastery is discipline. No one achieves lasting success without it. So from the moment you awake each day, devote yourself to the perfection of whatever you pursue. Do this and you will achieve self-mastery. Achieve self-mastery and you will have the makings of a great leader. . . . Discipline is all about cultivating powerful habits that become part of your lifestyle.--Robin Crow, ROCK SOLID LEADERSHIP

* Jerry in Pennsylvania:

Nice work! Keith Oberman gave a phenomenal, poignant, talk on the medical reform situation . . . his father is in hospital . . . very well done.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3036677/#33217296>

* Joanne in Pennsylvania

Loved the pictures, Blaine. What is above your head in the picture in section D from Graceland? It looks like an orb. If so, it could be a spirit form. Possible? I couldn't enlarge the picture, so I couldn't see it in detail. Could be a very interesting phenomenon in that picture.

* Elizabeth in Washington:

They (Bed, Bath & Beyond) let you use expired coupons, also. And you can use up to five if you are purchasing that many things. What a great customer-friendly place!

* Pat in Pennsylvania:

Here is a neat/weird web site for you to check out. People post pictures of their parents when they were young? Maybe something for your newsletter?

<http://myparentswereawesome.tumblr.com/>

* Bill in Pennsylvania:

Rachel and I saw WHIP IT. I would recommend this movie. It was a very clean movie, which would be enjoyable for the whole family (very little cursing). I am a huge Drew Barrymore fan, and she did an outstanding job as her first role as director.

* Kevin in Pennsylvania:

I can highly recommend seeing THE COVE, a disturbing documentary about the slaughter of dolphins and their heroic champion, the former trainer of Flipper.

* Joey in New Jersey:

Joey Novick competes in the November 1st, 2009 NYC Marathon to fund raise for Hole in the Wall Gang Camps!

In 1990, the 36-year-old Joey Novick competed in his first New York City Marathon. He likes to say he "competed" because it sounds better than "walked very slowly." He is fairly sure that he passed this guy who at 94 was the world's oldest marathon runner. His time: 9:07:24. He traveled through all five boroughs, finishing in 23,761st place.

And in 2009, Joey is planning to come out of retirement, and "compete" once again to help raise money for a great cause. So he again needs you to help him run for the Hole in The Wall camps.

To make a donation today, please click:

<http://www.jumpforjoey.org>

* Steve in Pennsylvania (commenting on a joke in BLAINESWORLD #678):

No joking, my sister-in-law was nicked during a procedure, which then caused a rushing to another hospital for emergency surgery, recovery was painful, slow- lasting for months; there was a long time , when her very life continuing was of real concern. She's fine, ok--I know how to joke: helluva way to lose weight--but considering she looked like death and her weight got down I think into the 80s, it was very scary and it took several years for her to regain to the point of looking and feeling health. That was an Ouch.

This is different from your cute story about the patient before surgery, when asked about the cause, and the response was "gravity" . . . that was from one of your older newsletters.

Accidents and incidents happen, but every time I have to have the colonoscopy process, there is always the wonder and hope, that there is no cancer. Testing for cancer is important.

If a real nurse had said "The lab," she said, "will call to set a date for your screaming," I probably would have said something like " I think I am changing labs" I did not order "screaming"--I don't want it.

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3. Staggering home

After a night out with the guys, Bob was in no shape to drive his car home. So he decided to walk. As he staggered home, a police officer pulled up beside him.

"Where do you think you are going at 1 a.m. in the morning?" asked the officer.

"I am on my way to a lecture," Bob replied.

"And who would be giving a lecture at this time of the night?" the officer asked.

"My wife." Bob replied.

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4. Reviews

A. I thoroughly enjoyed THE INVENTION OF LYING, a romantic comedy about a guy who lives in a world where everybody tells the truth--all the time . . . and about everything, including a retirement home that has this sign out front "A Sad Place for Hopeless Old People" . . . advertising is equally truthful, such as this roadside sign that promotes a "a cheap hotel for intercourse with a near stranger" . . . so when this one rather innocuous guy discovers that he can lie, the world changes . . . there are both funny and touching moments in this film that effectively teams up Ricky Gervais with Jennifer Garner . . . rated PG-13.

B. SOMETHING THE LORD MADE is a 2004 made-for-cable drama that has been out for quite some time, but I only caught up with it recently after a friend recommended it (thanks, Natalie) . . . do get it on DVD if you want to see a moving film based on a true story . . . it's about a heart surgeon, Alan Rickman, who develops a pioneering new technique with the help of his lab assistant, Mos Def, a poor black man who could never afford to go to medical school . . . Def is particularly excellent in his role . . . I also liked the "feel" of the film; it really seemed like the 1930s when the story began . . . no official rating, but certainly appropriate (and interesting) for both teenagers and their parents.

C. Jim Donovan's latest, DON'T LET AN OLD PERSON MOVE INTO YOUR BODY (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11) had me hooked from the beginning with its catchy title . . . I found myself thinking, "That's just what I want to avoid in my life."

Donovan then shows you how to make the rest of your life the best of your life--regardless of your present age . . . he does so with many examples taken from his own life, such as this one describing how he gave up cigarettes:

* I like to start an affirmation with the phrase, "I am so happy and grateful" because that, in and of itself, sets up a positive, attraction energy and reaffirms my being happy and grateful. Gratitude is one of the highest vibrational states we can achieve.

I personally became a non-smoker after about 30 years of being addicted to cigarettes using an affirmation I learned from Louise Hay.

The specific phrase that I used, for anyone wanting to change unproductive behavior, is "I now release the need for cigarettes."

Notice that I did not say, "give up." We humans do not usually "give up"

anything without a fight. Releasing the need is quite different from giving up or quitting.

Hay is not the only expert cited by the author . . . I also liked when he talked about visualization, he cited this one:

* Legendary golfer Jack Nicklaus said he will not even pick up a club until he has a clear image in his mind as to how the ball will travel and where it will land.

And when it comes to making decisions, Donovan mentioned the following that has always been one of my favorites:

* I've always enjoyed the story about the woman who told author and motivational speaker, Wally Amos, that at 54, if she were to go to law school, in three years when she graduated, she would be 57. Wally asked her how old she would be in three years if she did not go to law school.

DON'T LET AN OLD PERSON is a short book that can probably be read in a few hours . . . however, don't let its length fool you . . . there's a lot to think about that will have you wanting to revisit it often . . . in addition, there's an excellent listing of resources that will give you ideas for further exploration into the subject matter.

D. Heard THE YANKEE YEARS by Joe Torre and Tom Verducci, the account of the New York Yankees from 1996-2007 . . . this was a stretch when the team made it into the playoffs twelve straight times, captured six American league pennants and four World Series titles.

I knew I was going to like the book from the beginning when Torre tells of how he got into the record books . . . when playing for the New York Mets, he grounded into a record four double plays . . . for that effort, he thanked Felix Milan (the player batting ahead of him) for making it possible

because he was the one who got on base.

Yet there's very little else about Torre's earlier career, so this should not be considered a memoir . . . rather, it is a season-by-season account of what it took for Torre to lead the Yankees to the success they had over that era.

I liked hearing about inside stuff about the many players that I followed, including Derek Jeter, Alex Rodriguez, David Cone and Marianno Rivera . . . in addition, I was impressed how the authors shared this information without slinging a lot of the dirt that had been hinted at by excerpts before the book was published.

The story of what happened after Torre's last season was particularly gripping . . . I was saddened to learn more about how he was forced out of his job by George Steinbrenner and the rest of his executive team.

By listening to THE YANKEE YEARS on CD, I received an added bonus--an interview that Verducci conducted with Torre after the book was completed.

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5. TV alert

A. MAN SHOPS GLOBE follows Keith Johnson, the buyer for Anthropologie, the clothing retailer which also has filled its stores with unusual decorative objects, furniture, and textiles . . . it promises to be a virtual tour of the world for flea-marketers who don't want to leave their chairs . . . Wednesdays at 10 p.m. on SUNDANCE.

B. I'MA BE ME features Wanda Sykes in a stand-up special, taped before a live audience at the Warner Theater in Washington, D.C. . . . she takes a look at the irony of the country electing a black president just before it went broke . . . Friday at 4:20 a.m. . . . for other times, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/yf4qdrq>

For a behind-the-scenes look at the show, please click:

<http://www.hbo.com/events/wanda-sykes-imabeme/video.html>

C. MONTY PYTHON: ALMOST THE TRUTH (THE LAWYER'S CUT): THE NOT-SO INTERESTING BEGINNINGS airs on Sunday and runs through Friday on IFC at 9 p.m. . . according to TV GUIDE, "It still feels fresh, 40 years later."

D. HEAD GAMES is a new TV game show, hosted by Greg Proops, that will put contestants' knowledge about science to the test . . . for example, did you know that maggots can be used to test fresh wounds? . . . Saturdays at 9 p.m. on SCIENCE CHANNEL.

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6. Illegal border crossings compared

Be forewarned: Yes, this is political. No, I won't accept your complaints if it bothers your sensibilities. Just don't read any further if you think that might be the case.

Country: Iran

Penalty: 10 years of hard labor, followed by caning, followed by deportation

Country: North Korea

Penalty: 12 years of hard labor (unless you're pretty and can get Bill Clinton to come get you)

Country: United States

Penalty: Driver's license, welfare, and free health care

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7. Websites

A. Go to one website and get all the latest news headlines by clicking:

<http://www.digg.com>

You'll find information from business to science, as well as entertainment . . . for example, if you missed the Mike Tyson interview with Oprah, you can read all about it here . . . what makes this so interesting is the fact that you (those who take the time to vote) actually determine the rankings of a particular story.

B. Here's an airport prank that I found funny and think you might, too:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGvWPY1Ajcl>

You can just watch it, but it is better if you listen to it at the same time.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

You may have heard me talk about the YOMBER Principle before . . . now you can read it by going to Consulting on the left, then Sample Articles . . . methinks that you'll find this something useful when dealing with customers, students and even family members.

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8. Computer tip

To reduce the size of pictures in BLAINESWORLD, I often use freeware called IrfanView . . . this graphic viewer does a lot of other things, too . . . for more information, please click:

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

If you found this helpful, it's no surprise . . . as notes my friend Pat in Pennsylvania:



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

I'm much obliged to Pat Achilles for providing the above . . . she does comics, greeting cards, artwork for children's books and so much more . . . for more information, call her at 215.348.4837 or email her at: patachilles@aol.com . . . you can also get a FREE weekly comic delivered to your email address by clicking:

<http://www.achillesportfolio.com/freecartoonsignup.htm>

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9. Medical advice (that you don't even have to pay for)

Eat right!

Make sure you get your daily dose of fruits and veggies.

Take your vitamins and bump up your vitamin C.

Get plenty of exercise because exercise helps build your immune system.

Walk for at least an hour a day, go for a swim and take the stairs instead of the elevator.

Wash your hands often. If you can't wash them, keep a bottle of antibacterial stuff around.

Get lots of fresh air. Open doors and windows whenever possible.

Try to eliminate as much stress from your life as you can. Get plenty of rest.

OR take the doctor's approach. Think about it . . . when you go for a shot, what do they do first? They Clean your arm with alcohol.. Why?

Because Alcohol KILLS GERMS. So . . .

I walk to the liquor store. (Exercise.)
I put lime in my Corona. (Fruit.)
Celery in my Bloody Mary. (Veggies.)
Drink outdoors on the bar patio. (Fresh air.)
Tell jokes and laugh. (Eliminate stress.)
Then pass out. (Rest.)

The way I see it . . .

If you keep your alcohol levels up, flu germs can't get you!

And I keep in mind what mother always said, "A shot in the glass is better than one in the a*s!"

Live well. Laugh often. Love much.

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10. A quote I like

Jim Donovan in DON'T LET AN OLD PERSON MOVE INTO YOUR BODY (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11):

Years ago, when I had the pleasure of meeting and briefly speaking with success legend, Zig Ziglar, I remember his reply to my question, "How are you?"

Zig's answer, "Better than great."

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11. Thought for the day

If I mention a book four separate times in any newsletter, you can tell I really liked it . . . that's the case with DON'T LET AN OLD PERSON MOVE INTO YOUR BODY (see also Sections 2, 4C and 10) by Jim Donovan . . . see the following passage for still another example of why I think Jim rocks:

As I was sitting there totally enjoying the scenery, two women walked passed me on their way out of the restaurant, having finished their lunch. The women looked to be in their late 40s or early 50s although I avoid ever guessing women's ages for obvious reasons.

As they passed, I overheard one of the women say, "When I was young . . ." Those words hit me like a lightning bolt, especially since I was working on this book at the time.

What a disempowering choice of words. Your words have power, so choose them carefully. While you and I know that she meant no harm by her choice of that particular phrase, her mind took it in. What do you suppose the

message to her subconscious mind was? Obviously, I'm not young any longer. I must be old.

A phrase that would have conveyed the same message but would have been more empowering would have been to say, "When I was younger . . . "

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12. Advance planning department

A. As a follow-up to his Pulitzer-nominated poetry collection *Country Music*, Bucks County Community College professor Allen Hoey has published *Once Upon a Time at Blanche's*.

Hoey, the 2001 Bucks County Poet Laureate, will read from his new book at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, October 18, at Triumph Brewing Company in New Hope, Pa.

"The earliest poems in this collection were included in *Country Music*," the New Hope resident explains. "They take place in a fictionalized version of a dive bar where I used to go when I was an undergraduate at a state college in the North Country of New York State."

In addition, John Strauss will be performing music and George Drew will be reading from his new book, *American Cool*.

B. The October Lecture Series in my development (Biltmore Lake) will be held on Friday, October 23rd at 7:00 p.m.

Get cost saving ideas from resident engineer and business owner Phil Murphy. Phil will provide "do it yourself" tips on things like flushing your water heater, cleaning your kitchen exhaust fan filters, other smart ideas. He will also share his top 10 things not to forget to do when leaving town.

Phil is a graduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy where he earned a degree in engineering and also earned his MBA at California State University. He logged 18 years in the corporate business world before becoming a general contractor in North Carolina. Phil Murphy House Hold Management, his current venture has grown over the past 3 years and Phil has developed a practical planned maintenance schedule designed to avoid expensive repairs.

If you're a Biltmore Lake resident, please RSVP on the Intranet before Wednesday, October 21. If you're a not a resident and would like to attend as my guest, please send an email to: bginbc@aol.com and put OCTOBER 23 in subject line.

C .Student Life at Bucks County Community College presents Broadway singer John D. Smitherman on Saturday, November 14 at 7:30 p.m. at Gateway Auditorium, Newtown, PA.

He has sung for presidents, ambassadors, royalty, and early in his career, was a back-up singer for Barry Manilow. A recipient of numerous awards for both singing and acting including two Apple Awards and the prestigious Grandview Award for Best Actor in a Musical. He can be heard on several recordings, including John D. Smitherman . . . Live, Opera Passion, and

By Popular Demand.

Smitherman will be performing songs made famous by Mario Lanza, Perry Como, Tony Bennett, Tom Jones, etc. with music from Showboat, South Pacific, and Phantom of the Opera.

Tickets are just \$10. To obtain, please click:
<http://www.bucks.edu/tickets>

Also available at the Student Life Office. Call 215.968.8015 or email kayen@bucks.edu for further information.

D. Experience Germany

Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange for Young Professionals

Community college students interested in living, studying, and working in Germany are encouraged to apply to this year-long scholarship program sponsored by the U.S. Congress and German Bundestag. No prior German language skills are required!

Program Includes:

Two Months intensive German language training
Semester of study at a German university or professional school
Five-month internship with a German company in participant's career field

Scholarship covers: round-trip international airfare; language school and university tuition in Germany; accommodation with hosts or in a shared apartment; monthly stipends; health insurance; various program seminars in the US and Germany; and local support throughout program year.

Program Details: Participants from all over the U.S. work and study in their career field in Germany for one year. Applicants in all fields may participate; students in business, engineering, technical, vocational, and agricultural fields are especially encouraged to apply. Applicants must be between the ages of 18-24 at the start of the program, and have clear career goals and preferably some work experience in their field.

For more information, contact cbyx@cdsintl.org or call 212.497.3522.

Application deadline is December 1st, 2009.

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PS. Please join me in celebrating Columbus Day on Monday and, also, enjoying the fact that you may not have the holiday around that much longer . . . see for yourself by clicking:

<http://tinyurl.com/yfvp23r>

In addition, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan . . . and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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#679

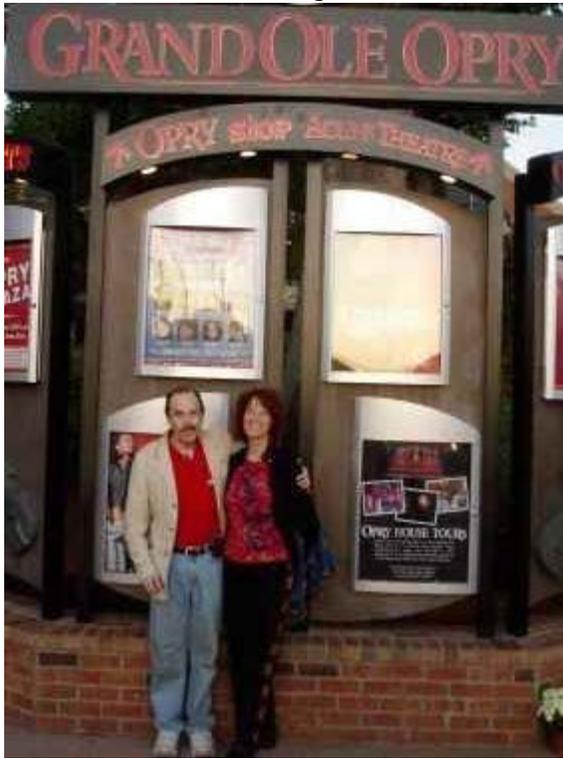
10.5.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I just got back from several days in Nashville, TN, where she was gaining some additional training in Breema (see the BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD section below) . . . when she wasn't busy with that, we were able to get to the Grand Ole Opry for a show on one of the nights:

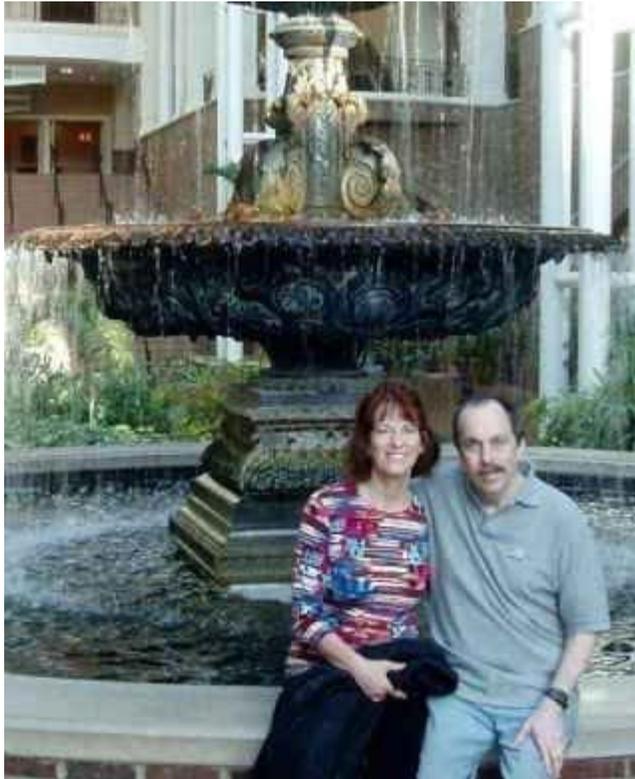


It was fun watching the radio broadcast "in concert," though we could have done without all the commercials . . . the best part was that Carrie Underwood was the featured performer:

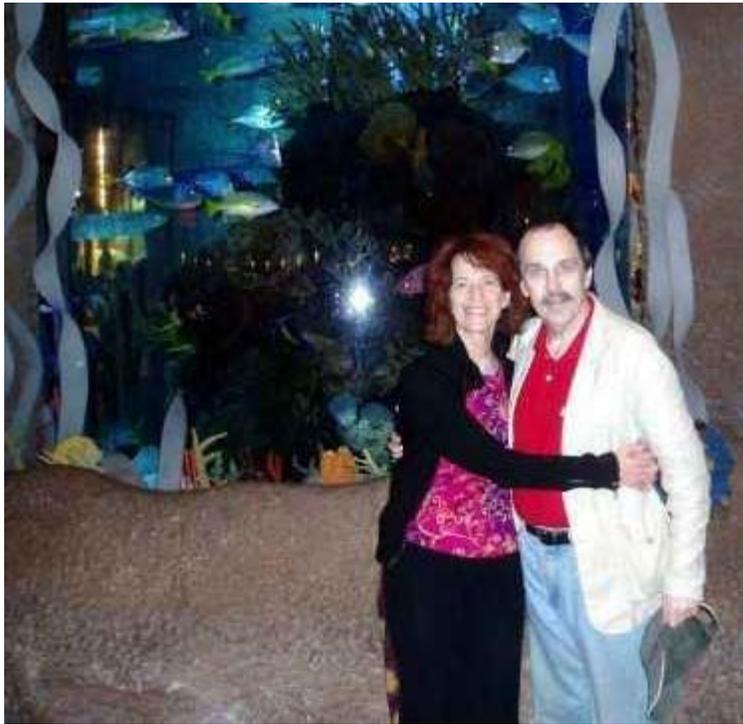


She was fantastic!

B. On another night, we toured the Grand Opryland Hotel and Convention Center with its amazing nine acres of indoor gardens, cascading waterfalls and river with its own Delta flatboat:



From there, we went to an unusual restaurant called Aquarium . . . the food there was excellent, though on the costly side . . . yet the price was worth it, given that you see fish wherever you're sitting:



For more information, please click:

<http://www.aquariumrestaurants.com>

C. We managed to catch a play, too: MY FIRST TIME . . . six very talented actors talked about their first sexual experiences . . . the production was funny, as well as touching . . . it runs through October 10 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.actorsbridge.org>

D. Lastly, we took a drive to Memphis in pouring rain to see Graceland:



It was fun getting to see where Elvis lived . . . for more information,

please click:

<http://www.elvis.com/graceland/>

For dinner, we wanted to go to a famous ribs' place called Rendezvous--only to discover that it was closed on Sundays . . . so instead we took the recommendation of an employee at Graceland to go down the street to a place called Marlowe's . . . were we in for a treat!

The ribs were outstanding, and our server (who introduced himself as "Stan the Man") was both friendly and efficient . . . I don't know that we'll be back in the area anytime soon, but if we were, we'd certainly come back to this place . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.marlowes.tv>

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

Cynthia was kind enough to submit this week's entry, based on her aforementioned Breema training (see also Section 1A):

Once every so often, you meet someone, and you know that what they have to offer is invaluable in your life. Katherine Correa is an instructor of Breema . . . a bodywork that, for me, has touched my life on so many levels. Breema is bodywork that is done on the floor with clothes on. And it has given me the taste of simplicity and being in the delicious moment. Nothing else for me is really needed in this life. To slow down, feel this moment . . . my body breathing . . . my body having weight . . . me just being present within myself in this existence with this moment as it is.

It has been a gift to me, and Katherine represents Breema. She is a fantastic teacher, and I want to thank her for the work she does in the world.

Should you want to contact Katherine, she can be reached at 615.269.9718 or via email, kathcorrea@gmail.com . . . her website is:

<http://www.nashvillemindandbody.com>

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2. FYI

A longtime airline executive shared his favorite trick with me to reclaim the reclined space. If the person in front descends into his lap, he begins sneezing a bit. He'll ask a flight attendant for some water--no reason to be quiet about his possible "illness" after all. Once he gets the water, the fake sneezing increases. Then he works himself up to a big sneeze after dipping his fingers in the water. As the sneeze comes out, he slicks water onto the head of the reclined passenger in front of him. Presto--the passenger bolts upright and remains there for the rest of the flight. It's foolproof--and downright contemptible, I suppose.

SOURCE:

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL GUIDE TO POWER TRAVEL

(see also Sections 4C, 7A and 11) by Scott McCartney

FYI, part 2

So sorry, but space limitations only allow me to run two emails this week.

* Diane in Pennsylvania, responding to a request I made for the recipe for a great-sounding dessert she mentioned on Facebook:

Pineapple Bake

3/4 of 1 stick of butter (softened)

4 eggs

5 slices of bread (cubed)

3/4c of sugar

1 can of crushed pineapple

1 bottle of cinnamon sugar

Beat sugar, butter and eggs. Stir in pineapple (I usually drain some of the pineapple juice) and as much or less cinnamon as you want. (I use 1/4-1/2 of a small bottle.) Fold in bread. Sprinkle cinnamon sugar on top. Spray pan with cooking spray in 11 by 9 by 2 pan. Bake at 350 for 1 hour. Serves 6.

Enjoy!

* Marie in New Jersey, commenting on her son's role in a recent concert of the Rutgers Symphony Orchestra:

Neil is 3rd in from the far right of the stage--black suit, white tie, very handsome! You might be able to pick him out from watching his other videos. He has the most professional stance.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VzKMBk20IPI>

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3. Homeroom conversation (overheard)

Last June, my friend's daughter Brenda was discussing her upcoming prom. "I'm renting a stretch limo and spending \$1000 on a new dress, and I've reserved a table at the most expensive restaurant in town," she said.

Her teacher overheard this conversation and shook her head. "I didn't spend that much on my wedding, " she said.

Brenda quickly answered, "I can have three or four weddings. But a prom you only do once."

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4. Reviews

A. Please see CAPITALISM: A LOVE STORY, Michael Moore's latest . . . even if you don't like him, you'll be shocked to learn that there's a foreclosure every 7.5 seconds . . . and that employers take out insurance on your life (with the payout going to them) . . . this documentary

will definitely get you thinking, which is always a good thing . . . rated R, though I'm not quite sure why; it would certainly be appropriate for any mature teenager.

And even if you don't believe what Moore has to say, please view this clip from ABC News:

<http://tinyurl.com/y96ct12>

B. STATE OF PLAY is now out on DVD . . . this is a political thriller about a journalist investigating the death of a woman who was the assistant and mistress of his friend--an ambitious congressman . . . there are a lot of twists and turns, and my interest was maintained throughout the film . . . Russell Crowe was quite believable in leading role, and I liked Jeff Daniels' work too . . . Benn Affleck and Rachel McAdams also star . . . rated PG-13.

C. THE WALL STREET JOURNAL GUIDE TO POWER TRAVEL (see also Sections 2, 7A and 10) by Scott McCartney, the paper's Middle Seat columnist, is packed with useful suggestions that will make trips easier for both novice and veteran travelers.

For example, when it comes to improving your bags' chances for arriving at your destination, the author recommends:

* Always mark your bags distinctly, but not with long ribbons that could get caught in machinery. Use tape, or tightly tied package ribbon, directly on the bag. And don't rely on big luggage tags--they can get torn off. Baggage has become uniformly boring black these days, and there's nothing worse than seeing fifty similar black bags on a carousel. Colorful identifying marks not only make it easier for you to spot your bag, but also keep other people from picking up the wrong bag--unless, of course, eight people on your flight all had black bags with yellow ribbons.

Yet when it comes to what luggage you should actually buy, even McCartney is confused:

* Even the size limits vary among airlines. At American, United, and Delta, the maximum size of carry-on baggage is forty-five linear inches--the length, width, and height dimensions added together. At US Airways and Continental, the maximum is fifty-one inches--13 percent more. I have a Travelpro roll-abroad bag that I've taken all over the world, and every time I've raised it to slide it into an overhead bin, it has fit (sometimes snugly in older bins). The bag is twenty-three inches tall, fifteen inches wide, and twelve inches deep, when I don't unzip the expanders. At its standard size, its measurements total fifty inches--exceeding the rules at the three biggest airlines in the United States, while legal on Continental and US Airways. And airlines wonder why their rules confound travelers?

So what's a traveler to do? Assuming you get on the flight, there's always this option:

* Another jet lag strategy is melatonin to "reset" your body clock when you arrive in a new time zone. Melatonin is a hormone secreted by the pineal gland in the brain that helps control the body's internal clock. It's released by our bodies based on sunlight--nighttime yields the release of more melatonin. If you cheat yourself out of

a night, you lose melatonin and your circadian rhythm is disrupted. Taking a small supplemental dose-doctors usually recommend 0.5 mg-about an hour before you go to sleep after arrival, and perhaps a day or two into your trip, helps some people recover quickly. Medical studies on melatonin supplements for jet leg have been inconclusive. It's worth a try, but your mileage may vary, as they say.

POWER TRAVEL does its best job in covering plane trips . . . in addition, there are some good tips for booking both hotel stays and cruises . . . my only disappointment was that there's not coverage on car rentals.

D. Heard THE GREATEST GENERATION, written and read by Tom Brokaw.

It is a collection of some 50 stories about Americans born between 1910 and the mid-1920s who "never shined or whimpered" . . . they instead got us through World War II and then helped build modern America.

Brokaw divides these tales over eight topics: Ordinary People; Homefront; Heroes; Women in Uniform and Out; Shame; Love, Marriage and Commitment; Famous People; and the Arena.

I enjoyed hearing about many folks who would achieve fame in a variety of endeavors, including Ben Bradlee, Art Buchwald, Andy Rooney and Julia Child . . . many others entered politics, such as Mark Hatfield, Robert Dole and George H. W. Bush . . . however, the tale that most moved me was the one about Thomas Broderick, an ordinary soldier who was blinded in the war but who went on to become a successful businessman and father.

I'll have to revisit the print version of the book to see the accompanying pictures . . . yet I'd do it again (listen to the audio version) just to catch Brokaw's narration.

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5. TV alert

A. SHERRI centers around a newly single mom and part-time comedian/actress who tries to get back into the dating scene and move on with her life after divorcing her cheating husband . . . it stars THE VIEW's Sherri Shepherd, along with guest stars Malcolm-Jamal Warner (remember him from THE COSBY SHOW?) and James Avery (who used to be in THE FRESH PRINCE OF BEL-AIR) in multiple episodes . . . sneak previews begin nightly on October 5 at 7 p.m. on LIFETIME, then the show moves into its regular 10 p.m. slot on October 13.

B. 30 FOR 30 is a series of 30 original documentary movies, focusing on a notable sports event from the past 30 years . . . directors include Barry Levinson, Spike Jonze and John Singleton and topics range from Wayne Gretzky's 1988 trade to the Los Angeles Kings to the creator of fantasy football . . . Tuesdays at 8 p.m. on ESPN . . . you can also catch part of the above episode on hockey by clicking:

<http://espn.go.com/video/clip?id=4532506>

C. Kelsey Grammer stars as HANK, a CEO who loses it all in the recession and must start all over again . . . Wednesdays at 8 p.m. on ABC.

D. MYTHBUSTERS returns to DISCOVERY on Wednesdays at 10 p.m. . . . this week, you'll find out if it's possible to knock someone out of their socks literally.

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6. Password audit

During a recent password audit, it was found that a blonde was using the following password: MickeyMinniePlutoHueyLouieDeweyDonaldGoofy.

When asked why such a big password, she said that it had to be at least eight characters long.

NOTE:

If you feel this is unfair to blondes and/or if you're one, then just substitute "redhead" or "brunette" as the person using the password . . . and thanks to Bill in Pennsylvania for submitting this joke . . . it is a joke, Bill, isn't it? Or was this actually the password used by somebody with the initials of "D.L." that we won't mention by name so as to protect the guilty?

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7. Websites

A. FareCompare.com is one of my favorites for pricing information. It was started by a road-warrior-geek, Rick Seaney, who did technology projects for some travel companies and realized he could create a business offering good fare information to the public. From the first screen, FareCompare.com asks you for your origin and destination, then shows you the cheapest tickets available for the next eleven months, shown by month (airlines put their schedules and fares only eleven months out). Instantly, you can see if the prices on other booking Web sites are good deals or not. (Or start your search on FareCompare and skip the other steps.)

<http://www.farecompare.com>

SOURCE:

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL GUIDE TO POWER TRAVEL
(see also Sections 4C, 7A and 11) by Scott McCartney

B. According to Jean in Pennsylvania, if you need inspiration, take three minutes and click:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_jeOguqNIAo

Methinks you'll stop any complaining you're doing now and/or will do in the future once you view this clip!

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view

it, please click:

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

To see how many others are viewing this website at the same time that you are, look at the counter in the lower left-hand corner.

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8. Computer tip

Blogs

Blogs are becoming more and more popular these days and rightly so. They are one of the most powerful SEO tools. SEO stands for **Search Engine Optimization**, a term describing techniques that help your website climb the SERPs (Search Engine Results Pages). Like one of my SEO teachers says, "building a site is like putting a billboard in your basement." You have to market the heck out of it and SEO is the first step.

There are two forms of SEO that impact your site's ranking in search engines: Onsite and Offsite factors.

Onsite techniques are ones that you have more control over. Some of these include:

Keyword-rich content

Meta tags

Well laid-out design (well-coded and easy to navigate), Search engines don't tend to like Flash, Frames or Java Script. keep it simple and clean.

Themed site (a lot of content around one subject)

Interlinking site (sitemaps.html and sitemaps.xml)

Keeping site updated

Offsite techniques are more about what others do on their websites in linking to you. Some offsite techniques include:

Competition

Analysis and statistics (i.e., number of unique visitors to your site)

Getting listed in directories

And links (links pointing to your website). Links are one of the most powerful ways of climbing the Search Engines results pages. In fact, many argue THE most important factor. The best inbound links have three main qualities:

They are from higher ranked sites

They are relevant to the topic you are writing about

They link to you using relevant keywords.

That's where blogs come in . . . they are a great SEO tool. By continually adding posts/content they not only keep your site updated, they also offer more and more content. And this increases your chances of other sites linking back to you and of your content getting listed in the search engines' indexes.

SOURCE:

The above was written by Karen Mazza, who graciously allowed me use it here. She is the owner of Charlotte's Web Design and Internet Marketing in Asheville, NC. You can contact her via email at klmazza@charter.net, phone: 828.252.3612252-3612; or the Internet:

<http://www.charlottesweb-design.com>.

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9. Learning to swim

My mom said she learned how to swim when someone took her out in the lake and threw her off the boat. I said, "Mom, they weren't trying to teach you how to swim."--Paula Poundstone, American stand-up comedian

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10. A quote I like

When I REALLY like a book, I'll cite it four different times in an issue . . . that's the case with THE WALL STREET JOURNAL GUIDE TO POWER TRAVEL (see also Sections 2, 4C and 7A) by Scott McCartney . . . I especially liked how he urged readers to:

Be kind to your fellow travelers. The window-seat occupant asked me to move so he could get out and fetch a blanket. "Would you like a blanket?" he asked me. How considerate. Flight attendants weren't about to offer blankets, but passengers can help one another. We can all improve our travel by recognizing that we're all in it together.

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11. Thought for the day

VIA POSITIVA: OH YEAH!
by Howard Hanger*

Louis Armstrong was an "at-risk" kid. Could well be the At-Risk-Kid-Of-All-Time Poster Child. He grew up in abject poverty in one of the roughest sections of New Orleans. He was poor and black in a blatantly segregated city. On a daily basis, he was witness to drug deals, prostitution and violence. Born out of wedlock, his father left the family when he was an infant and his mother left him and his sister in the care of his grandmother when Louis was three years old. Their poverty was so desperate that Louis' mother turned to prostitution in order to survive.

As a child, Louis hung out in the red-light district in New Orleans and listened

to bands playing in brothels and dance halls. One of his favorite haunts was a place called the "Funky Butt" which was close to his home. As a young boy, he attended Fisk School for Boys, but got into trouble on a regular basis and was sent to The Home for Colored Waifs--a reform school just outside the city.

During this tumultuous time, a Russian-Jewish family--the Karnofskys--took him in, gave him odd jobs and loaned him the money to buy a cornet--his first musical instrument. The kindness and generosity of this family so impressed Louis, that he wore a Star of David Pendant in their honor for the rest of his life. But it didn't keep him out of trouble. When he was twelve, he was arrested for shooting a pistol in the city and landed in the reform school for two years.

Now the prognosis for a kid like this is not good: drugs, prison, aggression, bloodshed, depression and early death possibly from suicide. It would be ever-so-easy to forecast a life that began like Louis'. But, of course, it didn't end that way. God knows why or how. Maybe it was his love of music. Maybe it was the kindness of the Karnofskys. Maybe it was flat-out luck.

Whatever it was, one of the remarkable features of Louis' musical career was that he didn't end up singing the blues. He sang and played love songs, torch songs, toe-tapping-high-stepping-shoulder-shimmying-fanny-wiggling songs. He played songs that made you want to croon to the tune and boogie with your booty. His songs could smear a smirk across your smackers and stir a stride into your stroll. And his most familiar, most recorded, most often-heard expression was, "Oh Yeah!"

Oh Yeah? Say what? Oh Yeah? Mom's a hooker, no money, little to eat, cops chasing you down, called a nigger (even in a stage introduction later in life), no respect, no social standing, in and out of reform school. You kick off life that way and can still say, "Oh Yeah?" You can still sing "What a Wonderful World?" and "Hello, Dolly" and "When the Saints Go Marching In?" Say frickin' what?

Not only that, Louis Armstrong was an inordinately generous man, constantly giving to those in need. Some estimate that he gave away as much money as he kept for himself. Was it his religion? Don't think so. When asked about his religion, he said he was raised a Baptist, wore a Star of David and was friends with the Pope.

Oh Yeah?

Maybe this musical genius was onto something. Maybe this trumpet-tootling, gravelly-throated maestro somehow got a glimpse of a bigger picture. Perhaps somewhere along the line (or all along the line) Mr. Satchmo recognized the "Yes" in life: the "Yes" that coils the galaxies and the DNA--the "Yes" that scoots Mr. Sperm up close and personal for a dance with Ms Egg--the "Yes" that shifts Lady Moon from full face to sidewise grin--the "Yes" that jumpstarts dragonfly buzz and ignites thunder boom.

Maybe, just maybe Mr. Magical Big Mouth was able to see that life is more than what happens to you--more than circumstances or situations. It just might be that "Oh Yeah" is a mantra that can reconnect you with infinity, with wonder, with love.

Oh Yeah??? Oh Yeah!!!

* Reprinted with the generous permission of Howard Hanger, minister of ritual

for the Jubilee! Community . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.howardhanger.com>

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12. Advance planning department

A. Cynthia (see also Section 1A) will be conducting a JourneyDance session in the Asheville area that's open to ALL for free . . . so here's hope "y'all" can join her . . . it will take place on Sunday, October 11, at 1 p.m. at Congregation Beth HaTephila in Asheville . . . both dancers and non-dancers are invite to join in on the fun; guys are welcome, too . . . for more information or to reserve a spot, please send an email to bginbc@aol.com and put OCTOBER 11 in subject line.

B. Risa in New Jersey:

Health and Professional Network meetings this week--back to back, Wednesday in Westfield and Thursday in South Orange . . . more details and program topics on our website. Great opportunity to network face to face! Contact me if you need information-: 973.761.5758 or email: info@hpwn.org.

For more information, please click:

www.hwpn.org

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

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#678

9.28.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia (see also Section 12C), my beautiful bride, and I had fun celebrating our next-door neighbor Conor's seventh birthday . . . we invited a bunch of other neighbors over and all enjoyed a delicious ice cream cake from Cold Stone Creamery . . . see below for a picture of the birthday boy in the middle, along with his friend Chase:



B. Even as I write this, I'm still shaking my head over how fine life in Asheville continues to be for us both . . . we've just never lived before in an environment where there are so many friendly people . . . or that there was so much to do . . . as was the case on Saturday when we woke up to a pouring rain . . . so when the Fall Fling that was going to be held in our community got canceled, we just switched gears to head downtown for a day that included:

* Massages at The Cosmic Groove . . . this is one of our

many favorite activities to do; i.e., get a massage . . . prices at this place are very reasonable (starting at \$29/session and \$37 for the next one with packages available), and to date, we've never had a bad massage from any of the several therapists they have on staff . . . for more information, please click:

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

* Dinner at Kubo's, a Japanese Fusion restaurant . . . my chicken teriyaki was perfect . . . Cynthia was a bit disappointed with her tofu and vegetable order, in that there was too much of the former and not enough of the latter . . . Nicole, our server, was both efficient and friendly . . . we'll definitely return . . . for more information, please click:

<http://kubosjapanese-asheville.com/>

* We then went across the street to the Fine Arts Theater to see BRIGHT STAR (see also Section 4A) . . . what made the film memorable for us was the fact that it co-starred Asheville native Paul Schneider, who was there to introduce it . . . we got a kick hearing the applause that broke out several times when he was on screen . . . afterward, he stayed around for a very interesting Q-and-A session . . . he noted that "I can relate to the guy [his character, a friend of the poet John Keats] being next to the guy, sort of like Salieri was to Mozart." . . . and in commenting on Jane Campion's excellent direction, he said she told him, "I don't know if you think you can do it, but I think you can."

In general, we like this theater because of its reasonable prices . . . it is also the home for most of the art and independent films that we see . . . lastly, Cynthia told me that she even helped put up the marquee sign for the current films . . . when walking one day, she saw the guy putting up the letters . . . she asked if she could put up one, and he said "sure" . . . so she was given the long rod and actually put up an "E" . . . now that's a picture I would have liked to have been able to take . . . for more information, please click:

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

* And as you might expect, our evening concluded with some ice cream . . . we rushed to the only place that was still open, The Hop, and an employee was nice enough to let us in though we arrived a few minutes after the closing time . . . as is always the case, we liked the ice cream there . . . it is always creamy, and there are lots of flavors--some of them a bit unusual (including salty caramel, my favorite) . . . for more information, please click:

<http://thehopicecreamcafe.com/>

Hey, I know . . . it's a tough life . . . but somebody has to live it, and it might as well be us!

C. Professionally, I started Leadership Asheville . . . this is an organization that offers programs and initiatives designed to strengthen the region . . . I'm looking forward to working with the other 38 folks

in my Class of 2010 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.leadershipasheville.org/>

To get us going, there was an exciting two-day orientation . . . we learned:

- * How the Internet can be used as a community leadership pool from Sarah Benoit with Creative Original Online Marketing;
- * About the history of Asheville from Dr. Dan Pierce, History Department Chair at UNC Asheville;
- * How to speak clearly from Rick Fornoff with Message Clarity; and
- * About inclusive leadership from Patti Digh with The Circle Project.

All the sessions were excellent . . . however, I'll remember the last one because of the several group exercises that Patti conducted . . . one had us partnering with somebody to plan an upcoming party . . . whatever the person said, we were first to say the words "yes, but" . . . you can probably imagine the result--not much enthusiasm . . . yet after a brief pause, we then changed the words to "yes, and" . . . this time, the room came alive with excitement!

For more information about Patti's work, please click:

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

D. CONGRATULATIONS to Leslie Niven and James Lang on their recent engagement . . . they're slated to be married sometime next fall.

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

This week it goes to the entire office staff at the Biltmore Lake Association--the group that manages the community where we live.

Pam Phillips is the Community Manager . . . she has the often thankless task of making sure that everything runs smoothly . . . it somehow does . . . David Berry, Recreation Director, is the person with overall responsibility for the many social, hiking and waterfront activities that take place . . . he deserves special recognition for all that he has done recently, given that he also just got married (best to you on that, David!) . . . and Kerry Arzberger, Community Administrator, is the newest member of the team . . . she has jumped right into things and her enthusiastic, helpful nature has already begun making a difference for me and the others that she has already assisted.

Consequently, in large part because of these three fine individuals, I was not surprised when I heard the news that Biltmore Lake has recently been named 2009 Community of the Year (Large, Mixed Use Community) in North Carolina!

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2. FYI

Want to eat and live like a thin person? Then follow these principles from THIN WITHIN (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11) by Judy Wardell:

Rub both hands on the entire area of your abdomen and stomach. Okay?

On a scale of 0 to 10 being empty, 5 being comfortable, and 10 being stuffed, at what level of hunger is your body right now? Write down that number . . .

And on a scale from 0 to 10, 0 being unpleasant, 5 just okay, and 10 feeling terrific, how do you feel right now? Write down that number . . .

Do you notice any relationship between your level of hunger and of your being?

All right--good work!

The Hunger Scale Tool

The information you derived from doing the preceding exercise regarding the degree of hunger you experience can conveniently be illustrated by the following, which we call the Hunger Scale:

Stuffed: 10
Comfortable: 5
Empty: 0

Remember that 0 is empty, 5 is comfortable, and 10 is stuffed . . . you know, Thanksgiving stuffed-aching-belly-have-to-lie-down-on-the-sofa-can't-eat-another-bite-or-it-will-ooze-out-stuffed.

At Thin Within when we say that we eat only when we're hungry and stop before we're comfortable, we mean 0 to 5 eating. We feel there's no such thing as "I'm just a little bit hungry." You're either at a 0 or you're not. And if you're not, don't eat. . . .

If you eat 0 to 5 or less, you will lose the weight you targeted on Day 3. . . .

If you start eating when you're at a 3 and eat to a 7, then you'll stay overweight. . . .

And obviously if you eat from 5 to 10, you'll gain more weight.

FYI, part 2

* Lorraine in New Jersey sent the SBDC's free newsletter that now features videos . . . this week the emphasis is on overcoming objectives . . . to see it for yourself, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/ybzwgd5>

* Pat in Pennsylvania (WITH A QUESTION):

A recent ad to my Ipod was "Make Your Own Kind of Music" by the

Mamas and Papas. The kind of song you can sing out loud when you are driving in the car alone. Ha! And it's amazing how you don't forget the words to certain older songs. . Amazing how when some of those old songs come on you know the words almost automatically. Incredible how the words and harmony comes back. Wow!

Aside from still having a good memory, maybe there is some formal term for that?

* Ward in Pennsylvania:

What do all the following words have in common: alcohol, zenith, zephyr, nadir, algebra, zero and azimuth?

Answer:

They and many others we use are all of Arabic derivation.

* Harvey in Pennsylvania:

Think you're creative? Figure out how to balance a raw egg so it stands vertically on its broad end.

Answer:

There's an easy way and a hard way.

First the easy way:

Put a small amount of sugar on a hard stable surface and carefully place the egg broad side down on the sugar. Slightly rotate the egg to align with the crystals. Carefully position the egg so you can "feel" the balancing point. Then, while gently holding the narrow side down, carefully blow away the excess sugar. Result: Egg standing vertically with no apparent means of support.

Now the hard way:

Grasp the egg firmly (not too firmly), and bring it up over your head. Come down vigorously and come to a full stop. Do this 6-12 times. There are two ligaments in an egg holding the yolk in suspension. The lift and full stop breaks the upper ligament within the egg allowing the yolk to settle. Now the egg can be balanced vertically but this still takes a lot of patience. It may not work with every egg. Simply try with a few more.

Good for a party trick. Have fun.

* Dan in North Carolina:

This is good advice, especially with respect to checking emails:

<http://tinyurl.com/yafdoyx>

Movies seemed to be on the mind of several readers this past week.

* Kelly in North Carolina:

I really liked COLD SOULS. Paul Giamatti is a wonderful actor to behold in that role. It's an existential sci-fi comedy and right up my alley.

* Jim in Pennsylvania:

Just got back from seeing movie Fame. Awesome talent there! Left dancing out of the theatre.

MY TWO CENTS:

I haven't seen it . . . or at least not yet . . . to tide me over, though (and you too), please click below for the theme song:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mx-vl1j9pIM>

* Kevin in Pennsylvania:

Walked out of THE INFORMANT . . . poorly written, acted, scored and filmed. Got my money back though . . . hooray for Regal Theaters!

Much better is NPR interview of the real people the movie is about:

http://www.thisamericanlife.org/Radio_Episode.aspx?episode=168

GREAT MINDS THINKING ALIKE:

I also walked out on this film . . . my only regret is that I saw Kevin's email after I had done so.

* Natalie in Pennsylvania:

Saw a great movie we rented from Netflix called SOMETHING THE LORD MADE. It's based on a true story and was deeply moving, I know it's your kind of movie. We also saw LILLIES OF THE FIELD, which I had never seen. I loved it. Just can't get enough of Sidney Poitier.

CORRECTION:

Last week, some of you may have received the newsletter with a name that I butchered . . . Section 4A should have referred to the new film from Tyler Perry (NOT Petty, as I inadvertently typed) . . . that serves me right for listening to Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers when I should have been concentrating . . . THANKS to Jean in Pennsylvania for bringing this to my attention.

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3. Ouch!

My doctor swore that my colonoscopy would be painless, but the nurse made it seem otherwise.

"The lab," she said, "will call to set a date for your screaming."

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4. Reviews

A. BRIGHT STAR (see also Section 1B) is a period drama set in London, 1818 about the love affair between John Keats, a 23-year old English poet, and the girl next door . . . their relationship soon became complicated by the fact that Keats had no money, and that's the part of the movie I liked best; i.e.,

how it portrayed the life poets had to endure then--and now, too . . . Ben Whishaw is excellent in the main role, and Abbie Cornish shines as his neighbor Fanny Brawne . . . Paul Schneider steals almost every scene he's in as Brown, the best friend, who has a deep attraction for both the Whishaw and Cornish characters . . . the film is a bit slow-moving at times, but stick with it . . . rated PG, though methinks that those under 13 would prefer seeing something else.

POETRY CORNER:

I don't typically run poems in this missive, but the preceding movie got me wanting to revisit . . .

Bright Star
by John Keats

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art--
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors--
No--yet still stedfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever--or else swoon to death.

For more information about Keats and an analysis of this poem, please click:

<http://academic.brooklyn.cuny.edu/english/melani/cs6/star.html>

B. AWAY WE GO is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #666 follows:

Enjoyed AWAY WE GO, a sweet and quirky film about an expectant couple who travel the country in search of the perfect place to eventually live . . . along the way, they reconnect with an assortment of friends and relatives who help them discover what is important in life . . . there's some great dialogue, along with two winning performances from John Krasinski and Maya Rudolph . . . the soundtrack--featuring the music of Alexi Murdoch--is outstanding . . . rated R.

C. Imagine achieving permanent weight loss without dieting, calorie counting, special exercises, pills or gimmicks . . . that's the premise behind THIN WITHIN (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11) by Judy Wardell, a book that has helped many folks--including my wife Cynthia.

You'll learn (to use the author's subtitle) HOW TO EAT AND LIVE LIKE A THIN PERSON . . . the ideas are presented in 30 short chapters that can easily be read within a month, and I liked the accompanying exercises that are given for each day.

Nothing on the surface is particularly profound . . . however,

the author presents them in ways that make such common sense that you'll wonder why you never thought about them before . . . for example:

* Eat only when my body is hungry. This is the fundamental key to weight mastery. We eat only when we're hungry. We feel there's no such thing as a little bit, or kinda hungry. We either are or aren't. When in doubt, don't eat. At Thin Within we pay attention to our body's messages. They can be trusted. And if we eat only when we're hungry, we'll lose weight and we'll feel good.

* Eat only when I'm sitting. There is no joy in eating on the run. Such eating is not very satisfying and it encourages picking. It's interesting how when you eat on the run, the mind erases the meal but the body doesn't. If you sit down at the table every time you eat, you will naturally slow down and pay more attention to your food, which is precisely the point. It is an invitation to conscious eating.

And then there was this tidbit that I especially liked:

* Pay attention only to my food while eating. When you're eating alone that will be easy to do. However, when you're with another person, it might seem difficult to pay attention only to your food. When eating with others spend about thirty seconds focused on your food, then put your fork down and focus your attention on the other person and the conversation. I have noticed that I cheat the person I'm with if I eat while conversing, and I deprive myself of the pleasure of my food if I talk while eating. So alternate eating and talking. This will allow you to receive optimum pleasure from the food and your relationships.

In addition, I appreciated how the approach set forth in THIN WITHIN can and should be used in all aspects of our lives . . . as Wardell notes:

* Examine and question all parts of your life, since you deserve pleasers everywhere. Is your home a teaser? Your car? Your job? Your relationship? How can you change a teaser into a pleaser? . . . Some people are afraid to have a perfect life because they believe that such happiness is always followed by some sort of disaster. This kind of thinking isn't supportive; it is living in the past.

UPDATE:

I read an original edition of THIN WITHIN that was written in 1984 . . . sometime after, the author and her husband, Dr. Arthur Halliday, wrote SILENT HUNGER . . . this expanded the proven weight management program and brought God into the picture . . . this book, since republished as THIN AGAIN, emphasizes how the Holy Spirit empowers the individual with God's transforming love and grace to live as a naturally thin person.

In 2002, a new and revised THIN WITHIN was reissued . . . around the same time, a national non-diet faith based weight loss and wellness program was launched with individual lesson materials and a national network of support groups . . . for more information, please click

<http://www.thinwithin.org/>

If religion is NOT your thing, see if you can get the 1984 hardcover or 1985 paperback edition of this book online . . . however, if you can't,

get the 2002 edition and feel free to gloss Biblical references . . . you'll still find it extremely worthwhile.

D. Heard *THE GINGERBREAD GIRL*, a novella by Stephen King . . . it's the story of a heartbroken mother whose baby has suddenly died . . . she takes up running to escape her depression and eventually runs away from her husband to a deserted spot in Florida . . . there she discovers a secret about one of her neighbors that's he's willing to kill to protect.

The first half of this two-hour tale had me hooked . . . I actually cared for Emily and wanted to see what would happen to her as the suspense built . . . however, the second half disappointed me . . . I felt nothing for the villain; there just wasn't enough written about him to get into his character . . . and the violent ending was just too predictable.

Yet that said, Mare Winningham's excellent job of narration kept me interested throughout . . . in fact, I just put her name down as somebody I'd like to listen to in the future--reading some other author.

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5. TV alert

A. *NATIONAL PARKS; US'S BEST IDEA* is a five-part series directed by Ken Burns . . . tonight's episode, "The Last Refuge (1890-1915)," focuses on the time when many Americans feared industrialization would negatively impact the country's pristine ideas . . . Monday at 8 p.m.; repeated at 10:30 p.m. . . . PBS times and dates often vary, so check local listings or please click:

<http://www.pbs.org/tvschedules/>

The above is episode two . . . to see episode one, please click:

<http://video.pbs.org/video/1258704633/program/1072181584>

B. *THE MIDDLE* begins Wednesday at 8:30 p.m. on ABC . . . this comedy stars Patricia Heaton and Chris Kattan; it's about a woman car salesperson whose married with three children . . . when her youngest complains that the pancake is still frozen, she tells him, "Well, lick it. It'll last longer."

According to *THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*:

What makes this a standout family show is not the absence of dirty words. Who needs those when there's an abundance of eccentric humor and bright writing?

C. *MAN v FOOD* has a special baseball episode, featuring visits to three baseball stadiums where the food is among the most unique and delicious in the country . . . one that I'll have to see: a stadium in Illinois where they serve a juicy bacon cheeseburger on a Krispy Kreme bun . . . Wednesday at 10 p.m. on *TRAVEL*.

D. I've watched the *JAY LENO SHOW*, off and on, for its first few weeks . . . there were some interesting guests and a few funny

bits . . . but after a promising beginning, it seems to have settled into a familiar routine that very closely resembles the previous version . . . weeknights, 10-11 p.m., on NBC.

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6. Penguins

Did you ever wonder why there are no dead penguins on the ice in Antarctica? And, if so, where did they go?

Wonder no more!

It is a known fact that the penguin is a very ritualistic bird, which lives an extremely ordered and complex life.

The penguin is very committed to its family and will mate for life, as well as maintain a form of compassionate contact with all offspring throughout its life.

If a penguin is found dead on the ice surface, other members of the family and social circle have been known to dig holes in the ice, using their vestigial wings and beaks, until the hole is deep enough for the dead bird to be rolled into and buried.

The male penguins then gather in a circle around the fresh grave and sing:

"Freeeeze a jolly good fellow."

(Then they kick him in the ice hole!)

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7. Websites

A. THANKS to Bob in Pennsylvania for sharing this website for book junkies:

<http://www.goodreads.com>

My older daughter, Sara, turned me on to it, and I keep all my book reading in order there. It's good as a social networking site as well, if that's your interest (not mine, particularly), but it's also a nice way to keep tabs on what your friends are reading, and what books are around in the various categories that appeal to you.

B. Is it possible to double your pleasure while dancing? This guy certainly seemed to think so; see for yourself by clicking:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pEli2rrrJwl>

Make sure you have your sound on and whatever you do, make sure you stay with this clip past the first minute.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

For those who missed my recent seminar, at which I discussed my Four-mula 4 Success, you can read about by moving your cursor to the left of the homepage to "Consulting" and then "Article Samples" . . . choose the first one, "How to increase your business by 10 percent or more," and you'll learn about some of the ideas that I shared.

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8. Computer tip

If you get an email and want to save it on your hard drive, all you need to do is go to File, then Save As . . . give it any title you want and after you click once, you now have the file where you can retrieve it easily.

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9. Love story (a touching one from New Jersey)

A young woman in Wildwood, New Jersey was so depressed that she decided to end her life by throwing herself into the Atlantic Ocean. She went down to Morey's Pier and was about to leap into the frigid water when a handsome young sailor saw her tottering on the edge of the pier, crying. He took pity on her and said, "Look, you have so much to live for. I'm off to Hawaii in the morning, and if you like, I can stow you away on my ship. I will take good care of you and bring you food every day."

Moving closer, he slipped his arm around her shoulder and added, "I'll keep you happy, and you'll keep me happy."

The girl nodded yes. After all, what did she have to lose? Perhaps a fresh start in Hawaii would give her life new meaning. That night, in the darkness, the sailor brought her aboard and hid her in a life boat. From then on, every night he brought her three sandwiches and some fruit, and they made passionate love until dawn.

Three weeks later, during a routine inspection, she was discovered by the Captain. "What are you doing here?" the Captain asked.

"I have an arrangement with one of the sailors," she explained. "get food and a trip to Hawaii and in return, he's screwing me."

"He certainly is," the Captain said. "This is the Cape May Ferry!"

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10. A quote I like

Take this book [or any book] and set it on a table or the floor. Don't touch it. Now, try to pick it up. No, no, no . . . don't pick it up. If you pick it up, you're actually doing it and no longer "trying"--just try to pick it up. No, no, no . . . now you're not picking it up at all. You see, there is not such thing as "trying." You either do it or you don't.

SOURCE:

THIN WITHIN (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11) by Judy Wardell

And that above reminds me to extend the following . . .

***** SPECIAL OFFER *****

I'll personally help you lose your baggage without even going to the airport; i.e., I'll hypnotize you if you want to lose weight, quit smoking, etc. . . you need to be serious about this, and you must commit to working with me over three sessions . . . it is obviously best if you're in the Asheville area . . . if that be the case, send me an email with the words SPECIAL OFFER in subject line . . . if you're not local to me but in NJ or Bucks County, PA, send me the same email, and I'll see if we can schedule something when I'm next up North.

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11. Thought for the day

When I REALLY like a book, you can tell by the fact that I mention it in four different spots in BLAINESWORLD . . . that's exactly the case with Judy Wardell's THIN WITHIN (see also Sections 2, 4C and 10), the source for the following passage:

Once, there was a poor man walking sadly along a road, and a very rich man came up to him and handed him a golden nugget. The rich man told him that the nugget would make him very rich. The poor man went home and, indeed, became very rich. A few years later as he was walking along the road, he saw a poor man and gave him the nugget. This poor man immediately rushed off and had the nugget appraised. And do you know what he discovered? The nugget was only painted brass.

He remained a poor man.

The moral of the story is that he who believes himself to be rich is rich.

This story is a wonderful illustration of how an affirmation works, and it also demonstrates the Thin Within principle of Belief (leading to) Action (leading to) Result.

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12. Advance planning department

A. Save \$10 on tickets this Friday, October 2, at the Comedy Cabaret's new location in South Jersey by clicking:

<http://www.comedycabaret.com/newjersey.html>

If you'd like to see the Comedy Club Entertainer of the Year and/or read about other news, please click

<http://www.comedycabaret.com/news.html>

B. Charlotte Schatz invites you to her studio: 1627 N 2nd Street,

Philadelphia, as part of POST-Philadelphia Open Studios Tour (East of Broad St) . . . Saturday and Sunday, October 3rd and 4th from 12-6 p.m. . . . for more information, please click:

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

C. Cynthia (see also Section 1A) will be conducting a JourneyDance session in the Asheville area that's open to ALL for free . . . so here's hope "y'all" can join her . . . it will take place on Sunday, October 11, at 1 p.m. at Congregation Beth HaTephila in Asheville . . . both dancers and non-dancers are invite to join in on the fun; guys are welcome, too . . . for more information or to reserve a spot, please send an email to bginbc@aol.com and put OCTOBER 11 in subject line.

D. THE PRODUCERS open at Mercer County Community College's Kelsey Theatre in November . . . plan to be there, if just to catch Betsy Sell in the orchestra and Lou Woodruff conducting . . . for more information, please click:

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

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#677

9.21.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I saw GOD'S FAVORITE at the Hendersonville Little Theatre . . . written by Neil Simon, it's a comic update of the Book of Job . . . parts are laugh-out-funny, and the whole thing is extremely well-acted . . . Larry Gentile's performance in the leading role was as good as we've seen in quite some time . . . we also liked the work of Kerry Corlis and Bob Reece. . . and kudos to director Jason Denton for bringing it together . . . do catch this play if you can; it runs through October 4 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.hendersonvillelittletheatre.org/>

Driving around the Biltmore Village section of Asheville one day, we came across a new restaurant for us: the Village Wayside Bar & Grill . . . the sandwiches were great and very reasonably priced . . . our friendly server, Elizabeth, added to our enjoyment of the meal . . . for more information, please click:

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

And around the corner there's Biltmore Coffee & Creamery, a place that serves some 22 varieties of ice cream . . . we tried and really enjoyed caramel caribou, which contained toffee ice cream with caramel sauce and chocolate-covered caramel cups . . . my mouth is watering just typing about it . . . for more information, call 828.505.1624.

B. Professionally, I attended two informative programs:

* The Chamber of Commerce ran a session on "Making Your Business Successful in Asheville" . . . it was enlightening to be able to listen to a panel of successful business owners share their ideas . . . John Miles with Integritive did an excellent job as the moderator . . . I particularly liked this one suggestion he gave:

When you meet folks, rather than just give them five cards, send them three referrals for business.

Lee Beason with Mountain 1st Bank shared this other winning thought:

I base everything on one premise: Will it make you tell others about us?

* Leadership Asheville had its first annual Leadership Asheville Luncheon . . . I was glad to be able to attend because I have been chosen to be a member of the upcoming Class of 2010 . . . in addition, I enjoyed being able to go with and recognize Class of 2009 graduate Phil Murphy (my neighbor who originally told me about this dynamic organization) . . . Phil runs a very unique business, Phil Murphy Household Management, which looks after your home when you're away . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.go2guy.biz/index.html>

Author Patti Digh was the featured speaker at the luncheon . . . she got everybody thinking when she told talked about a very compelling question she started asking herself:

What if you only had 37 days to live?

C. CONGRATULATIONS to Brian McCartin and Theresa Agozzino on their recent engagement . . . they're slated to be married sometime next year.

D. In the unlikely event you missed last week's fiasco, lots of readers got multiple copies of BLAINESWORLD #676 . . . some few got over 30 . . . one person even said he got 106.

By chance if you never received this particular issue and/or you discarded it because of all the email that you were getting, you can still get it by any of the following methods:

* Send an email to: bginbc@aol.com and put SEND 676 in the subject line.

* Go view it at my website by clicking:

http://www.blaineworld.net/newsletter/09.14.2009_676.asp

* Or if you're a Facebook user, please click:

http://www.facebook.com/blainegreenfield#/note.php?note_id=156360838082

I remain truly sorry this happened . . . it seems that one subscriber who wanted off this mailing list (but who never bothered to tell me) reversed the header and sent it back to the list, which fired off the list again. This message was then sent multiple times, evoking the list over and over again.

To prevent this from reoccurring, I have taken several preventative steps . . . I won't bore you with the details, other than to say MANY THANKS for your understanding.

And I'm especially grateful to Bill in Pennsylvania for helping me put things in perspective with this email:

You know what they say: "To err is human, to really f***k things up takes

a computer."

Pat in Pennsylvania also came through with the following comic that I sent to the small handful of folks who unsubscribed as a result of what happened:



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

I'm much obliged to Pat Achilles for providing the above . . . she does comics, greeting cards, artwork for children's books and so much more . . . for more information, call her at 215.348.4837 or email her at: patachilles@aol.com . . . you can also get a FREE weekly cartoon delivered to your email by clicking:

<http://www.achillesportfolio.com/freecartoonsignup.htm>

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

This week, it goes to the Financial Control Department of Bed Bath & Beyond, located in Union, NJ.

It seems that I had fairly a substantial store credit from this fine business, dating back to 2005 . . . somehow, it had gotten misplaced and was never used.

Out of the blue (some four years later), I got a letter asking if I still had the store credit or if I wanted it replaced . . . because of my several moves over the past few years, the original credit had been lost or misplaced, so I asked for a replacement and was pleasantly surprised that it came a few short weeks later.

In fact, I'm still shaking my head over this!

Regular readers, of course, will know that I'm a longtime fan of Bed Bath & Beyond . . . merchandise selection is always excellent, at whatever store you go to, and the help you usually get is far superior than what you get at other retail stores . . . the return policy is extremely generous, and I like the fact that you can almost always get a 20% discount if you just hold onto the coupons they send through the mail.

For more information, please click:

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

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2. FYI

Door knockers.

They make a great gift for a realtor to give out; e.g., to use as a "thank you" for people who move into a new home . . . my recommendation is to make sure they're the right color (bronze or silver), then personalize them with the last name of the recipients and actually offer to hang them.

Here's another use for them: Install on the door of your guest bathroom . . . we've done that at our home, which makes it so that you never have to guess whether the bathroom is in use.

SPECIAL THANKS:

Sue Russeck (215.688.1381), my favorite realtor when I lived in Pennsylvania, actually gave us such a door knocker for our New Jersey home . . . we brought it to Asheville with us and when we found that it wasn't appropriate for our front door, came up with the guest bathroom idea.

FYI, part 2

* Laura in New Jersey (with a REQUEST FOR HELP):

I completed my three years with Verizon Wireless, but now I am "out there" looking for a job again like so many of my friends.

I am looking for a position that would use my analytical and reconciliation skills as well as my communication skills. I have an MBA in management. My forte is straightening out incoming and outgoing payment accounts (cash accounts, wholesale and commercial billings as well as retail Internet accounts). I had saved them significant money by my thoroughness and ability to see patterns of problems. I developed procedures and tools to help with routine, repetitive processes, to make information easier to find and read. The results have been less time searching for the same facts, confirmation of basic calculations with quicker and more accurate results.

If any of you can think of 2-3 people you could suggest I talk to who know a lot of people, I would be most appreciative. They do not necessarily have to be hiring managers or even in your company. They should be people with a wide circle of friends.

I would like to stay in the Central Jersey area (Somerset, Hunterdon or Morris Counties or New Brunswick areas). I would appreciate whatever you could do for me.

I can be reached at: LauraInNJ@aol.com.

* Bob (Greene) on my review of his latest book:

Now, that is a truly lovely review. Thank you.

In writing LATE EDITION, I tried to tell the story the way I did for this reason: I hoped that, by telling the story of that one mezzanine newsroom, I could come close to getting down on paper what it is we all may be losing as the inevitable changes in the newspaper world, and in America, take place. What you said in your review-- especially what you said about the joy OF the job-- tells me that you understand all of this very well.

I'm honored. Because of your recommendation of the book, I hope the sound of all that laughter and good times in the long-ago city room will reach many of your readers.

Thank you again for your thoughtfulness and your kind words. It means a lot to me.

* Mariusz in Illinois, author of WHY ARE WE SO CLUELESS ABOUT THE STOCK MARKET?:

I recently did a radio interview. If you have a few moments, you can listen to it by clicking on the link below:

<http://recordings.talkshoe.com/TC-139/TS-268470.mp3>

* Rick in Pennsylvania:

Description: MobiStories are Digital children's picture books for use on Computers, iPods, Cell phones and pretty much anything with a screen.

Created to offer storytime--anytime. Each digital book is narrated, has the original text and images from the published book, and we add music and/or sound effects to enhance the story.

Download yours today at:

<http://www.MobiStories.com>

Search the website for: Salsa for Kittens and Puppies . . .it's free!

We'll also keep you up to date on technology and reading. Big changes are happening with books and media and we are on the forefront of the industry. Join in and follow along as we share info on the future of Children's Digital Picture Books.

* George in Pennsylvania:

My 10 yr old son and I were watching TV together this past weekend and the Viva Viagra commercial came on and I asked him "What do you think that commercial is about?" and he replied very seriously, "Oh, that's on all the time. It's about a medicine for men that brings joy to people."

I contained my laughter and thanked him.

But my FB comment was , , , "and if that joy lasts for more than four hours, you need to call your physician."

* Mel in Colorado, my favorite rabbi in the western part of the country:

L'shana Tova to you!

It's 5770, not 5070.

I STAND CORRECTED (Thanks, Mel):

I had a typo last week with respect to the actual Jewish New Year. Mel above gives you the correct information.

* Darcy in Pennsylvania:

A new article has been posted at:

<http://tinyurl.com/yecr253>

If you know of any women in the Philly area who are considering going into business for themselves, there's some very timely information here.

Please forward this email to anyone you think might be interested in the topics of publicity, marketing, advertising, writing and more. If you received this email indirectly and would like to be on the email notification list, please send me an email with SUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

My email is: write2sell@verizon.net

* Kathy in Pennsylvania:

Please help support Olivia Webb.

When you shop at supportmyschool.org, Garrettford Elementary will receive profits from your purchase and Olivia Webb will receive prize credits.

A message from Olivia Webb:

Hi--I know you are grandmom's friend. I am hoping you can help my school's fundraising effort by buying something from the online catalog. Thank you. Livi

Please go to:

<http://supportmyschool.org>

and enter the Student ID in the Customers/Supporters section to start shopping.

Student ID: gar4424
Student: Olivia Webb
School: Garrettford Elementary

* Roger in Pennsylvania:

To view original acrylic and watercolor paintings and see mural projects, please visit:

<http://www.theartfulroger.net>

To see the most recent photos, go to Artful Gallery III.

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3. Dream job

Joe, Mike, Mary, and Tom were talking about their dream jobs. "I want to be a lawyer," Joe began, "so that I can defend my countrymen."

"I want to be a congressman," said Mike, "so I can draft laws to benefit my countrymen."

"I want to be a doctor," said Mary, "so that I can cure my countrymen."

Hearing no response from Tom, Joe turned to him and asked, "What would you like to be?"

Tom thought a moment and replied, "I'd like to be a countryman."

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4. Reviews

A. I'm a big fan of Tyler Perry--the talented writer, director and star of several films . . . however, that said, I did not like his latest effort: I CAN DO BAD ALL BY MYSELF . . . it's the story of a woman who can't seem to get her life together . . . then her mom dies, and she is faced with the responsibility of raising three children . . . the acting by Taraji P. Henson (nominated for an Oscar for her work in THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON) and others if fair, at best . . . only one performer did stand out; i.e., the heavysset young boy . . . he was terrible . . . there were several musical numbers, and even they weren't done very well . . . rated PG-13.

B. DUPLICITY is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #652 follows:

Saw DUPLICITY . . . or make that, tried to see the film . . . I just couldn't get into it and walked out after one hour . . . it is about two spies involved in the midst of a clandestine love affair . . . for me, there were far too many plot turns . . . and I'm not a big fan of a storyline that jumps back and forth in time . . . I'm usually a fan of both the stars, Julia Roberts and Clive Owen, but not this time around . . . also, DUPLICITY was written and directed by Tony Gilroy . . . I saw his last effort, MICHAEL CLAYTON, and somewhat liked it--but not to the extent of it getting seven Oscar nominations . . . after I wrote my review, several readers complained that they hated it . . . if you were one of them, definitely don't see his latest . . . rated PG-13.

A much better rental would be WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING, starring Sandra Bullock and Bill Pullman . . . the story involves a woman who rescues a guy who has been pushed onto the railroad tracks . . . although it's very predictable, you'll enjoy it because this is one romantic comedy that is both funny and charming . . . rated PG.

C. I admit to being a Yankee . . . but wanting to know more about what this term meant, I turned to Steve Mitchell's hilarious HOW TO SPEAK SOUTHERN and came across this definition:

* Anyone who is not from Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee,

North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas and possibly Oklahoma and West-by-God Virginia. A Yankee may become an honorary Southerner, but a Southerner cannot become a Yankee, assuming any Southerner wanted to.

"Momma, can Yankee go to heaven?"

"Don't ask foolish questions, son Of course not."

That compelled me to read the whole book, which can probably be finished within an hour . . . however, that's only for the first reading . . . it is so valuable and so many useful terms in it that I'm sure I will be revisiting it--often.

For example, there's this other term that I often mangle with my pronunciation:

* Yawl: A useful Southern work that is consistently misused by Northerners when they try to mimic a Southern accent, which they do with appalling regularity. Yawl is always plural because it means you-all, or all of you. It is never-repeat, never-used in reference to only one person. At least not by Southerners. "Where yawl goin."

And lastly, I got a kick out of reading more about:

* Thang: A word Yankees consistently mispronounce as "Theeng." "Have you seen Sue Ann's new boyfriend? Honey, he just the cutest thang."

Greatly adding to my enjoyment of HOW TO SPEAK SOUTHERN were the accompanying cartoons by SCRAWLS (Sam C. Rawls) . . . several of them were funny by themselves; i.e., without any accompanying text.

D. Kurt Vonnegut never wrote a memoir . . . so it turns out his last book, A MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY, is perhaps the closest he ever got to writing one.

I got to hear this relatively short collection of essays on CD . . . it was fascinating to hear the author's thoughts on a variety of subjects, including America, carts, politics and life in general.

There were many tidbits that made me laugh; some even caused me to think . . . among those that caught my attention were the following:

* Here is a lesson in creative writing. First rule: Do not use semicolons. They are transvestite hermaphrodites representing absolutely nothing. All they do is show you've been to college.

* I think that novels that leave out technology misrepresent life as badly as Victorians misrepresented life by leaving out sex.

* If you actually are an educated, thinking person, you will not be welcome in Washington, DC.

* Do you think Arabs are dumb? They gave us our numbers. Try doing long division with Roman numerals.

And then there's this one, my favorite:

* If you want to really hurt your parents . . . the least you can do is go into the arts. I'm not kidding. The arts are not a way to make a living. They are a very human way of making life more bearable. Practicing an art, no matter how well or badly, is a way to make your soul grow, for heaven's sake. Sing in the shower. Dance to the radio. Tell stories. Write a poem to a friend, even a lousy poem. Do it as well as you possible can. You will get an enormous reward. You will have created something.

Unfortunately, Vonnegut died before he was able to finish his next work, IF GOD WERE ALIVE TODAY--a novel about a comedian.

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5. TV alert

A. So far, GLEE is my favorite new show of the year . . . I like the mix of comedy, drama and music, as well as the performance of Jane Lynch as the over-the-top cheerleading coach . . . Wednesdays at 9 on FOX.

B. Network TV has two shows that look promising this week:

* THE GOOD WIFE debuts on Tuesday at 10 p.m. on CBS . . . it's a legal drama about lawyer whose husband has been accused of corruption . . . it has an outstanding cast, including Julianna Margulies, Christine Baranski and David Paymer.

* MODERN FAMILY, starring Ed O'Neill (of MARRIED WITH CHILDREN fame) has its season premiere on Wednesday at 9 on ABC.

C. The much-anticipated SEINFELD reunion doesn't take place until October 4, but there's still much to watch between then and now on CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM if you're a Larry David fan (as I am) . . . Sundays at 9 p.m. on HBO.

And one of the regulars on the show, the very funny Jeff Garlin, has his own special--titled YOUNG AND HANDSOME--on COMEDY CENTRAL on Saturday at midnight.

D. BORED TO DEATH airs on Sundays at 9:30 p.m. on HBO . . . this is a comedy about a private eye for hire that also has an excellent cast, including Jason Schwartzman, Ted Danson and Zach Galifianakis . . . TV GUIDE notes, [Danson is] "the force that sparks so much of the show's hilarity, of which there is plenty here."

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6. Swine flu update

This one is just starting to go around, so it's a good idea to nip it in the bud right now!

This one was inevitable.

And sure enough, it has been forwarded by gullible friends

who "mean well."

Usually, it says it's a warning from the Health Department.

Or the Center for Disease Control.

The warning:

Don't eat canned pork, because . . .

(yepper!)

you might get H1N1--Swine Flu.

But it's not true. A total lie.

That's right . . .

it's just Spam!

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7. Websites

A. Scott in Pennsylvania shared this fantastic website for a FREE night of theater:

<http://www.freenightoftheater.net/>

The night is October 15, and you'll find hundreds of theaters from around the country . . . there's nothing in Pennsylvania or at least not the last time I looked, but there's plenty of stuff in New Jersey that's not too far away . . . unfortunately for me, Asheville is not yet listed . . . but hopefully will be in the future.

B. Pat in Pennsylvania sent along this very funny clip about something that may well even be better than Twitter:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhilbbeUc0g>

Methinks it will be something your Jewish friends, in particular, will enjoy (though any religion will find it amusing) . . . also, if you forward to others, make it easy for yourself . . . just forward the entire newsletter, refer them to Section 7B and mention that if they like what they see, they should feel free to get a FREE subscription to this newsletter . . . all they have to do is send an email to bginbc@aol.com.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

For those who have not yet visited the above, see the very top of the homepage for a brief explanation about what it's all about.

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8. Computer tip

Jerry in Pennsylvania:

Please examine any publications with "print preview" at 100%. It shows differences in characters, as well as exactly what will print.

MY TWO CENTS:

Good advice. Sometimes, I'll do a print preview and not see everything the way it will look when printed. Only when I go the 100% setting do I get a true look at how others will see the document.

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9. Having mom over for dinner

(You don't even have to be a mother to enjoy this one.)

Brian invited his mother over for dinner. During the course of the meal, Brian's mother couldn't help but notice how beautiful Brian's "roommate" Jennifer was.

Brian's mom had long been suspicious of a relationship between Brian and Jennifer, and this had only made her more curious. Over the course of the evening, while watching the two interact, she started to wonder if there was more between Brian and Jennifer than met the eye.

Reading his mom's thoughts, Brian volunteered, "I know what you must be thinking, but I assure you Jennifer and I are just roommates."

About a week later, Jennifer came to Brian saying, "Ever since your mother came to dinner, I've been unable to find the beautiful silver gravy ladle. You don't suppose she took it, do you?"

Brian said, "Well, I doubt it, but I'll send her an email just to be sure," So he sat down and wrote:

Dear Mom,

I'm not saying that you "did" take the gravy ladle from the house, I'm not saying that you "did not" take the gravy ladle. But the fact remains that one has been missing ever since you were here for dinner.

Love, Brian

Several days later, Brian received an email back from his mother that read:

Dear Son,

I'm not saying that you "do" sleep with Jennifer, I'm not saying that you "do not" sleep with Jennifer. But the fact remains that if Jennifer is sleeping in her own bed, she would have found the gravy ladle by now.

Love, Mom

Lesson of the day: Never lie to your mother!

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10. A quote I like

Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us every day.--Ivy Baker Priest (1905-75), a Republican politician who served as United States Treasurer under President Eisenhower from 1953-61

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

I've also seen this quote attributed to somebody by the name of Sally Koch . . . might you know who this latter individual is, as well as her background? . . . and if you know who said the quote for sure, I'd be most appreciative.

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11. Thought for the day

212 the extra degree

At 211 degrees, water is hot.
At 212 degrees, it boils.

And with boiling water, comes steam.
And with steam, you can power a train.

One extra degree makes all the difference.

One degree. Applying one extra degree of temperature to water means the difference between something that's simply very hot and something that generates enough force to power a machine--a beautifully uncomplicated metaphor that ideally should feed everything we do.

Two-twelve serves as a forceful drill sergeant with its motivating and focused message while adhering to a scientific law--a natural law--reminding us how seemingly small things can sometimes make tremendous differences.

Two-twelve.

Secrets to success don't exist. We instinctively know it. Success in anything has one fundamental aspect: effort. And in most cases, to achieve exponential results requires extra effort. That's the extra degree.

Thomas Edison said:

"Many of life's failures are men who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up."

Vince Lombardi tightened it up with:

"Inches make the champion."

212 distills it even further.

From 2000-2006, The PGA Championship winner took home an average of \$1,060,714. The second-place finisher averaged \$460,657 . . . less. The

margin of difference, 1.71 strokes . . . less than a stroke a day.

At NASCAR's Daytona 500 from 1997-2006 (10 years), the winner took the checkered flag by an average margin of 0.175 seconds . . . less than two-tenths of a second. For the winner it meant \$509,000 . . . more.

How often do we miss an opportunity to create better results because we don't apply a small amount of effort beyond what we normally do? Consider the impact of making an extra contact each day at work . . . a sales call . . . a customer follow-up . . . a brief discussion with a colleague . . . an encouraging talk with a member of your team. With contact comes opportunity. At the end of a year you'll have opened more than 200 additional doors of possibility. On the personal side, imagine the exponentially positive results of investing an additional 15 minutes of quality time each day with your children or spouse--an equivalent of more than two weeks each year at work.

No longer will you be able to do only what is required of you, only what is expected of you. Because with awareness comes responsibility--to yourself and others.

And you are now aware.

The excitement has begun. Are you smiling yet?

Your new target is 212.

SOURCE:

Permission was graciously granted by Give More Media, a company co-founded by Sam Parker (author of the book 212) . . . for more information, please click:

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

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12. Advance planning department

A. Yours truly is speaking to the residents of our development, Biltmore Lake, on Friday, September 25, at 7 p.m. . . . the topic:

“What's the difference between a left-handed and right-handed pencil?”

Come to find out the answer to that burning question and a lot more as I will share my ideas on "Four-mula 4 Success" . . . the four things anybody can do in no more than 15 minutes on a daily basis to be successful.

TO RSVP:

If you reside in the community, please RSVP via the Intranet by Monday, September 21; if you'd like to attend as my guest, send an email to me at: bginbc@aol.com and put SEPTEMBER 25 in subject line.

B. Carole in New Jersey:

The Mercer County Million Mom March Chapter is pleased to be participating in the following event:

New Jersey's Statewide Cultural Celebration
Saturday, September 26, 2009
Noon to 5:00 p.m.

South Riverwalk Park
Riverview Plaza
(Above the Route 29 Tunnel near the Trenton Thunder stadium)
Trenton, NJ

Volunteers are needed to staff our gun violence prevention information booth. As we will want to offer our children's activities, having a couple people at the table would be very helpful . . . if you can help, please email me at: castiller@gmail.com.

C. Jean in Pennsylvania:

Bucks County Business Breakfast Series: In-Person Networking:
Successfully Promoting Yourself and Your Business

September 29, 2009
Time: 8:15–10 a.m.
Location: LaSalle Bucks County Center, University Drive, Newtown, PA

How do you walk into a room full of strangers and successfully promote your business? Presenter Susan M. Richard, MBA '99, of Richard Associates will provide step-by-step directions to improve your networking skills and maximize your efforts. This lecture is ideal for the new entrepreneur as well as the established businessperson.

D. Ginger in Florida:

March in the Boots of our Troops Walk with Laura Bryna

Sunday, October 4, 2009, 8 a.m.

The March in the Boot of our Troops walk is a fun activity for anyone who wants to support our honored men and women of the military. The walk will start at the Parkland, FL Pine Trails Park Amphitheater and proceed east on Trails End Road and continue to University Drive and then return to the Amphitheatre. The walk is approximately 3 miles long. There is a \$15.00 registration fee for each participant. Water, coffee and donuts will be provided. The first 200 participants to pre-register will receive a March in the Boots of our Troops with Country Artist Laura Bryna T-shirt. If you are unable to walk, but would like to help sponsor someone who is, please mail a check made out to Fisher House West Palm Beach to Ginger Eisenrod at 11420 NW 30th St., Coral Springs, FL 33065.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.marchinthebootsofourtroops.com>

PS. Happy Fall to y'all . . . for the Northern Hemisphere, as in the United States, Canada and most of Europe, the season officially begins on September 22, 2009 at 5:18 p.m. EDT . . . also, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as for hope that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#676

9.14.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I hosted my brother Ken and his wife Lavelle over the weekend . . . the weather was beautiful, which made it possible for us to take them for a walk around the community where we live (one of our favorite activities):



On Saturday night, we went to a new restaurant for us: Table in Asheville . . . the food was OK, though somewhat pricey . . . we all wanted to try the spaetzle; however, the waiter said we could not substitute it in place of the side dish that came with our respective entrees . . . so we all made do with just one portion that we shared, and it turns out that was more than enough because we weren't

crazy about it . . . for more information about the restaurant, please click:

<http://www.tableasheville.com>

On Sunday, we went to Tupelo Honey Cafe for breakfast . . . as is just about always the case, we had to wait to be seated . . . yet it was worth it because the food was excellent . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.tupelohoneycafe.com>

From there, we went to Jubilee for the morning service . . . it was both fun and inspiring, in large part because of Howard Hanger--the effervescent minister of ritual and celebration . . . the accompanying band was a nice touch . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.jubileecommunity.org/>

And our day concluded with a tip to the Biltmore estate . . . the weather cooperated to make for a lovely visit, and we caught a break because it wasn't at all crowded . . . for more information, please click:

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

B. Personally, I got through the removal of a basal cell on my left arm . . . the appointment reminded me to please urge you to:

- * Use sunscreen if you're in the sun--every day, every time.

- * Find yourself a good dermatologist and visit him or her on a regular basis. I'm fortunate to have found one in Asheville: Dr. Todd Wilkinson, 828.274.4880. If you're anywhere near East Windsor, NJ, I strongly recommend my previous dermatologist, Dr. Judith Stenn, 609.443.4500.

In addition, I'll remember my recent appointment because Cynthia joined me--as she often does . . . it was comforting to have her there with me . . . and I was glad to be there for her when she grew faint as I was being treated . . . it turns out that she was the one who needed to lie down--not yours truly . . . I also got a kick out of the response from Dr. Wilkinson to a question that Cynthia asked about what she should do to prevent scratching her mosquito bites . . . he told her to "wear mittens."

C. In the news:

- * John Anastasi, one of my favorite reporters, quoted me in a story on the state of the economy:

<http://tinyurl.com/lz29q3>

NOTE:

If you're on Facebook and want to find out what else John is working on, send him friend request by clicking:

<http://www.facebook.com/people/John-Anastasi/1770996270>

- * Lavelle Olexa (see also Section 1A) had her mentoring program

spotlighted at:

<http://tinyurl.com/l2dwbx>

* Rebecca Kelly got a great mention at this website:

<http://www.packetinsider.com/blog/art/?p=183>

* And to read about Risa Olinsky's successful first triathlon (way to go, Risa!), please click:

<http://maplewood.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/09/14/vitality-my-first-triathlon/>

D. CONGRATULATIONS to two of my friends, Linda Kanner and Rick Pine, who were recently married . . . I wish for them that the best of their past is the worst of their future!

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

This week, it goes to Dr. Andy Scarpati--hypnotist and friend extraordinaire.

I've known Andy for well over 20 years . . . he frequently spoke to my marketing classes at Bucks County Community College and on two separate occasions, allowed me to use his business as a class project for my students .

When Andy became a hypnotist, he helped me deal with anxiety that I was having prior to getting bloodwork done . . . and he was the person who first got me interested in becoming a hypnotist and who has continued to encourage me every step of the way.

In fact, every time I come "up North," I make it a point to check-in with Andy . . . and he never fails to motivate me and/or lend materials.

If you live anywhere near Bucks County, PA, and if you'd like him to hypnotize you to kick any habit, your best bet is to email him for an appointment: dr.scarpati@comcast.net.

If his name is familiar, you might also recognize him as being the guy who started Comedy Cabaret . . . that's his other gig; i.e., running highly successful comedy clubs . . . for more information about a locale near you, please click:

<http://www.comedycabaret.com/main.html>

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2. FYI

When we moved into our home, we were going to buy an intercom system . . .that purchase was made unnecessary because of the phones we bought instead.

From Panasonic, they're part of something known as the KX-TGA939 series . . . they include an intercom feature, as well as a very useful locator option for those times when you misplace a phone . . . there's a lot more, too,

including an answering machine that we don't even use.

For a complete listing of features, as well as stores that carry the item, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/n69vzo>

Panasonic shows a \$79.95 list price, but if you shop around, you'll see you can buy the phones for as low as \$56.95 each . . . and even lower if you consider a used one.

FYI, part 2

* Jean in Pennsylvania:

Angelo is a friend of mine whom I met when he was the web guru for the Courier Times.

Help Me Make My 'Message of the Day' Go Viral
by Angelo John Lewis

Several years ago, I had the idea of sending out a spiritually oriented message of the day via voice message. I record a daily message, and a caller calls 641-715-3800, Code 55310 to hear it and maybe respond back. Now I'd like to try this again and have the intention of continuing this for at least 30 days.

Here's where I need your help. Please call 641-715-3800, Code 55310 and listen to the message. If you feel moved, leave me a message. If you like the message, forward this note or share the number with your friends. I'd love to have this whole thing go viral and watch it spread. Being weak, I could use some encouragement to keep this going.

So please call the message, listen, and then leave your response. If you want, leave your phone number on your message if you'd like me to call you back. I'd also like some suggestions as to future topics.

Thanks for reading this and being in my life.

<http://www.angelojohnlewis.com>

* Maya in New Jersey:

Folks asked how they can help on all the travails the Delaware is facing. You are all awesome! We have put out anew press release and action alert, exposing the some pretty dirty dealing by the Army Corps. So step one--go to the DelawareRiverkeeper Network website and read it:

<http://www.delawariverkeeper.org/newsresources/pressrelease.asp?ID=80>

* Scott in Pennsylvania with a whole host of great offers:

FREE cat food by clicking:

http://www.catster.com/contests_fun/royal/canin

FREE GeoTrax DVD by clicking:

http://www.dealcatcher.com/forums/m_652336/tm.htm

FREE subscription to DIME, the basketball lifestyle magazine, by clicking:

<http://tinyurl.com/ysy9kd>

Toys "R" Us now has a video game trade-in program:

<http://tinyurl.com/l235xg>

FREE Consumer Action Handbook by clicking:

http://www.consumeraction.gov/caw_orderhandbook.shtml

MY TWO CENTS:

The above is a very useful booklet published by the Federal Citizen Information Center . . . it is definitely worth obtaining.

THANKS to the several readers who responded to my "Mr. Curious" question on their opinions as to President Obama's proposals for health care reform . . . among them:

* Debbie in Indiana:

Being low income, I'm having a hard time getting the medical care I need just to function as a normal human being. I have been unable to walk very far because of a broken plate in my ankle. When it broke, I adjusted my walking and now my ankle bone is not sitting in the socket right. On top of that, now my ankle is full of arthritis.

The doctors say they don't know how I even can walk. I had to quit my job and apply for Medicaid. I was told I need the surgery to fix the plate in my ankle and to fuse my bone into the socket. I would be in a wheelchair for at least eight months, and I would have to learn to walk again.

So I say "yes," let's do it. I want to run and play with my grandkids. It has been two years since I quit my job, and I still can't find a doctor that will touch me because I have Medicaid. My ankle has gotten worse and now I can only walk around my very small house. Anywhere else, I have to take a wheelchair.

My brother is a cardiologist in Elkart IN. I asked him if he could find a doctor that would take care of me because no one in NW Indiana will touch me. I was told that no doctor in that area will touch me and this is why. Medicaid only pays 20 cents per office visit. Every time they accept a patient with Medicaid, they loose money. They have staff to pay. It costs \$18 for a person to pull this patient's chart. The time that the nurse spends with the patient plus the time that the doctor spends . . . all for 20 cents.

* Roger in Pennsylvania:

I think President Obama is a GREAT President along the same lines as Franklin D. Roosevelt. I have read two of his three books and find him to have the right mix of intelligence and stick-to-it-iveness, guts, and go-get-'m, problem solving that will finally reform a health care system that has needed overhaul for the past 50 years.

Yes, I heard his speech in the car while driving from Quakertown to Bristol last evening. This speech presented us with a plan, a schedule, and solutions that will work. I also liked his firm resolve to be the LAST President

to face the problem because he is determined to correct the broken health care situation in the U. S.

He held out the olive branch and opened the door for members of the Republican Party to present fresh and new ideas and he is willing to sit down and work out details with them.

As always, I am emotionally responsive to this man's concern for people and he has a special regard for hard working middle class people and the marginal and poor. This is the sign of a good human being.

I like this proposal and if I were to have the opportunity to vote for it, my vote is a resounding YES!

* Steve in Pennsylvania:

Saw part of President Obama's presentment to Congress and saw what remained of the U.S. Open--different battles, the first will not be resolved so quickly (referring to the span of time). The games are on in play; that is the important thing. I so liked the comprehensiveness and outline of the President's view of what was necessary to comprehensively address the totality of an American solution.

My hope is that there will be legislative resolve and reform . . . this year; of course, the process will continue . . . but we have to be outspoken, too!

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3. Question (asked by comic Emo Phillips)

How many people here have telekinetic powers?

Raise my hand.

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4. Reviews

A. I was looking forward to seeing TAKING WOODSTOCK, a comedy inspired by the true story of a family who wound up playing a key role in the Woodstock Music and Arts Festival of 1969 . . . was I ever disappointed . . . it wasn't very funny; however, even worse, there seemed to be very little music throughout the whole film . . . the only time it came alive was in the middle, in which it seemed like you were given a behind-the-scenes look at what was needed to make the event a reality . . . I also had no feeling for any of the main characters . . . rated R.

B. ADVENTURELAND is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #655 follows:

ADVENTURELAND is billed as a coming-of-age comedy, but frankly, I don't recall laughing very much . . . it traces the tale of a recent college grad who takes a summer job as a games attendant at a local amusement park . . . what I did like was the acting of Jesse Eisenberg in the main role, as well as Kristen Stewart's work as the woman who captures his

heart . . . though the film got very good reviews, I wouldn't recommend that you rush out to see it . . . rated R.

A much better rental would be BABY BOOM, a touching comedy about a management consultant whose life is turned upside down when she inherits a 14-month-old infant from a recently-deceased pair of very distant relatives . . . her life is changed, as you might expect . . . Diane Keaton is outstanding in the leading role . . . rated PG.

C. On the jacket of his latest book, THINK LIKE A CHAMPION, Donald Trump notes:

* I may be successful already, but I learn something new every day.

Though I obviously have not achieved Trump's success, that exactly sums up what I try to do every day; i.e., learn . . . and it is the reason why I liked this book so much.

In a collection of short essays, Trump openly shares his ideas and about what works for him--and, also, what doesn't . . . he covers a diverse number of topics, ranging from President Obama to the stock market and including the need to keep the big picture in mind, Stephen King, imagination and building your reputation.

Golf, one of his passions, is covered as well:

* Most of you know that I'm a golfer. I've always said that golf is a brain game, which it is, but it is a demanding sport technically and is a game of finesse. You cannot play golf halfheartedly and expect to get anywhere with your game. You have to concentrate and you have to have patience. As the legendary golfer Bobby Jones said, "It is nothing new or original to say that golf is played one stroke at a time. But it took me many years to realize it." We win in our daily lives by being careful with every day, by having a champion's view of each moment.

However, it was this tidbit that really caught my attention:

* Some financial courses are dry-but necessary. I was able to handle them by making them more interesting in my own mind by applying the principles immediately to some imaginary project I would come up with. By doing this, I was already working in the real world while I was in school, which I think saved me a lot of time when I actually got started on my own. I had been multitasking before I knew what multitasking was.

What a great idea to apply when it comes to any course, seminar or meeting we attend!

I think I've read about all of Trump's 13 book . . . if he keeps coming up with others winners such as THINK LIKE A CHAMPION, I'll remain a fan and look forward to his next one.

D. In the bestseller, YOU: ON A DIET, Drs. Roizen and Oz stressed that the key for a weight-loss plan is a daily 30-minute walk . . . a follow-up CD, YOU: ON A WALK, makes this easy to do.

They do so by including music for two separate walks, one slower

and one faster--both designed to keep you moving at a pace that you can handle comfortably . . . in addition, they include such pointers as the following:

- * Stretch after every walk.
- * Share your successes with a partner.
- * Keep in mind that every 5-10 years, you need to eat less calories than you did previously.

This would be a worthwhile purchase for any beginning dieter and/or walker . . . however, that said, I do wish the music was more a bit more interesting . . . it didn't really inspire me; rather, it felt like I was stuck in an elevator.

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5. TV alert

From AOL Television, here's information on the shows that need work or are just plain terrible this fall season:

NEEDS TUTORING 'The Vampire Diaries'

We like vampires -- especially very pretty vampires -- and soapy teen CW dramas as much as the next person, but is it too much to ask for a little levity amidst all the angst?

Airs Thurs., 8 p.m. on CW | Premieres Sept. 10 'Three Rivers'

It had us at Alex O'Loughlin, but CBS' new medical drama about transplant surgeons felt a bit formulaic. Tone down the melodrama (but keep the tight scrubs).

Airs Sun., 9 p.m. on CBS | Premieres Oct. 4

FAILING OUT 'Brothers'

This Fox "comedy" is arguably the worst pilot we've seen in years. An NFL player is one of the leads. We're not sure what's more offensive -- the horrendous dialogue or the torture of good actors like CCH Pounder.

Airs Fri., 8 p.m. on FOX | Premieres Sept. 25 'Accidentally on Purpose'

This sleazy CBS sitcom will simply be known as fall's other new cougar comedy. The premise doesn't seem like it would hold up once the baby is born, but we'll probably never know, since it would be a miracle if the series lasted that long.

Airs Mon., 8:30 p.m. on CBS | Premieres Sept. 21

DON'T FORGET:

To share your reaction when you see any of these and/or any other new shows . . . what you like, what you dislike--and why.

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6. Doctor's advice

Morris, an 82 year-old man, went to the doctor to get a physical.

A few days later, the doctor saw Morris walking down the street with a gorgeous young woman on his arm.

A couple of days after that, the doctor spoke to Morris and said, "You're really doing great, aren't you?"

Morris replied, "Just doing what you said, Doc: 'Get a hot mamma and be cheerful.' "

The doctor said, "I didn't say that. I said, 'You've got a heart murmur; be careful.' "

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7. Websites

A. Even if you're not a sports fan, I urge you to look at these clips if you haven't seen them already (and even if you have):

* Roger Federer with perhaps the greatest tennis shot I have ever seen:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_afYphgCsw

* A touching father/daughter moment at a baseball game:

http://mlb.mlb.com/media/video.jsp?content_id=6663629&c_id=phi&tcid=fb-phi-video1

And for more on that story, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/lj373q>

B. To put a smile on your face, please click:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9RajNvJ3bCU>

This is the original Gratitude Dance that methinks you'll be able to master after just one viewing!

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

In case you've ever wondered how many others have viewed this website, please look at the counter in the bottom left of the homepage.

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8. Computer tip

According to Professor Paul Schwartz at the U.C. Berkeley Law School, THE FUTURE OF REPUTATION is "A timely, vivid, and illuminating book that will change the way you think about privacy,

reputation and speech on the Internet."

You can read it for FREE by clicking:

<http://docs.law.gwu.edu/facweb/dsolove/Future-of-Reputation/>

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9. Tact

Three guys go in for a job interview at the same company.

The first one goes in for his interview and the interviewer says, "What's the first thing you see when you look at me?"

The guy says, "That's not too hard, you've got no ears."

The interviewer says, "That's it, get out, you'll never be seen around here again."

The second man takes his turn and is asked the same question.

The applicant replies, "Uh, you've got no ears."

The interviewer throws the guy out, cursing and yelling that he'll never get a job with his company.

As he is leaving, the second guy warns the third guy, "Listen man, whatever you do, don't say he hasn't got any ears. He's so touchy with the ear thing."

"Okay," said the third applicant on his way into the office.

Once inside he is told, "Name the first thing you notice when you look at me."

The guy answers, "That's easy, you wear contacts."

The interviewer was flabbergasted, "How on earth did you know that, son?"

"What? Are you kidding? Isn't it obvious . . . you can't wear glasses, you've got no ears!"

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10. A quote I like

There's no I in Team, but there is an I win Win.--Michael Jordan in his Hall of Fame induction speech, when chastised by a coach (Tex Winter) about scoring a lot of points toward the end of a game

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11. Thought for the day

The butterfly's struggle
Tony Masiello*

What do butterflies have in common with the human spirit? Meet Maggie, a middle-aged wife and mother who was about to find out.

Maggie wasn't rich like a millionaire or poor in a manner of being homeless. She was living an average comfortable life. It was made even better when a beautiful baby girl came her way. She and her husband made sure their daughter had her needs met and they were still able to take a yearly vacation by the beach.

Maggie was a partner in her husband's business. They both had a different set of duties which kept everything in balance. One day a devastating blow came to her husband's business, and over a three year period the business dropped out of site. Her husband had to totally reinvent himself and was yearning to fulfill a dream with a new vocation. She was happy for him and supported him fully, but still the money was not coming in.

Maggie began to feel guilty that she wasn't contributing with any kind of income. It had been a long time since she had worked outside the home and had to work for someone else. Needless to say she was scared but still had faith that everything would be okay. She began job hunting and found filling out applications somewhat difficult, especially the part asking for job references. Keep in mind that she was self-employed with her husband for almost 20 years. It felt as though that didn't count for anything as she was never called for an interview.

At the time she was job hunting her mom became more ill than she had been and ended up in the hospital for a week. Once Maggie's mom returned home she became her mom's helper one day a week. She did the shopping, changed sheets, vacuumed and did other things that her mother was not able to do anymore. Of course her mom would pay her for her time and labor, but she still felt she needed to find another source of income.

One of the first applications she had filled out finally came through. She passed the interview with flying colors and was told she was "exactly" what they were looking for. Although it was only part time it was exactly what she wanted. It was important for her to be home when her daughter arrived home from school. She was told they would be in touch when the schedule was ready. Knowing she had the job made her feel contented and productive again.

Within a few weeks though, she received an e-mail saying that the company had changed the job into a full time position and she was not qualified. Maggie was devastated. She felt betrayed and felt she had been lied to. That evening she was alone as her husband and daughter had gone out for the night. She welcomed the aloneness and wanted to drown her sorrows in a hot tub of bubbles.

As she knew she would, she began to cry, softly at first just from the sheer pain of being rejected. Three long years of struggle had finally caught up with her. Then she became angry; angry at everything from the circumstances that got her there, to God himself. She cried harder and yelled, "What do you want me to do?" She really felt that God had abandoned her.

When she was able to cry no more, she became exhausted and gave up. It was at that moment that a silent idea came to her to offer other elderly people home care assistance.

Using another talent for computers she printed off some flyers and cards and

distributed them to her church, grocery stores and even placed a small ad in the newspaper. Within a week she had procured two new clients.

Now, even though she's not a CEO of a major company or a power player she feels happy and productive again. So, had God really abandoned her? Let's look at nature for the lessons and the answer.

Before a butterfly can emerge out of its chrysalis it has to go through a lot of struggling. Yes, struggling. Each time it lunges out to escape, acids are being removed from its wings. If someone were to come along and break the chrysalis open for it then the butterfly would die from those acids. In essence the struggle is necessary for the butterfly to survive. Then in the stillness, when the struggle is over, the butterfly can come out and share its beauty with the world.

We as humans are not any different. There are times that we need to struggle, to rid ourselves of the acids that make up sadness, fear, and anger. It is only at this time when we are exhausted and still that we begin to hear the Universe whisper to us.

* Reprinted with the gracious permission of Tony Masiello, an Author, and Intuitive Consultant. He is the author of the e-book, WHISPERS FROM THE UNIVERSE, which is a collection of writings that will help you, motivate you, inspire you and guide you along the inner path of your life. For more information, please click:

<http://www.whispersbook.com>

<http://www.universalinsight.com>

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12. Advance planning department

A. GOD'S FAVORITE, a Neil Simon play, opens at North Carolina's Hendersonville Little Theatre on Friday, September 18 and runs on weekends through October 4 . . . I saw a sneak preview of the show and can tell you that this is one you won't want to miss . . . look for my review in next week's issue, but for more information now, please click:

<http://www.hendersonvillelittletheatre.org/>

B. Invites from readers:

* John in Pennsylvania:

Yes, folks--I'll be playing acoustic solo at the:

Zebra Striped Whale
12 S. State St., Newtown, PA

Sunday, Sept. 20 from 4-6 p.m.

Come on by; it's free. And the ice cream and coffee are great! Plus, you get to hear me and sing along!

* Pat In Pennsylvania:

My husband will appear in two small but wacky roles in the hilarious comedy "Are You Being Served?" based on the original British TV series at the Doylestown Senior Center at the end of this month. My friend Kim Weidman is directing and also funny in one of the roles, and the rest of the cast is equally zany. September 25, 26, 27, October 2, 3, 4, 10 and 11. The Sept. 27, Oct. 4 and 11 performances are matinees at 2:00 p.m.; all others are evenings at 8:00 p.m. Tickets \$18 and sales benefit the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and WLVT Channel 39 Public Television. Believe me, it is FUNNY!

For more information, please click:

<http://www.spencerproductions.org/>

* Marie in New Jersey:

You may recall that my son was 1st chair in the NJAll-State Orchestra and Regional Orchestras several times . . . he's now appearing with the Rutgers Symphony in its October, 2009 concert at the Nicholas Music Center on the Douglass Campus on Saturday, October 3, from 8-10:30 p.m. . . . tickets: \$15-25 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://ruevents.rutgers.edu/events/displayEvent.html?eventId=62858>

* Allen in Pennsylvania:

Join George Drew and Allen Hoey for a book launch for their new poetry collections, American Cool and Once Upon a Time at Blanche's, respectively. John Strauss will begin the festivities by playing a little music. Beer and wine will be available, and please come prepared to buy books!

Date: Sunday, October 18 from 2:30-4:30 p.m.

Location: Triumph Brewing Company, 400 Union Square, New Hope, PA

C. Yours truly is peaking to the residents of our development, Biltmore Lake, on Friday, September 25, at 7 p.m. . . . the topic:

"What's the difference between a left-handed and right-handed pencil?"

Come to find out the answer to that burning question and a lot more as I will share my ideas on "Four-mula 4 Success" . . . the four things anybody can do in no more than 15 minutes on a daily basis to be successful.

TO RSVP:

If you reside in the community, please RSVP via the Intranet by Monday, September 21; if you'd like to attend as my guest, email me at bginbc@aol.com and put SEPTEMBER 21 in subject line.

D. The Rotary Club of Bristol's Golf Outing takes place on October 5. The money raised goes to scholarships for Bristol borough residents to attend college and, also, to the Rotary/BCCC scholarship that goes to Borough and Township residents for a full-ride at Bucks County Community College. Sponsors and golfers still welcome.

The outing does give folks the opportunity to play on a private course: Yardley Country Club in Yardley, PA . . . for more information, please click:

http://www.rotary7450.org/Bristol/golf09_brochure.pdf

PS. If you're Jewish or know Jewish folks, L'shanah tovah . . . or Happy New Year to you and yours . . . to win a bet, go up to virtually any Jew and ask him and/or her to name the upcoming year . . . very few will know the answer: 5070 . . . and it seems like only yesterday it was 5068.

Regardless of your religion, my wish for you is as follows:

May you enjoy your apples and honey.

May you find it easy to give and receive.

May you know when to surrender, and do so with grace.

May you remember that some people's lives are parched dry . . . and be grateful for the abundance in yours.

May you find beauty in unexpected places.

May you carry your loads with ease amid sweetness.

May you learn and teach well.

May you move with as much joy and ease as you can.

May your home be filled with fresh air and light.

May your tense and angry times be short-lived . . . so that you come back quickly to your comfortable ol' self.

May you be startled and delighted by new beginnings.

May you find your uniqueness.

May you play with friends . . . and hear beautiful music.

May you come to the surface for air when you need it.

And may everything that hurts you also be a little funny.

Also, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan . . . and that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#675

9.7.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I joined several friends (and their relatives) for dinner on Saturday at Limones in Asheville . . . that's the two of us, along with Sonny and Jodi:



I tried a new dish for me, sea bass, and enjoyed it immensely . . . it was very tasty . . . Cynthia said her salmon dish was equally good . . . service was a bit on the slow side, and the restaurant was a bit noisy--in part because it got so crowded . . . reservations are therefore a must . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.limonesrestaurant.com>

B. On Sunday, we went with other friends to dinner at what is ordinarily one of our favorite places: Sushi Thai in Asheville; 828.225.8885 . . . Sutra, our favorite waitress, was no longer there; she has left the area to move back home with her parents . . . we instead had a new waitress who tried, but just about every dish we ordered had to be sent back because of various mixups . . . eventually, the food we got was fine--but it was almost like a comedy of errors . . . I'm hopeful that it was one of those rare nights when things go wrong for this restaurant that is usually top notch.

From there, we went to the Lexington Avenue Arts and Fun Festival . . . by the time we got there, it was winding down, but we still had a fun time on the Lazoom Bus where we heard a performance by Kelly Barlow while touring the streets of Asheville . . . she is a one-woman band who enthusiastically plays several instruments while singing hits from Buddy Holly to the Beatles to her own stuff . . . and getting everybody to join her, too . . . we had a blast.

C. MR. CURIOUS HERE:

Will you be watching President Obama's speech on health care reform this coming Wednesday? Or if you can't watch it, at least read it? I hope that you do and, if so, I'd be interested in your reaction to it.

I know there are problems with some of what has been proposed, but to Obama's credit, I do think that he is trying to bring about some change . . . and keep in mind that what has been proposed, to date, is evolutionary in nature; i.e., what eventually becomes legislation will be different than what is out there now--perhaps even radically so.

Regardless of how you feel, I urge you to also:

* Find out how much both the insurance and pharmaceutical industries are contributing to politicians who come out on either side of the proposal.

* Rent the documentary SICKO, if you've never seen it.

* And view this clip of how one politician handled an angry mob when asked for his views:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCNs7Zpqq08>

D. CONDOLENCES to Jean Dolan and family on the loss of her brother, John Anthony Settembrino, who passed away Saturday morning at his residence . . . in lieu of flowers, memorial donations in John's memory may be made to Hillside SPCA, Hillside Road, Pottsville, PA 17901. Online condolences may be sent to:

<http://bestlifetributes.com/>

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

This week, it goes to David McLoughlin--Front Office Manager at the Trenton Marriott in Trenton, NJ.

That is where I stayed last week when "up North" for a meeting at Bucks, as well as for some hypnosis work . . . I booked the hotel at what I thought was a very fair rate via:

<http://www.priceline.com>

I wasn't expecting that much in terms of the facility, but David's hospitality helped make it exceed my expectations . . . he couldn't have been more gracious and largely because of him, I would recommend that others stay here as well when visiting either Mercer County or Bucks County.

In addition, I should mention that all other staffers I encountered were most friendly and helpful too . . . it was nice to constantly be greeted by smiles.

My only disappointment with my stay: The per night parking charge of \$13/night was rather steep, given that no other hotel in the area has any such fee . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/ttnmc-trenton-marriott-at-lafayette-yard/>

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2. FYI

With respect to losing weight or any other-self-defeating behavior, try the following approach that Cynthia recently shared with me:

When you are your own critic and call yourself names like fatso, loser, etc., it is self-defeating.

It's as if you are on a football field, all alone, and you are tackling, tripping and banging into yourself with nobody else around. That is the pain of constantly judging and evaluating yourself. And, of course, it makes you feel miserable, battered and abused. And what do you then do? Eat some more, of course.

Instead of judging and evaluating yourself, try this approach:

1. Watch what you have done on an imaginary TV screen.
2. Take a few deep breaths as you observe what is not working; e.g., eating six cookies unconsciously.
3. And put in the correction, such as simply waiting until you are not hungry.

There is no shame or blame in this approach. It is merely observing your behavior as objectively as you can (that is the purpose behind the TV screen method), giving yourself feedback (that is not moving me to my weight loss goal), and putting in the correction.

SOURCE:

Cynthia based part of the above on one of her favorite books, THIN WITHIN: HOW TO EAT AND LIVE LIKE A THIN PERSON by Judy Wardell

FYI, part 2

* Pat in Pennsylvania (on what I wrote last week about driving while on cellphones):

Yes, there are moron drivers that do not deserve to have the use of a cellphone while driving. I agree. However the bad never outnumbers the good!! I use my cell phone all the time and lots while driving. Its how most if not all of us who earn a living in the field stay competitive. I get stuck behind people who have no business driving and talking. They are the problem and its not everyone who drives and talks on a phone. They are a small few compared to the millions who can talk and drive. Seems the bad ones cannot chew gum and walk at the same time. So why would we expect them to be any different when driving? Sure accidents may happen. But again, its due the select few who have no business driving and talking.

Yes, it does take a certain amount of skill to talk and drive. Since my first cell phone use in the car was in like 1987? I can say that after 22 years of driving and talking on the phone, I feel I do have it down. Not to mention that I have 36 years experience as a licensed driver and 52 years as a passenger. I am not about to surrender that privilege just because of a select few don't have the skill to do two things at once. If someone is going to suggest such a thing will they also demand that pilots give up their head sets and talking to airport people and other planes and people on the plane while flying? The focus of your issues should be on the people who can't talk and drive at the same time and not be limiting or put restrictions on the good ones who can.

* Dan in Pennsylvania added:

Some links to hands free bluetooth speakerphones for the car:

http://www.amazon.com/BlueAnt-Supertooth-Light-Bluetooth-Speakerphone/dp/B000Q6UOZE/ref=sr_1_9?ie=UTF8&s=wireless&qid=1252020560&sr=8-9

http://www.amazon.com/BlueAnt-Supertooth-Light-Bluetooth-Speakerphone/dp/B000Q6R4MK/ref=sr_1_4?ie=UTF8&s=wireless&qid=1252020560&sr=8-4

http://www.amazon.com/BlueAnt-Supertooth-Bluetooth-Speakerphone-Black/dp/B001953NGS/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=wireless&qid=1252020560&sr=8-1

* Dan also had a QUESTION:

I need to learn about the pyramid schemes like Amway. Have you ever taught any classes about them or done any research about them? I would like to be able to analyze such a scheme, in terms of how many levels of profit makers can be supported before the system breaks down, how much, relative to realistic market cost, does the product have to cost to support many levels of profit makers, and who, if anyone, gets screwed in the end. There's got to be some research and data out there.

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

sharkdb@verizon.net and, also, send a copy to me, bginbc@aol.com, so I can share this information with others.

* Nick in North Carolina (with a REQUEST FOR HELP):

Some of you know that I am on the Board of directors for the Buncombe County Rescue Squad. I do this in memory of my son Johnathan, who was a member of that organization. The squad, like every other business, is struggling financially. This is an opportunity to get some much needed cash. The Christie Cookie Company is giving away \$25,000 to the charity with the most votes. There are two things you need to do

to really help.

1. Go to the website and vote for the Buncombe County Rescue Squad. To do this, cut and paste the following link and go to the site to vote. You will need to type in the charity name Buncombe County Rescue Squad, Inc. It is located in Asheville, NC. The contact person is Karen Speed. The link is: <http://ilovechristiecookies.com/contest/>

2. Forward this message to everyone in your address book and ask them to help. Let's see if networking, tweeting, social websites or whatever other means you use to communicate with your friends to win us some money.

If you want to know more about the Rescue Squad, go to this website:

<http://www.buncomberescue.org>

You will be impressed with what they do. The Buncombe County Rescue Squad is a Private Non Profit 501-3C Corporation.

Please help. It will only take a few minutes.

* Linda in Pennsylvania:

Check out this website for a city profile in Asheville that I thought you might enjoy reading:

http://www.usairwaysmag.com/city_profiles/city/asheville/

* Staci in Pennsylvania:

Years ago (I may have been in 8th or 9th grade), a friend's mother had a wonderful meditation CD where someone walked you through going for a walk, sitting down, and it was amazing the visualization I incurred. (See how I still remember it.). Can you suggest something similar; e.g., on iTunes or elsewhere?

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

staci.obrien@comcast.net and, also, send a copy to me, bginbc@aol.com, so I can share this information with others.

* Darcy in Pennsylvania:

I'm now Philadelphia's small business development expert on Examiner.com. My ranking on the site is linked to the number of views of my articles, so I'm inviting you to view my very first article at:

<http://www.examiner.com/examiner/x-22775-Philadelphia-Business-Development-Examiner~y2009m9d5-Ideas-for-promoting-your-small-business>

You can sign up on the site to receive an email every time I post a new article. You also can click on my photo and, from my profile, add me to your list of favorite Examiners.

I'd like to personally send you an email announcing each new article (no more than 3x/week); if you'd like to be removed from this email list, simply reply to this email and put "REMOVE" in the subject line.

If there are any topics you'd like me to address, let me know.

Please forward this email to anyone you think might be interested in the topics of publicity, marketing, advertising, writing and more. If you received this email indirectly and would like to be on the email notification list, please send me an email with "SUBSCRIBE" in the subject line.

My email address is: write2sell@verizon.net

* Just in time for the upcoming Jewish holidays, Art in Pennsylvania was kind enough to send me these two links:

For full explanation of the Shofar and its sacred uses and history, go to:

<http://shofar221.com/>

For the Shofar webpage, go to:

<http://shofar-sounders.com>

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3. Bookstore visit (as told by comic Brian Kiley)

I went to a bookstore and asked the saleswoman, "Where's the self-help section?" She said if she told me, it would defeat the purpose.

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4. Reviews

A. Seek out ADAM, a touching romantic comedy about a man with Asperger's Syndrome whose life is changed when he meets his new neighbor . . . it's a beautiful film with great dialogue that had me caring for the two leading characters, Hugh Dancy and Rose Byrne--both of whom were outstanding . . . the ending was just about perfect, too, especially because it was not the typical Hollywood conclusion to a film of this type . . . rated PG-13.

B. Rather than rush out to rent anything new (there's really not too much out there), I suggest you instead catch ARTHUR . . . Dudley Moore is delightful as the drunk who is about to marry a member of high society, but who falls in love instead with a waitress--played by Liza Minelli in one of her best efforts . . . however, it's the work of John Guilgud as the butler that really made the film soar . . . he won a well-deserved Oscar, as did "Arthur's Theme (Best That You Can Do)" for Best Original Song . . . rated PG.

C. As a kid, I wanted to be a professional baseball player . . . however, I soon came to the realization that no matter how much I practiced, I was never going to become more than a reserve outfielder on my Little League team.

Fortunately, I was lucky to have grasped the concept so well explained in Tom Rath's excellent book, STRENGTHS FINDER 2.0:

* When we're able to put most of our energy into developing our natural talents, extraordinary room for growth exists. So, a revision to the "You-can-be-anything-you-want-to-be" maxim might be more accurate:

You cannot be anything you want to be--but you can be a lot more of who you already are.

So that was when I switched gears and turned my attention away from an athletic career to other directions . . . yet that said, my life would have been a lot easier for me had I been able to assess my talents much earlier in my life.

Rath now makes it possible via this update of his earlier bestseller, *NOW DISCOVER YOUR STRENGTHS* . . . it describes the assessment tool that's available to purchasers of the book (via a unique access code to a website) that enables you to not only determine your talents, but to come up with ideas for putting them into action.

For example, I found myself personally relating to this description of a Developer:

* You see the potential in others. Very often, in fact, potential is all you see. In your view no individual is fully formed. On the contrary, each individual is a work in progress, alive with possibilities. And you are drawn toward people for this very reason. When you interact with others, your goal is to help them experience success. You look for ways to challenge them. You devise interesting experiences that can stretch them and help them grow. And all the while you are on the lookout for the signs of growth--a new behavior learned or modified, a slight improvement in a skill, a glimpse of excellence or of "flow" where previously there were only halting steps. For you these small increments - invisible to some - are clear signs of potential being realized. These signs of growth in others are your fuel. They bring you strength and satisfaction. Over time many will seek you out for help and encouragement because on some level they know that your helpfulness is both genuine and fulfilling to you.

And I also liked what he had to say about working with an Achiever:

* This person may well need less sleep and get up earlier than others. Look to him when these conditions are required on the job. Also, ask him questions such as "How late do you have to work to get this done? Or " When did you come home in this morning?" He will appreciate this kind of attention.

STRENGTHS FINDER 2.0 is the perfect book for you to read if you're not sure if you are in the right job or career . . . in addition, I'd strongly recommend it as a gift for any high school or college student you know who may be struggling with the question of his or her choice of major.

D. Spencer Johnson, billed as "The king of parables" by USA TODAY, has long been one of my favorite authors . . . his *ONE MINUTE MANAGER*, co-authored with Ken Blanchard, helped revolutionize my thinking about management, and his *ONE MINUTE FATHER* helped me become a better parent.

His latest, PEAKS AND VALLEYS, is the story of a young man who lives unhappily in a valley until he meets an old man who lives on a peak . . . this encounter changes the former's life, and it will change yours too as you encounter both good and bad times.

I particularly appreciated being reminded that during bad times, I need to:

* Relax, knowing the valleys end. Do the opposite of what put you in the Valley. Get outside of yourself: Be of more service at work and more loving in life. Uncover the good that is hidden in a bad time and use it to your advantage.

By the same token, when times are good, I need to:

* Be humble and grateful. Do more of what got you there. Keep making things better. Do more for others. Save resources for your upcoming Valleys.

You may think you are reading nothing new here, but the material catches up on you . . . it's something that we all need to be reminded about and Johnson does an excellent job of doing this in PEAKS AND VALLEYS.

I was fortunate to have heard a CD copy of this book, and am glad that I did because it contained a bonus audio interview with the author that shared some of his unique insights on putting the principles to work.

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5. TV alert

From AOL Television, here's information on the Best shows this fall season:

HEAD OF THE CLASS

'V'

ABC's been hunting for a worthy successor to 'Lost' for years now and failing dismally. But the net just may have found one with this sleekly modern remake of the campy '80s show, with vibrant characters and amazing special effects. Oh, and it's scary as hell. We still have goosebumps.

Airs Tue., 8 p.m.on ABC | Premieres Nov. 3

Modern Family'

This smart, wry ABC mockumentary about three "normal" families was our favorite new comedy. Sample line from Ty Burrell's wannabe hip dad: "I surf the web, I text . . . 'LOL' -- laugh out loud, 'OMG' -- oh my god, 'WTF' -- why the face. I know all the dances to 'High School Musical.'" Genius.

Airs Wed., 9 p.m. on ABC | Premieres Sept. 23

HONORS STUDENTS

'Glee'

We won't stop believing in Fox's infectious, quirky, soulful high school dramedy. Aside from fun sing-a-long potential, there are relatable characters of all ages, types and cliques. And speaking of the education system's losers . . .

Airs Wed., 9 p.m. on FOX | Premieres Sept. 9

'Community'

Joel McHale, Chevy Chase and newcomer Danny Pudi headline this band of community-college slackers on NBC. And while 'The Soup' host McHale shines, the entire ensemble works together to make this comedy hum.

Airs Thurs., 9:30 p.m. on NBC | Premieres Sept. 17

'FlashForward'

Where 'V' is more of a thriller, this other ABC drama inherits 'Lost''s more puzzling elements. The central mystery -- Why did everyone black out for two minutes? And were their visions really from the future? -- is absorbing enough for fans to theorize obsessively about it for years to come.

Airs Thurs., 8 p.m. on ABC | Premieres Sept. 24

'The Good Wife'

We can hear the elevator pitch: "What if Bernie Madoff's wife . . . went back to practicing law?!" But CBS' 'The Good Wife' moves beyond its ripped-from-the-headlines origin thanks to a top-notch cast, including star Julianna Margulies (in her first decent gig since 'ER').

Airs Tue., 10 p.m. on CBS | Premieres Sept. 22

NEXT WEEK:

I'll share information on the shows that need work or are just plain terrible . . . as always, I'd be curious as to your reaction when you see these and/or any other new shows . . . what you like, what you dislike--and why.

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6. Companionship

A lonely woman buys a parrot for companionship. After a week, the parrot hasn't uttered a word, so the woman goes back to the pet store and buys it a mirror. Nothing. The next week, she brings home a little ladder. Polly is still incommunicado, so the week after that, she gives it a swing, which elicits not a peep.

A week later, she finds the parrot on the floor of its cage, dying. Summoning up its last breath, the bird whispers, "Don't they have any food at that pet store?"

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7. Websites

A. For the most complete collection of recipes on the Internet, please click:

<http://www.recipezaar.com>

Choose from 372,000 member-contributed recipes. You have the option to search the site by ingredients or browse recipes by course, cuisine, diet, occasion or preparation. There is even nutritional information based on the recipe ingredients. See what others have thought about the recipes, too, because there are plenty of comments from people who have actually made them.

DON'T FORGET:

If you attempt any recipe you find here, I would not be at all crushed if you made some of it for me--and then very nicely chose to also ship it to me.

B. Many kids don't want to get a Facebook friend request from their Mom or Dad . . . see why NOT by clicking:

<http://myparentsjoinedfacebook.com/>

Some of the most embarrassing posts included one mother telling her daughter to stop drinking sodas because she had cavities, another mother requesting "intervention should she ever wear twill, tapered-leg, buttless mom jeans" and the results of one stepfather's "Which sex position fits you best?" quiz.

IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT:

That you're on Facebook and I'm not your friend, that can be changed by sending me an invite . . . or for more information, please feel free to click:

www.facebook.com/blainegreenfield_

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

To see other books I've reviewed, go to "Blaine's Best" to the left and then click on the second part of letter "O" . . . as can be seen, I'm currently #367 in the listing of Amazon's Top 500 reviewers . . . if you'd like to see me move up:

1. Go to:

<http://www.amazon.com>

2. Using the search engine at the top, find some book I've recently reviewed; e.g., THE PASSION TEST.

3. Click on reviews . . . mine will be at the top or toward the top on your right.

4. If you find what I've written helpful, please click YES when prompted.

5. That's it. Thanks in advance!

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8. Computer tip

If you feel you've been a victim of online harassment, please click:

<http://www.wiredsafety.org/>

Self-proclaimed as the world's largest Internet safety, help and education resource, its Frequently Asked Questions (on the left) are invaluable if you are seeking information on such topics as cyberstalking, determining if your child is at risk, spyware and adware.

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9. Place to stay

A Hindu priest, a Rabbi and a lawyer are traveling together and need to find a place to stay for the night. Finding no hotel or motel anywhere for miles, they come to this farm house and ask if they can stay for the night. The farmer says, "Well, OK, but I only have one guest room with one double bed. Someone will have to sleep in the barn."

The Hindu priest says that he will sleep in the barn. The lawyer and Rabbi are getting ready for bed when there comes a knock at the door. "There is a cow in the barn," says the priest. "My religion forbids me to sleep with a cow."

The Rabbi says, "OK, I'll go."

The lawyer and the priest are getting into bed when there comes a knock at the door. "There's a pig in the barn," says the Rabbi. "There's no way I'm sleeping with a pig."

"OK," says the lawyer, "I'll sleep in the barn."

As the priest and rabbi are getting into bed, there's another knock at the door.

It's the pig and the cow.

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10. A quote I like

People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them.--George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), Irish Playwright

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11. Thought for the day

Two days we should not worry

There are two days in every week about which we should not worry, two days which should be kept free from fear and apprehension.

One of these days is Yesterday with all its mistakes and cares, its faults and blunders, its aches and pains.

Yesterday has passed forever beyond our control.
All the money in the world cannot bring back Yesterday.

We cannot undo a single act we performed;
we cannot erase a single word we said.
Yesterday is gone forever.

The other day we should not worry about is Tomorrow with all its possible adversities, its burdens, its large promise and its poor performance; Tomorrow is also beyond our immediate control.

Tomorrow's sun will rise,
either in splendor or behind a mask of clouds, but it will rise.
Until it does, we have no stake in Tomorrow,
for it is yet to be born.

This leaves only one day, Today.
Any person can fight the battle of just one day.
It is when you and I add the burdens of those two awful eternities Yesterday and Tomorrow that we break down.

It is not the experience of Today that drives a person mad,
it is the remorse or bitterness of something which happened Yesterday and the dread of what Tomorrow may bring.

Let us, therefore, Live but one day at a time.

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. Political Cartoonist and Author, Joe Szabo to speak on Constitution Day, September 17, from 12:30-1:30 p.m. in the Gallagher Room at Bucks Community College (Newtown, PA). He'll also be speaking at the Lower Bucks County campus (Bristol, PA) on September 16 from 12:30-1:30 p.m. He will be addressing "Images of America" and share his experience of how America is perceived by other countries. Don't miss this exciting and informative program.

B. The Hicks Art Center Gallery provides changing art exhibitions and related activities for the cultural enrichment of the students and staff at Bucks County Community College and all the residents of Bucks County.

Its next exhibit features more than 40 artists from the mid-Atlantic region whose work is made with recycled or reused materials. Guest curator, Rebecca Kelly, will give a gallery talk at 6 p.m. on Thursday, September 17.

C. Yours truly is speaking to the residents of my development, Biltmore Lake, on Friday, September 25, at 7 p.m. . . . the topic, "Four-mula 4 Success," the 4 things you need to do every day to market yourself and/or business . . . if you'd like to attend as my guest, please drop me an email to that effect . . . put SEPTEMBER 25 the subject line of your email.

D. If you're a jazz and blues fan, come on out Sunday, September 27th for a full day of jazz at Katmandu, Route 29, in Trenton, NJ. The music starts at 10 a.m. and ends at 6 p.m.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.jazzon2.org/katmandu.pdf>

PS. Hoping that you get to enjoy Labor Day, I invite you to celebrate just one of the gains the labor movement has brought by clicking:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7E82ozXyNjk>

Make sure your speakers are turned up for this make that way up!

After, please then click this click from the History Channel on the history of the holiday:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZkq7d4lyrw>

Please also join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan . . . and that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

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8.31.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had a rare week apart when I had to go "up North" to attend an In-Service Day meeting at Bucks County Community College . . . I think it was a waste of my time and money, especially given the fact that I'm just teaching one online Creativity course this fall . . . my thinking is that there should be an online option for such meetings, especially for faculty members living out of town . . . but despite several attempts on my part to arrange such an option, none was made available.

B. Yet all was not lost because I also used the time to complete the hours needed for my hypnosis certification from the National Guild of Hypnotists . . . I did so by running two group stress reduction/self-hypnosis sessions, attended by 23 folks, and then was able to schedule seven individual appointments to help with such problems as smoking cessation, weight loss and conscious eating.

THE OFFER REMAINS:

Just like I did when in Bucks County, I'm willing to work with you--particularly if you live anywhere near the Asheville, NC area--to help you kick any habit you want to break . . . as you may have heard me say, I can help you lose your luggage without going to the airport.

I'm still not charging anything for this service . . . my only expectation is that, in return, you'll give me 100% effort toward meeting whatever goal you set for yourself.

C. I did get to grab a dinner with my daughter Risa and her husband JP at Michael's Restaurant, a diner located at 2991 Brunswick Pike, Lawrenceville, NJ; 609.530.1681 . . . the food there is both plentiful and reasonably-priced . . . also, I got to squeeze-in two visits with my favorite chiropractor, Dr. Wendy Attadgie:

<http://attadgiechiropractic.com/index.php>

She is the absolute BEST, as is her massage therapist Dana Pringle . . . hey, you just know that if I was going to get an adjustment, I was also going to get myself a massage--and I did that two separate times.

I even managed to catch a show with my friends Natalie and Ivan: DANGEROUS CORNER . . . it's a psychological drawing-room thriller that was well-performed by the Langhorne Players . . . George Hartpence, as always, was excellent in one of the starring roles . . . his wife, Carol Thompson, also shined . . . do catch it if you can; it runs through September 12 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.langhorneplayers.org>

D. MR. CURIOUS HERE:

Do you text while driving? I sincerely hope NOT, but if you do or know somebody who engages in this practice, please click:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7rdV9ADjpcg>

What about using your cellphone while driving? I've come to the conclusion, somewhat belatedly, that using a cellphone while driving can be equally distracting . . . to see for yourself, please click:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAILZD2LrC8>

Think of the above clip when you next look down to pick up your phone, dial a number, take a call, etc. . . . headsets help--but not when it comes to taking your eyes away from the road.

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

This week, it goes to Staci O'Brien--an Independent Agent representing Aflac (American Family Life Insurance Company of Columbus).

When Bucks would inexplicably not allow me to use a room for the hypnotism sessions mentioned in Section 1B, Staci stepped forward--at the request of her mom--and graciously offered the use of her office . . . this meant that she had to come in and then stay around for some three hours until the last person had left . . . in addition, Staci helped with the recruiting efforts, personally inviting some of her friends and coworkers to attend.

Staci, by the way, is now wearing another hat for Aflac; she's a Coordinator in Training . . . I can see why she's moving up the ladder there . . . she's a real people person, interested in helping others.

If you'd want to contact her with questions about Aflac, the company that sells insurance for daily living to help you and your family with unexpected expenses, she can be reached at 267.251.3151. Or via email: staci_obrien@us.aflac.com

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2. FYI

If you want to declutter your home or office, consider donating any unwanted books to Better World Books. When you do so, you'll be promoting global literacy in the process.

You even get a prepaid shipping label for three or more books. The company then resells them online and proceeds go to help nonprofit literacy and education charities.

To date, Better World Books had contributed \$6.6 million to charity. If any book can't be sold, it is simply sent directly to one of five main partners: Books for Africa, Room to Read, Worldfund, the National Center for Family Literacy or Invisible Children Inc.

Or if you're simply looking to trade-in your old books for new reading material, then check out Bookins Inc., which enables you to swap your dusty, neglected novels for any of 500,000 books or 30,000 DVDs from other people across the country. Cost in only \$4.49 for shipping items you receive (those you send out are free), and everything's done through a centralized warehouse.

For more information, visit either:

www.betterworld.com

or

www.bookins.com

FYI, part 2

* Kevin in Pennsylvania:

I'm writing to let you know that Ginny is doing very well at Neshaminy Manor Home (NMH) in Doylestown. She enjoys every day and walks and smiles with everyone. Although it was difficult to make the move from our home of 25 years to NMH, we've had the best possible outcome. The staff is so loving and caring for her.

In honor of Ginny's phenomenal care and to aid and support the on-going efforts of the activities at NMH, I am pleased to invite you to attend and/or donate to their annual Alzheimer's Awareness Walk. It's a loop around the facility, and I will be there and many of the residents, their families and friends. It's unknown whether we'll be able/want to get Ginny out to participate, but that will be something we face that day.

WHEN?

Saturday September 20th, 2009: Registration begins at 10:30 a.m. and after a brief stretch, it's off to the races for a loop around the building. Probably will end by 11:30 a.m. Rain or shine.

DONATE?

If you wish to join me and make a small or large donation to their great effort and support the continued activities they provide: Please send a check made out to NESHAMINY MANOR to me (Kevin Jameson) at PO Box 431, Doylestown, PA 18901. I will bring it along with me at the event. Thank you

in advance!

Feel free to call me anytime if you want to visit with Ginny or talk about anything!

With Love and Regards, Kevin . . . 215.345.6676

* Jo in Pennsylvania (with a REQUEST FOR HELP):

I have a question for you and fellow newsletter readers (if you don't mind). My sister-in-law was in an auto accident. After 30 some days, she's home from the hospital (health coverage says time's up) and doing outpatient rehab. I think I had sent you the website that Jonson and I put together to help organize fundraising efforts. Anyway, there's more details there:

<http://www.friendsofcherylsanderford.org/>

The question is about buying private health insurance. Brian (my brother) sent this to family today . . .

If anyone knows of a good (cheap with good benefits) private insurance option let me know. I've seen some of the ones on TV and online, but they are not really insurance, more like discounts.

Do you have any leads on that, and if not, would you mind inquiring? I would REALLY appreciate it. Their insurance is about to run out. and she still has a long road of therapy ahead.

* Floyd in Pennsylvania:

I can say one thing: Every time I read your column, I find ways to cheat on any diet I was ever thinking of . . . LOL.

I think if I'm ever through or near your area, I'll be trying more than one place to eat.

MY TWO CENTS:

I do eat out with Cynthia quite often, but whenever we do or when we're eating home for that matter, we tend to watch what we eat . . . we often split meals in half, so that we can take a portion for another meal . . . we almost always order dressings and sauces on the side . . . we always refuse the bread tray . . . and I only have ice cream now once a week as a "special treat."

* Scott in Pennsylvania, continuing to amaze me with finding so much FREE stuff out there:

Free Subscription to Drive Performance

<http://driveperformance.subaru.com/Subscribe/Default.aspx>

Free Subscription to LEGO Magazine!

This 12 issue subscription is a great gift idea, too! Call 1.866.534.6258, Monday to Saturday. You'll need to join the LEGO Club (it's free!) and give the operator this special code: EGG26.

Free Fruitista Freeze Printable Coupon@ TACO BELL:

<http://www.kzzp.com/pages/promo/taco-bell/images/free-fruitista-coupon.jpg>

* Michael in Nevada (on the subject of PAWN STARS, the TV show):

Every morning I work out in the same gym as Rick, the "blue collar historian" co-owner of the pawn shop. I hear some of the stories he tells on the show. He also graduated from the school of Hard Knox.

* Dana in Pennsylvania:

Saw TIME TRAVELER'S WIFE. It was pretty good, but not great . . . not THAT bad, though!

* Linda in North Carolina (on THE MASTERY OF LOVE):

That good, huh? And the FOUR AGREEMENTS is not a "Christian" book?

ANSWERS:

Yes. No. (It is a spiritual book that would be of interest to virtually any reader.)

* Mel in Colorado:

What also should have been included in that book [MASTERY] is another helpful rule: What other people say about you, is NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!

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3. Cooperation

At one point during a game, the coach called one of his 9-year-old baseball players aside and asked, "Do you understand what cooperation is? What a team is?" The little boy nodded in the affirmative.

"Do you understand that what matters is whether we win or lose together as a team?" The little boy nodded yes. "So," the coach continued, "I'm sure you know, when an out is called, you shouldn't argue, curse, attack the umpire or call him a pecker-head.

"Do you understand all that?" Again the little boy nodded. He continued, "And when I take you out of the game so another boy gets a chance to play, it's not good sportsmanship to call your coach a dumb a*s, is it?" Again the little boy nodded.

"Good," said the coach. "Now go over there and explain all that to your grandmother."

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4. Reviews

A. INGLORIOUS BASTERDS is up there with the best films I've seen so far this year (along with 500 DAYS OF SUMMER) . . . it is director Quentin Tarantino's revisionist look at how a group of Jewish soldiers engage in targeted acts of retribution against the Germans in World War II . . . there's

humor, suspense, great dialogue and outstanding performances from Brad Pitt, Mélanie Laurent and Diane Kruger; however, it's Christopher Waltz who steals just about every scene he's in . . . if he is not nominated for an Oscar, I would be both surprised and disappointed . . . be forewarned that there is a good amount of violence, but please don't let that deter you . . . rated R.

B. THE SOLOIST is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #656 follows:

Cynthia and I had been seeing coming attractions for THE SOLOIST for months and couldn't wait to see it . . . the film, based on a true story about a homeless man with amazing musical talent who is befriended by a newspaper columnist, looked like it couldn't miss being a winner . . . sad to say, when we did get to see it this past week, our reaction was one of disappointment . . . we found it watchable, in large part because of the performances of Jamie Foxx and Robert Downey Jr. in the two main roles . . . they were fine, but overall, THE SOLOIST just didn't register with us . . . we weren't as moved by it as we had both hoped and thought we would be . . . rated PG-13.

C. Joseph Finder writes corporate thrillers (PARANOIA, POWER PLAY, etc) as well as any author today . . . his latest, VANISHED, is no exception.

It is the story of Nick Heller, a tough and smart investigator with a private intelligence firm, who is asked to help find his estranged brother . . . he does so, largely to keep his brother's son and wife alive.

From page 1, the story speeds along at a pace that kept me turning pages . . . along the way, I really began to feel for the main characters--a fact that made the book even more interesting than books of a similar nature.

In particular, Finder's use of dialogue keeps things moving along . . . and even had me smiling at times, for example as exemplified by these passages:

* You call that music?" I said. Just like old farts have been saying to teenage kids for generations. I imagine Mozart's dad said something like that, too.

* "Marriage is great--for some people. I just don't think it's in my skill set."

* My brother and I used to tell a joke when we were kids that went something like this: Hey, did you hear PLAYBOY just came out with a magazine just for married men? Yep. Every month, the centerfold's exactly the same woman.

The chase for those responsible for the disappearance of Nick's brother had me wondering what would happen until the very satisfying conclusion of VANISHED.

I only wonder how Finder will top this effort, which is the first in a proposed series about the main character.

D. A good friend had been touting Marshall Sylver for several

months . . . she kept telling me how his programs were excellent, and that I should listen to them.

So I finally broke down and just finished PASSION, PROFIT & POWER--written and read by Sylver . . . and in doing so, I found out that my friend was right: the author (also a well-known hypnotist) has many good ideas that can be applied to just about any profession.

This particular effort is subtitled "A SUBCONSCIOUS REPROGRAMING SYSTEM TO HELP YOU CREATE THE RELATIONSHIPS, MONEY AND PERSONAL WELL-BEING THAT YOU DESERVE NOW! . . . in large part, it is the subconscious part that makes it so valuable . . . Sylver first presents the ideas, then helps you learn them by showing you how self-hypnosis can be utilized for this purpose.

Among the useful tidbits I gained from listening were these:

- * If you're the one who notices you're in the middle of a disagreement, it's your responsibility to get things back on track when you know they're off.
- * The key question to ask yourself--to know you're in a healthy relationship--is whether you are getting more in your life because of the relationship than you would get if you were out of it.
- * Another great way to gain rapport with someone else is to get them talking about themselves.
- * Regarding habits, it usually takes 21 days to form on. . . . To change a habit, you must first tell yourself that it's already done. Affirm the change is occurring in the present.
- * There are three massively effective programming words to plunge from your vocabulary to get more of what you want: try, attempt and but.
- * Also avoid "whimp" words: hope and if.

The accompanying workbook is excellent, as are the exercises that are contained in it . . . my favorite one had you think about and then write down "your perfect day of work."

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5. TV alert

A. Boxing fans will want to catch MAYWEATHER/MARQUEZ 24/7, an account of the training camps of undefeated Floyd Mayweather and JuanManual Marquez who are preparing for their upcoming September 19 fight . . . Episode #1 airs on Thursday at 7:30 p.m. on HBO and Episode #2 is on Saturday at 10 p.m.

B. To save yourself in a nuclear attack, watch SURVIVING DISTASTER on Thursday at 11 p.m. on SPIKE . . . new episodes run on Tuesdays at 10 p.m.

The website features other useful information; e.g., how to survive a

burning high-rise, as well as a hijack . . . to see for yourself, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/lrlgqc>

C. Dangerous roads throughout the world are examined on MODERN MARVELS on Friday at 8 p.m. on HISTORY.

D. MICHEL LOFTUS: YOU'VE CHANGED features the razor-tongued comedian on Friday at 10 p.m. on COMEDY CENTRAL.

If you're not familiar with him, please click:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jWk13vp9cII>

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6. State of the art

A man was telling his neighbor, "I just bought a new hearing aid. It cost me \$6,000, but it is state of the art."

"What kind is it?"

"Twelve thirty."

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7. Websites

A. Regardless of how you feel about the health care proposals that are being discussed, please click:

<http://grandrants.wordpress.com/2009/07/27/obamacare-the-musical/>

Make sure your sound is on . . . that way, you'll get to listen to ObamaCare: The Musical!

B. A few weeks ago, there was an unassisted triple play in major league baseball . . . see it for yourself by clicking:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UG7rMRs6BFA>

Even if you're not a baseball fan, methinks this is one website that you'll want to forward to your friends and/or relatives who may like the sport.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

If you've ever wondered what this website is all about, just look at the box at the very top of the homepage (in the middle).

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8. Computer tip

Previously (in BLAINESWORLD #651), I mentioned how easy it was to set up a FREE Google alert; e.g., to notify you whenever you are mentioned somewhere online . . . if you missed that information, please click:

<http://www.google.com/alerts>

If you feel there are lies that appear in the records of Google and other search engines, please click:

www.reputationdefender.com

There's a charge for the above service, but keep it in mind if you ever in the future.

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9. Frantic

A psychiatrist gets a frantic call.

"You've got to help me, Doctor," a woman says. "My husband thinks he's a big opera star. Every night, he sings every word at the top of his lungs! Aida! Rigoletto! Traviata!"

"Send him to me," the shrink says. "I'll see what I can do."

A week later, the woman calls again. "Doc, I don't know how you did it! He's not singing nearly as much. Did you cure his delusion?"

"No," says the psychiatrist. "I just gave him a smaller part."

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10. A quote I like

Pain is inevitable. Suffering is optional.--Anam Thubten Rinpoche, spiritual adviser and charma teacher for the Dharmata Foundation . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.dharmatameditation.com/tulku-thubten.html>

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11. Thought for the day

The following is longish, but it is a "MUST" read. Be forewarned that it is also a tearjerker.

To my dog loving friends (and others will like it, too):

They told me the big black Lab's name was Reggie as I looked at him lying in his pen. The shelter was clean, no-kill, and the people really friendly. I'd only been in the area for six months, but everywhere I went in the small college town, people were welcoming and open. Everyone waves when you pass them on the street.

But something was still missing as I attempted to settle in to my new life here, and I thought a dog couldn't hurt. Give me someone to talk to. And I had just seen Reggie's advertisement on the local news. The shelter said they had received numerous calls right after, but they said the people who had come down to see him just didn't look like "Lab people," whatever that meant. They must've thought I did.

But at first, I thought the shelter had misjudged me in giving me Reggie and his things, which consisted of a dog pad, bag of toys almost all of which were brand new tennis balls, his dishes, and a sealed letter from his previous owner. See, Reggie and I didn't really hit it off when we got home. We struggled for two weeks (which is how long the shelter told me to give him to adjust to his new home). Maybe it was the fact that I was trying to adjust, too. Maybe we were too much alike.

For some reason, his stuff (except for the tennis balls--he wouldn't go anywhere without two stuffed in his mouth) got tossed in with all of my other unpacked boxes. I guess I didn't really think he'd need all his old stuff, that I'd get him new things once he settled in. But it became pretty clear pretty soon that he wasn't going to.

I tried the normal commands the shelter told me he knew, ones like "sit" and "stay" and "come" and "heel," and he'd follow them--when he felt like it. He never really seemed to listen when I called his name--sure, he'd look in my direction after the fourth or fifth time I said it, but then he'd just go back to doing whatever. When I'd ask again, you could almost see him sigh and then grudgingly obey.

This just wasn't going to work. He chewed a couple shoes and some unpacked boxes. I was a little too stern with him and he resented it, I could tell. The friction got so bad that I couldn't wait for the two weeks to be up, and when it was, I was in full-on search mode for my cellphone amid all of my unpacked stuff. I remembered leaving it on the stack of boxes for the guest room, but I also mumbled, rather cynically, that the "damn dog probably hid it on me."

Finally I found it, but before I could punch up the shelter's number, I also found his pad and other toys from the shelter. I tossed the pad in Reggie's direction and he snuffed it and wagged, some of the most enthusiasm I'd seen since bringing him home. But then I called, "Hey, Reggie, you like that? Come here and I'll give you a treat." Instead, he sort of glanced in my direction--maybe "glared" is more accurate--and then gave a discontented sigh and flopped down. With his back to me.

Well, that's not going to do it either, I thought. And I punched the shelter phone number.

But I hung up when I saw the sealed envelope. I had completely forgotten about that, too. "Okay, Reggie," I said out loud, "let's see if your previous owner has any advice." . . .

To Whoever Gets My Dog:

Well, I can't say that I'm happy you're reading this, a letter I told the shelter could only be opened by Reggie's new owner.

I'm not even happy writing it. If you're reading this, it means I just got back from my last car ride with my Lab after dropping him off at the shelter. He knew something was different. I have packed up his pad and toys before and set them by the back door before a trip, but this time . . . it's like he

knew something was wrong. And something is wrong . . . which is why I have to go to try to make it right.

So let me tell you about my Lab in the hopes that it will help you bond with him and he with you.

First, he loves tennis balls. the more the merrier. Sometimes I think he's part squirrel, the way he hordes them. He usually always has two in his mouth, and he tries to get a third in there. Hasn't done it yet. Doesn't matter where you throw them, he'll bound after it, so be careful--really don't do it by any roads. I made that mistake once, and it almost cost him dearly.

Next, commands. Maybe the shelter staff already told you, but I'll go over them again: Reggie knows the obvious ones--"sit," "stay," "come," "heel." He knows hand signals: "back" to turn around and go back when you put your hand straight up; and "over" if you put your hand out right or left. "Shake" for shaking water off, and "paw" for a high-five. He does "down" when he feels like lying down--I bet you could work on that with him some more. He knows "ball" and "food" and "bone" and "treat" like nobody's business.

I trained Reggie with small food treats. Nothing opens his ears like little pieces of hot dog.

Feeding schedule: twice a day, once about seven in the morning, and again at six in the evening. Regular store-bought stuff; the shelter has the brand.

He's up on his shots. Call the clinic on 9th Street and update his info with yours; they'll make sure to send you reminders for when he's due. Be forewarned: Reggie hates the vet. Good luck getting him in the car--I don't know how he knows when it's time to go to the vet, but he knows.

Finally, give him some time. I've never been married, so it's only been Reggie and me for his whole life. He's gone everywhere with me, so please include him on your daily car rides if you can. He sits well in the backseat, and he doesn't bark or complain. He just loves to be around people, and me most especially.

Which means that this transition is going to be hard, with him going to live with someone new.

And that's why I need to share one more bit of info with you . . .

His name's not Reggie.

I don't know what made me do it, but when I dropped him off at the shelter, I told them his name was Reggie. He's a smart dog, he'll get used to it and will respond to it, of that I have no doubt. But I just couldn't bear to give them his real name. For me to do that, it seemed so final, that handing him over to the shelter was as good as me admitting that I'd never see him again. And if I end up coming back, getting him, and tearing up this letter, it means everything's fine. But if someone else is reading it, well . . . well it means that his new owner should know his real name. It'll help you bond with him. Who knows, maybe you'll even notice a change in his demeanor if he's been giving you problems?

His real name is Tank.

Because that is what I drive.

Again, if you're reading this and you're from the area, maybe my name

has been on the news. I told the shelter that they couldn't make "Reggie" available for adoption until they received word from my company commander. See, my parents are gone, I have no siblings, no one I could've left Tank with . . . and it was my only real request of the Army upon my deployment to Iraq, that they make one phone call to the shelter . . . in the "event"... to tell them that Tank could be put up for adoption. Luckily, my colonel is a dog guy, too, and he knew where my platoon was headed. He said he'd do it personally. And if you're reading this, then he made good on his word.

Well, this letter is getting to downright depressing, even though, frankly, I'm just writing it for my dog. I couldn't imagine if I was writing it for a wife and kids and family. But still, Tank has been my family for the last six years, almost as long as the Army has been my family.

And now I hope and pray that you make him part of your family and that he will adjust and come to love you the same way he loved me.

That unconditional love from a dog is what I took with me to Iraq as an inspiration to do something selfless, to protect innocent people from those who would do terrible things . . . and to keep those terrible people from coming over here. If I had to give up Tank in order to do it, I am glad to have done so. He was my example of service and of love. I hope I honored him by my service to my country and comrades.

All right, that's enough. I deploy this evening and have to drop this letter off at the shelter. I don't think I'll say another good-bye to Tank, though. I cried too much the first time. Maybe I'll peek in on him and see if he finally got that third tennis ball in his mouth.

Good luck with Tank. Give him a good home, and give him an extra kiss goodnight--every night--from me.

Thank you,
Paul Mallory

I folded the letter and slipped it back in the envelope. Sure I had heard of Paul Mallory, everyone in town knew him, even new people like me. Local kid, killed in Iraq a few months ago and posthumously earning the Silver Star when he gave his life to save three buddies. Flags had been at half-mast all summer.

I leaned forward in my chair and rested my elbows on my knees, staring at the dog.

"Hey, Tank," I said quietly.

The dog's head whipped up, his ears cocked and his eyes bright.

"C'mere boy."

He was instantly on his feet, his nails clicking on the hardwood floor. He sat in front of me, his head tilted, searching for the name he hadn't heard in months.

"Tank," I whispered.

His tail swished.

I kept whispering his name, over and over, and each time, his ears lowered, his eyes softened, and his posture relaxed as a wave of contentment just

seemed to flood him. I stroked his ears, rubbed his shoulders, buried my face into his scruff and hugged him.

"It's me now, Tank, just you and me. Your old pal gave you to me." Tank reached up and licked my cheek. "So whatdaya say we play some ball?" His ears perked again.

"Yeah? Ball? You like that? Ball?" Tank tore from my hands and disappeared in the next room.

And when he came back, he had three tennis balls in his mouth.

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

NOTE:

I checked and found the above is not true, but it does serve as a good reminder of how much those in the service give to our country . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.snopes.com/glurge/reggie.asp>

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12. Advance planning department

A. Labor Day Sale!

Tunc and Edinah asked me to share this sale that will be running in Sarar, their store, from 9.4 to 9.7:

Buy 1, get 2 free

Everything in the store (except accessories).

Locations: Madison Ave. (at 46th Street) in NYC and, also, at Garden State Plaza, Paramus, and Central Valley, NY.

Print this part of the newsletter to show Tunc or Edinah . . . or if they're not there and the store doesn't recognize the "coupon," have the manager call either of my friends.

For more information about all the Sarar stores, please click:

<http://www.sarar.com/en.html>

B. Yours truly is speaking to the residents of my development, Biltmore Lake, on Friday, September 25, at 7 p.m. . . . the topic, "Four-mula 4 Success," the 4 things you need to do every day to market yourself and/or business . . . if you'd like to attend as my guest, please drop me an email to that effect . . . put SEPTEMBER 25 the subject line of your email.

C. Get your tickets now to hear Nikki Giovanni, acclaimed poet and writer . . . she is speaking on "The Balm that is Poetry" and reading from her new book BICYCLES on Friday, September 25, 7:00 in the Gateway Auditorium at Bucks County Community College in Newtown, PA. Also on the program is Kim Allen of Sister Sledge ("We are Family").

Tickets \$10; \$5 for students. Go to:

www.bucks.edu/tickets

or contact Natalie Kaye, 215.968.8015 or kayen@bucks.edu.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#673

8.24.2009

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-

1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I will probably remember our first year (and most especially the summer) in Asheville as the time when we had lots of visitors.

This past week alone, we got to see our financial adviser Ed Kohlhepp and his lovely wife Betsy . . . that's the four of us, overlooking both downtown Asheville and the mountains that surround us:

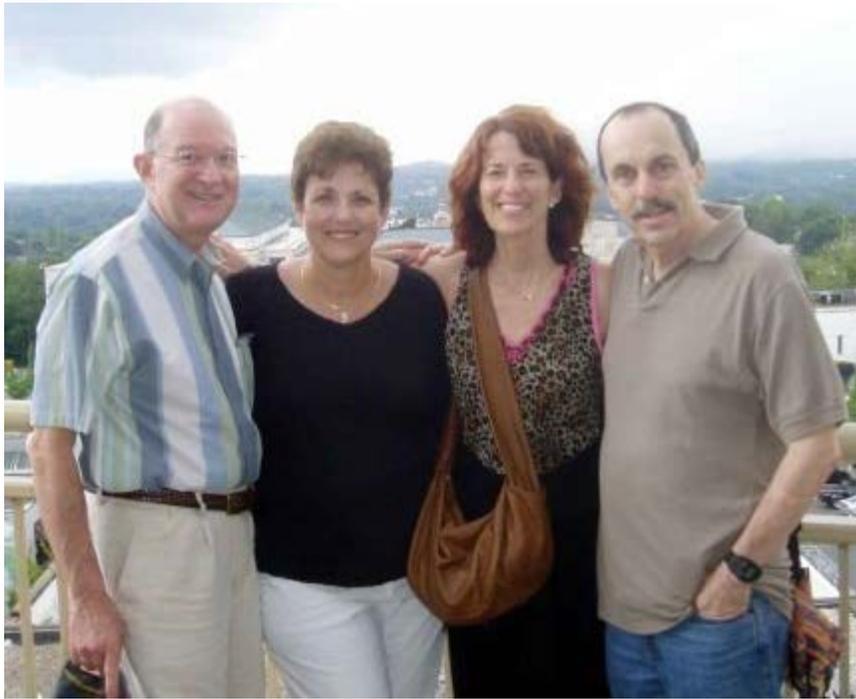
We also had a great dinner at Carmel's (my trout was outstanding, and Cynthia liked her salmon too) . . . for more information, please click:

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

And, naturally, we got to speak to Ed about our finances . . . we are still hanging in there, in large part due to his great advice over the years . . . for more information about his firm, please click:

<http://www.kohlheppadvisors.com>

B. Shortly after, our good friends Chic and Joni Dowburd arrived . . . see below for a picture of all of us, taken while we were strolling the grounds of the Grove Park Inn:



We even got to see a show with them: *REAL ESTATE*, which is still playing through September 6 at the Flat Rock Playhouse . . . it is a romantic comedy that we all enjoyed, in large part because of star Scott Treadway's funny performance as a guy trying to sell his house . . . his agent, played by Leslie Marie Collins, had us laughing too . . . for more information, please click:



<http://www.flatrockplayhouse.org/>

C. Earlier in the week, our friend Paul Licitra was also in town . . . Cynthia was busy that day, but I at least got to meet him for lunch at the Tupelo Honey Cafe . . . that's him on the left, along with his friend Pat LaCorte:



As is the case with many places in town, I've never had a meal there that I didn't like . . . my usual favorite is the sweet potato (oversized) pancake; however, this day I tried the homemade granola with fresh fruit and yogurt . . . it proved to be another winner . . . for more information, please click:

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

And lest I forget (on the subject of fine restaurants), Paul of course owns the Tuscany at the Towpath House in New Hope, PA . . . self-proclaimed as "New Hope's most romantic restaurant," it is another place where I've never had a bad meal . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.tuscanytowpathhouse.com>

D. Lastly, just by ourselves, we had our 6-month checkups from our dentist--Dr. Joseph Younger . . . all was fine; however, I mention this fact because of something that Dr. Younger does that really impresses us . . . he takes the X-rays that all dentists do, but then he has a machine that seems to enlarge them . . . he then proceeds to review what is happening in your mouth, right in front of you (as compared to other dentists who look at your X-rays on some viewing surface that is halfway across the room) . . . as he does so, he points out both the good and the bad . . . or make that, the things that will need more work--either then or some time in the future.

Should you want to make Dr. Younger your dentist, he can be reached at 828.277.9907 . . . you won't go wrong!

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

This week, it goes to Ana Pena--the cleaning person who helps keep our house looking as good as it does.

Cynthia and I were fortunate to find Ana shortly after moving in this past January, thanks to the recommendation of our neighbor Harry . . she does good work--actually, fantastic work--and her friendly disposition helps brighten our day.

She is both reliable and punctual, and we recommend her highly . . .in fact, many of our other neighbors have started to use her.

The good news is that if you live anywhere near the Candler area in North Carolina, Ana still has some slots open on her busy schedule . . . so if you'd like to have your house sparkle, give her a call at 828.230.7876.

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2. FYI

Look at your current cellphone or cable bill . . . then ask around to see what other rates are "out there" . . . if you find something cheaper (and you probably can), call back your current company . . . ask to see if the lower rate can be matched . . . in almost all instances, it can and will be . . . you can probably save \$10-30 per month this way and spread over a year, that can pay for at least one night out for you and a guest . . . or if you don't want to go out, feel free to make a contribution to the "BGPF, which is otherwise known as the Blaine Greenfield Pocket Fund.

FYI, part 2

* Deb in Colorado:

I had the gift of the opportunity to save the life of a 4 year old boy today.If you haven't taken CPR, please do. You never know where, when or whose life you may save. Thank you to the Universe for having me be where I was needed at the exact moment I was needed. Grateful!

MY TWO CENTS:

Way to go, Deb. And thanks for the reminder.

* MaryEllen in New Jersey:

Since you are already a melanoma champ, basal cell will be nothing. I am having my 5th MOHS surgery for basal cell at the end of September, all on my face. I go to Dr. Shah in Parsippany, and she is wonderful. Good luck with it and thanks for the friendly reminder lecture!

* Sharon in North Carolina:

And people ask me why I don't like shopping Best Buy unless I have to . . . things like this:

<http://tinyurl.com/n7e6fa>

The number one rule of responsible consumerism is to know more about what you're buying than the guy selling it to you.

* Maria in Pennsylvania:

My sister was supposed to come up and visit in September, but due to poor health had to cancel. She has 2 tickets to the event below. The tickets cost \$199.50 each; that's what she's asking. If you or anyone you know might be interested, here are the details:

Wed Sept 9, 8:00 Carnegie Hall, Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage;
Second Tier Center Left Section T3, Row/Box 40, Seats 2 & 3.
"An Evening with Andrea Bocelli and the New York Philharmonic."

If interested, please contact Maria at 215.968.5364 or via email:
maria@chilipeppercandles.com

* Several readers responded to the accent quiz in last week's issue;
among them:

John in Pennsylvania: That quiz got me right on the nose:
Philadelphia.

Scott in Pennsylvania: Me, too. And I loved his other comment:
We'll let youse in anywho .

Sally in North Carolina: Pegged me for Philadelphia. Didn't quite
jibe with my Louisiana upbringing..

Debbie in Louisiana: Used to be in radio, and I have a Cajun accent.

Nicholas in Vermont: The Midland.

MY RESULTS:

Philadelphia, but maybe because there wasn't a New Yawk option?
(Or at least I didn't see one.)

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3. Mother to daughter advice

Cook a man a fish and you feed him for a day.

But teach a man to fish and you get rid of him
for the whole weekend.

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4. Reviews

A. I'm a sucker for movies about time travel, but that said, I recommend
that you skip THE TIME TRAVELER'S WIFE . . . by doing so, you'll
save yourself some 1 hour and 47 minutes of time that you can spend
doing something more enjoyable . . . this film, based on the best-selling
book about a love that transcends time , dragged from beginning
to end . . . I just couldn't get into caring about the main characters
played by Eric Bana and Rachel McAdams (normally an actress
who I like), and the production values were about the cheesiest
I've ever seen . . . rated PG-13.

B. SUNSHINE CLEANING is now out in DVD format . . . my review
from BLAINESWORLD #654 follows;

SUNSHINE CLEANING is a quirky comedy-drama, stars Amy Adams
and Emily Blunt (so fine in THE GREAT BUCK HOWARD, a film I reviewed
last week) as two sisters who join forces to start a crime-scene

cleanup business . . . parts of it are funny, while others are quite touching . . . the supporting cast includes Alan Arkin and Steve Zahn, both among my favorite actors . . . it will remind you of LITTLE MISS SUSHINE, and that's no surprise given that the producers were the same . . . rated R.

C. Way back when God was a little girl, my undergraduate major at Rider University was journalism . . . I wanted to someday be a sports columnist and so when I heard that Bob Greene wrote about his days as a young journalist in LATE EDITION: A LOVE STORY, I knew that was a book that I just had to read.

Was it ever a trip down memory lane!

Greene, long one of my favorite authors (WHEN WE GET TO SURF CITY, ONCE UPON A TOWN, etc.), worked as a copyboy and in other apprentice positions for the COLLUMBUS CITIZEN-JOURNAL and the COLUMBLUS DISPATCH, two rival newspapers in Ohio's capital city, just a few years before I began college . . . he recalls those days with affection as he writes:

* In some American cities, famous journalists at mighty and world-renowned papers changed the course of history with their reporting. . . . [that didn't matter to Greene; his joy was in the fact that each morning . . .] I get to go down to the paper again.

Or when he comments that:

* I found myself not wanting days off, even though I had to take them. Nothing that could happen on a day away from work could match the delights of the sports desk.

I also liked his account of lessons he learned while a young reporter, particularly this one about his coverage of a tennis match:

* I suppose if you want to be resolute about it, there were two lessons to be taken from having written the story. One: When you write something about someone, you should anticipate the moment when you will have to look that person in the eye. Two: If you were correct in what you wrote, you won't have to worry when the person's eyes meet yours.

Toward the end of LATE EDITION, Greene tells about his visit to the pressroom of one of the papers that he had worked at (that was in the process of closing) . . . it touched me and got me recalling how much I missed not having two newspapers delivered to my doorstep every single day.

D. Heard the CD version of THE MASTERY OF LOVE: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO THE ART OF RELATONSHIP by Don Miguel Ruiz . . . if the name is familiar, it is because it should be . . . he had previously written one of the finest books I've ever read, THE FOUR AGREEMENTS (about the self-limiting beliefs that hold us apart and what we need to do to bypass them).

MASTERY is a natural follow-up . . . it is not very long and can be listened to and/or heard in one sitting, but methinks that would not be a wise thing to do . . . I'd instead recommend that you take your time with it, so you can reflect upon the many insights shared by Ruiz:

Among them:

* The right woman or man for you is the one you love exactly as is . . . that you don't need to change at all.

* It's easy to love your dog because your dog doesn't have opinions about you. Your dog loves you unconditionally.

* [when it comes to truth] There are three rules:

1. Don't believe me. I am not responsible for what you understand.

2. Don't believe yourself. Don't believe in the lies you tell yourself; e.g., you're not good enough.

3. Don't believe anybody else. Nothing they say will guide you to your happiness.

And perhaps most importantly:

* We are born to enjoy life, not to suffer.

Narration was done by the husband-and-wife team of Jill Eikenberry and Michael Tucker . . . both did an excellent job, adding to my enjoyment of THE MASTERY OF LOVE.

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5. TV alert

A. CRISS ANGEL: MINDFREAK features the modern-day Houdini transporting himself from 250 feet above Las Vegas to the street below . . . Wednesday at 10 p.m. on A&E.

B. DO YOU BELIEVE IN MIRACLES? is the amazing story of the 1980 U.S. Olympic hockey team . . . even if you're not a sports fan, you'll find this tale inspiring . . . Thursday at 9 p.m. on HBO FAMILY.

C. TERRY FACTOR: LIVE FROM VEGAS has the master ventriloquist--and AMERICA'S GOT TALENT winner--entertaining with a little help from his foam friends . . . Friday at 10 p.m. on CMT.

D. If you're curious about how the pawn industry works, then catch PAWN STARS on Sunday at 10 p.m. on HISTORY . . . if you can't wait, the show's website has some interesting videos you might want to catch:

<http://www.history.com/content/pawn-stars>

For example, you can learn how a pawn works, how to spot a fake Rolex and even how to get your very own Olympic medal.

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6. Elephant ears

A restaurant posts a sign that says "\$500 if we fail to fill your order." A

customer decides to put it to the test by ordering "elephant ears on rye."

The waitress writes down his order and walks to the kitchen. Seconds later, the chef storms out of the kitchen, goes to the customer's table and slams down five hundred-dollar bills.

"You got me," he tells the customer. "But I want you to know that this is the first time in ten years we've been out of rye bread."

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7. Websites

A. To create, share and store your resume online for free, please click:

<http://www.emurse.com>

There's a lot of other good stuff here, too . . . but the key is the resume service, which notes BUSINESS WEEK, provides for:

Simple, intuitive resume creation. . . . The easiest way to get your up-to-date work history on the first page of a Google search. . . . 4.5 out of 5 stars.

B. Want to find out unusual information about your name? If so, please click:

<http://www.isthisyour.name/>

I did for Blaine Greenfield and learned such things as the following:

* 44% of the letters are vowels. Of one million first and last names we looked at, 15.8% have a higher vowels. This means you are very well envoweled. (By the way, that's not something I share with just anybody!)

* In Pig Latin, it is Aineblay Eenfieldgray.

* According to the US Census Bureau, 0.015% of US residents have the first name "Blaine" and 0.0049% have the surname "Greenfield." The US has around 300 million residents, so we guesstimate there are 2 Americans who go by the name "Blaine Greenfield."

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

In case you're new to this missive, you can see pictures of me, in addition to my friends and relatives, by clicking "Blaine's Best" to the left and then "Pictures" . . . make sure you have your sound on to catch what's arguably the greatest rock song of all time.

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8. Computer tip

THANKS to Scott in Pennsylvania for sharing this question:

What do people see when they find you online?

You can control how you appear in Google by creating a personal profile by clicking:

<http://tinyurl.com/ma4trf>

People will see it on their results page when they do web searches for your name.

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9. DMV line

After standing in line at the DMV for what felt like eons, my friend James finally got to the counter. As the clerk typed his name into the computer, she said, "That's odd."

"What's wrong?" James asked.

"My computer says you're deceased."

Surveying his surroundings, my friend muttered, "Great, I died and went to hell."

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10. A quote I like

Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and you will help them become what they are capable of becoming.--Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe (1749-1832), German writer

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11. Thought for the day

Echo of life

A man and his son were walking in the forest. Suddenly the boy trips and feeling a sharp pain, he screams, "Ahhhhh."

Surprised, he hears a voice coming from the mountain, "Ahhhhh!"

Filled with curiosity, he screams: "Who are you?", but the only answer he receives is: "Who are you?"

This makes him angry, so he screams: "You are a coward!", and the voice answers: "You are a coward!"

He looks at his father, asking, "Dad, what is going on?"

"Son," the man replies, "pay attention!" Then he screams, "I admire you!"

The voice answers: "I admire you!"

The father shouts, "You are wonderful!", and the voice answers: "You are wonderful!"

The boy is surprised, but still can't understand what is going on.

Then the father explains, "People call this an 'ECHO,' but truly it is 'LIFE!' Life always gives you back what you give out! Life is a mirror of your actions. If you want more love, give more love! If you want more kindness, give more kindness! If you want understanding and respect, give understanding and respect! If you want people to be patient and respectful to you, give patience and respect! This rule of nature applies to every aspect of our lives."

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. There will be a Beginning Mambo Class and "Beginner's Only" Dance Party this Friday night, August 28th at the Asheville Ballroom in North Carolina. Details are listed below. We hope to see you there!

Friday, August 28th

Beginning Mambo Class at 7 p.m.

"Beginner's Only" Dance Party: 8-10 p.m.

Class Taught and Party Hosted by: Ted and Kimberly Ross

Location: The Asheville Ballroom & Dance Centre, 991-B Sweeten Creek Rd., Asheville

Learn to Mambo and practice your ballroom dancing in a fun, safe and supportive atmosphere at this "Beginner's Only" Class and Dance Party! Refreshments and sodas will be provided and Professional Dance Instructors will be at the party to assist students with their dancing questions. Line dances will also be taught and included in the party.

No partner is necessary for the class or party.

\$10 Class and Party (Special \$7 Rate for ages 17 & under).

B. An affordable alternative to the movies--live theater! Fun for children of ALL ages, and adults as well!

Come see Somerset Valley Player's current production of The Emperor's New Clothes. In this delightful musical comedy, the Emperor, obsessed with new clothes, hires two new tailors to make him a magical suit that only wise people can see. Only the new tailors are really out of work actors who can't sew a stitch! Meanwhile, his chief tailor is robbing him, buying third-rate materials for the new Emperor's clothes.

Discover who is wise and who is not! Also, does the Emperor ever find out his chief tailor is stealing from him?

Show dates are: August 29 and 30.

Curtain times are 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.

All Tickets: \$10.00

Tickets available at:

<http://www.svptheatre.org>

or by phone at 908.369.7469.

SVP is located at: 689 Amwell Road, Hillsborough, NJ.

C. I'm Harvey Mathason, President of TBD (Training By Design) Enterprises, a company specializing in teaching creativity in industry, schools and to individuals. I am the leader of "Questers" a " Mastermind" group focused on learning about creativity through diversity and sharing ideas.

We have monthly conference calls. The subject for our upcoming call is "Learning How to Learn." We invite you to join our call at 8 p.m. on Tuesday September 1.

To do so, call 1.712-.432.2800 and enter the pin number 549972. We ask that you mute your phone by entering #6. This is to avoid excessive noise during the call. You can express your ideas by sending an E-Mail to hmathason@aol.com. We can only accommodate 25 people on the call. There are 7 core members so this means we can have only 18 visitors. We would like to receive some information about you prior to our call. We leave that to your discretion. Send that information to the email address previously mentioned.

The 18 visitors to our call will be selected on a first come first, serve basis. For more information, call 215.752-.5117.

D. Yours truly is speaking to the residents of my development, Biltmore Lake, on Friday, September 25, at 7 p.m. . . . the topic, "Four-mula 4 Success," the 4 things you need to do every day to market yourself and/or business . . . if you'd like to attend as my guest, please drop me an email to that effect . . . put SEPTEMBER 25 the subject line of your email.

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PS. To my Muslim friends, Ramadan Mubarak! . . . this translates as a wish for a blessed Ramadan, which is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and the most sacred of the twelve months . . . also, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#672

8.17.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had a fun time with members of our community at a Swing Dance Party . . . that's us with the instructors, Kimberly and Ted Ross (see also the BLAINESWORLD AWARD WINNER after Section 1D):



That's one of the great things about Biltmore Lake, our development . . . there's always much that is happening.

B. Within the community, we are friends with all those in our immediate condo neighborhood . . . we even get together

from time to time, as was the case during the week when we celebrated Tammy's birthday . . . that's her with Stuart after he made her a gigantic s'more (the campfire treat made with graham crackers, chocolate and roasted marshmallows) in honor of the occasion:



C. We also got to see SEVEN BRIDES FOR SEVEN BROTHERS at the Flat Rock Playhouse . . . the production continued our run of enjoyable plays that we've seen there . . . nothing has ever been less than outstanding.

The choreography was especially lively, and I only feel bad that you can't see it because the run ended last weekend.

Next up is REAL ESTATE, a new romantic comedy starring Scott Treadway (who has become our favorite local actor) . . . we're slated to see it this coming weekend . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.flatrockplayhouse.org/>

D. Cynthia and I finished assembling our team of health professionals this past week when we visited our new dermatologist, Dr. Todd Wilkinson . . . we were impressed by his friendliness, as well as his knowledge . . . his staff also came across as being quite professional . . . he can be reached at 828.274.4880.

Everything appears fine for the both of us, though Dr. Wilkinson did a biopsy on a small part on my arm . . . I only mention that to remind folks to schedule regular visits with a dermatologist, especially if they spend a lot of time in the sun.

I don't do that, but as some of you may recall, I had to deal with melanoma a few years back for a spot that my dermatologist found between my toes . . . had I not had the appointment,

I could conceivably have been in bad shape at a later date.

Naturally, also use appropriate sun screen whenever you are out in the sun. OK, ok . . . I'm done with the lecture.

UPDATE:

I just heard from Dr. Wilkerson's office . . . the biopsy showed a basal cell, which means that it needs to be removed . . . it's not a big deal, though, in that it was discovered early . . . I'll be having it removed in the near future.

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

This week, it goes to Ted and Kimberly Ross --the couple who did such a fine job at leading the Swing Dance Party (see also Section 1A) .

You can read more about this dynamic couple by clicking:

http://www.ashevilleballroom.com/instructor_tedd-kim.html

Ted and Kimberly are available for private dance lessons, weddings, private parties and performances. They can be reached at (828) 333-8333. To be included on their mailing list for notification of their group dance classes, workshops and parties they teach at The Asheville Ballroom, please send them an email at ted.ross@charter.net

And if you can't wait, join them on:

Friday, August 28th
Beginning Mambo Class at 7 p.m.
"Beginner's Only" Dance Party: 8-10 p.m.
Location: The Asheville Ballroom & Dance Centre (991-B Sweeten Creek Rd., Asheville)

Learn to Mambo and practice your ballroom dancing in a fun, safe and supportive atmosphere at this "Beginner's Only" Class and Dance Party. Refreshments and sodas will be provided and Professional Dance Instructors will be at the party to assist students with their dancing questions. Line dances will also be taught and included in the party.

No partner is necessary for the class or party. \$10 for Class and Party (Special \$7 Rate for ages 17 & under.)

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2. FYI

To get half-price tickets to plays, concerts, sporting events or exhibits, please click:

<http://www.goldstar.com>

Goldstar operates in eight cities: Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Boston, Chicago, San Diego and Washington, D.C. Sign-up is free and gets you a weekly e-mail list of current and upcoming local events.

Although the top events may not make the list, there's still plenty to choose from. Also, you won't automatically get the worst seats in the house either!

FYI, part 2

* Kimberly in North Carolina:

The Washington Post recently ran an article on Asheville that I thought you might find interesting and gives you a little more history about our growing city. The thriving arts community is one of the primary reasons we chose to move to Asheville (along with the beauty and serenity of the mountains). We hope you choose to visit our area soon!

<http://tinyurl.com/orrmkb>

The article also referred to a listing of things to do in Asheville:

<http://tinyurl.com/rxg8gx>

* John in New Jersey:

I read the article on the slang shortcuts.

Here is a quote from it:

The consequences of misunderstanding the lingo can be mortifying. Cassandra McSparin, 23, of Jim Thorpe, Pa., knew a woman whose friend's mother had died. The woman texted her friend: "I'm so sorry to hear about your mother passing away. LOL. Let me know if there's anything I can do."

It turns out she thought LOL meant "Lots of love."

MY TWO CENTS:

Reminds me of when Cynthia first met my Dad . . . she didn't always get all his jokes . . . so we had a sign where I would hold up a big L on my cheek, sort of like I was scratching my face . . . one time I was scratching my face as my Dad was talking about some friend who had died . . . Cynthia started laughing!

* Jack in Pennsylvania:

I received a phone call from Penn yesterday after dinner. They decided that even though I'm still classified as "inactive" for the kidney transplant until I get the next two CT scans, they are willing to test three of my best choices for a match. I am O positive blood type.

My three must meet the following requirements:

O positive blood
not a diabetic
thinks he/she has more than one kidney presently

The only reason I am sending this email is because some of you have expressed interest in being tested for me. However, I know that this is a lot to ask of anyone. Do not feel pressured into anything.

The number to call if you meet the above requirements is

Terry @ 215.662.4447.

If anyone knows of someone wanting to barter for a kidney, I have a somewhat long white beard that I'm willing to trade!

Thank you.

* Verna in New Jersey:

I have a real life situation (can't call it a story since it is real life) and if you would like, I think it would be easier for me to share this with you through Facebook. It's something that perhaps you could pass on to your readers. This is 2009, and I have never in my 30 years of nursing heard of a mother dying in child birth . . . but it did just happen to one of the young ladies that worked in my office.

She gave birth to a beautiful little baby boy 7/8/09 and on 8/13/09 she passed away as a result of complications of childbirth at the age of 35. Her husband just recently underwent back surgery and will be out of work for 12 months at least. This leaves them now in a very precarious situation in that finances are no longer coming in since Cyndi was the sole supplier of the monies. As you can imagine with a little baby and no way of getting yourself employed, it's a rather difficult situation to say the least.

For more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/lwsx7b>

PLEASE NOTE:

You may have to be a member of Facebook to read the above . . . if you are not yet a member, but would still like to see this information, please send me an email to: bginbc@aol.com with the words "FACEBOOK INFORMATION" in your subject line.

Also, contributions can be made to:

George Walters
P.O. Box 2
Point Pleasant, NJ 08742

Or via email: gwalters1117@hotmail.com that also be used in conjunction with PayPal.

* Robin in Pennsylvania:

Just saw IN THE LOOP. Brilliant satire.

* Scott in Pennsylvania:

Staycation Movie Coupon offers from Sony (Exp 10/31)

\$2 off Staycation Movie Coupon offers:

House of Flying Daggers DVD
Seven Years of Tibet DVD
A Passage to India DVD
Gandhi DVD
Lawrence of Arabia DVD

http://www.sonyrewards.com/local/files/Stay_Coupon%20Aug9.pdf

\$2 off coupon on any one DVD:

Bad Boys
SWAT
Black Hawk Down
Boyz in the Hood

http://www.sonyrewards.com/local/files/Stay_Coupon%20July5%20%282%29.pdf

If you use these at Walmart, many of the titles are now \$5.00 and would be \$3.00 with the coupon!

* Colleen in Pennsylvania:

Interested in movies? My (favorite) niece is writing movie reviews. You can subscribe for free at:

<http://tinyurl.com/lg3ckb>

* Marty in New Jersey:

I sometimes wince when you use and overuse the archaic expression "methinks." There are so many other ways of expressing the sentiment without reverting to the 17th century. At least that is what me thinks.

MY RESPONSE TO HIM (who doubles as my favorite brother-in-law named Marty):

Laughing here. I typically use it once an issue . . . sort of a "Can you find Waldo?" type thing.

I did some research on it. Turns out it can be viewed as archaic, but also humorous:

<http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/methinks>

And if good enough for Chaucer, methinks it's good enough for me!

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3. Please help

A man goes to his doctor and hands him a note that says, "I can't talk! Please help me!"

"Okay," says the doctor. "Put your thumb on the table."

The man doesn't understand how that will help, but he does what he's told. The doctor picks up a huge book and drops it on the man's thumb.

"AAAAAAA!" the man yells.

"Good," says the doctor. "Come back tomorrow and we'll work on B."

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4. Reviews

A. 500 DAYS OF SUMMER is a romantic comedy about a boy meeting a girl, but it twists and turns in unpredictable ways that make it unlike just about any other film I've seen of this type . . . I very much enjoyed just about everything in it: the acting (Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Zooey Deschanel are both charming in the leading roles), dialogue, soundtrack, etc. . . . whatever you do, make sure you pack your things quietly as the movie ends because you won't want to miss the last line--an all-time great . . . rated PG-13.

SPECIAL BONUS FOR READERS:

Gordon-Levitt has a great dance number in the film . . . Deschanel was not in it, but if you'd like to see the two of them dancing together, please click:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtVh8kVZ_XM

B. I LOVE YOU, MAN is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #651 follows:

If you're in the mood for some laughs, catch I LOVE YOU, MAN . . . it's a comedy about a guy who proposes to his girl friend, but then comes to the realization that he has no male friends; e.g., to ask to be the best man at his wedding . . . Paul Rudd was fine in one of the lead roles; however, I thought his counterpart (Jason Segel) was hilarious . . . I first noticed him in FORGETTING SARAH MARSHALL; he'll now be somebody I look for in future films . . . I also liked the work of Rashida Jones as Rudd's girlfriend . . . rated R.

C. I loved the question posed by the book, WHY ARE WE SO CLUELESS ABOUT THE STOCK MARKET? . . . it's a good one and the author, Mairusz Skonieczny, does a solid job of answering it in this short but informative look at investing.

As the author notes on the book jacket:

* A successful investor only needs two things: 1) capital to invest; and 2) the ability to recognize two companies when they are selling for less than what they are worth.

He then proceeds to tell the reader how to recognize good companies, evaluate their current worth, decrease the chances of making investment mistakes, take advantage of Wall Street's short-sightedness and build wealth through stock market investing.

I particularly liked the conclusions at the end of each chapter; e.g., this one after Chapter 9:

* With the odds stacked against investors, it is better to wait for a company to trade on the open market for some time before buying shares. Private sellers and underwriters have a pretty good idea what the business is worth and when to sell it. They will not cut anyone a deal, but the stock market consisting of millions of buyers and sellers will. Investors should stay away from most IPOs. Instead, they should buy good companies in bad markets when everyone else is selling, and selling, and sell in good markets when everyone else is buying.

Unfortunately, most investors do the opposite.

My only criticism of the book is that I wish Skonieczny had used more real company examples with their actual financial figures (as opposed to Company A vs. Company B with earnings under \$2.32 for each year over a decade) . . . however, he comes through in the second to last chapter with some informative case studies featuring actual companies . . . and his Appendix, looking at real estate or stocks and which is the better investment, is particularly enlightening.

D. My brother is perhaps the world's biggest Dick Francis fan, but to date, I have read little by the author who builds horse racing into all his stories . . . however after listening to THE DANGER, I may well change my thinking.

As noted in the book:

* Kidnapping is a fact of life. Always has been, always will be. Extorting a ransom is an age-old pastime, less risky and more lucrative than robbing banks.

This thrilling novel centers around the work of Andrew Douglas, a partner in the firm of Liberty Market Ltd. whose job is both to advise people at risk how to avoid kidnapping and, also, to help negotiate with kidnappers once a grab has taken place . . . the ultimate goal is to get the victim back at the least possible cost.

What I liked about THE DANGER was that you didn't have to be a horse racing fan to enjoy it . . . thought that sport features prominently in each of the kidnappings, it didn't matter if you knew little about the subject . . . you'll still be in for an exciting ride (pun intended) that will take you from Italy to England to the United States.

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5. TV alert

A. SHAQ VS. has Shaquille O'Neal vs. athletes from sports other than basketball . . . he'll be competing against swimmer Michael Phelps, quarterback Ben Roethlisberger, tennis ace Serena Williams, Boxer Oscar De La Hoya, home-run hitter Albert Pujols and beach volleyball duo Kerri Walsh and Misty May-Treanor . . . Tuesdays at 9 p.m. on ABC.

B. PROJECT RUNWAY, the hit reality show that pits would-be designers against one another will have a new setting (Los Angeles), a new network (LIFETIME) and a special guest judge (Lindsay Lohan) when its sixth season begins on Thursday at 10 p.m. . . . due to a legal dispute, this show was off the air for nearly a year; during that time, reruns played on BRAVO.

C. ACCEPTANCE is a made-for-TV movie about a mom who does everything she can to get her daughter accepted into college . . . Joan Cusack stars and for me that alone should be a reason to watch this flick . . . Saturday at 9 p.m. on LIFETIME.

D. RHYS DARBY LIVE: IMAGINE THAT airs at midnight on

Saturday on COMEDY CENTRAL . . . if the name doesn't ring a bell, he's best known as band manager Murray on FLIGHT OF THE CONCHORDS.

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6. Judgement day

A Bible study group was discussing the unforeseen possibility of their sudden death. The leader of the discussion said, " We will all die someday, and none of us really know when, but if we did we would all do a better job of preparing ourselves for that inevitable event."

Everybody shook their heads in agreement with this comment.

Then the leader said to the group, "What would you do if you knew you only had four weeks of life remaining before your death and then the Great Judgment Day?"

A gentleman said, " I would go out into my community and minister the Gospel to those that have not yet accepted the Lord into their lives."

"Very good," said the group leader, and all the group members agreed that would be a very good thing to do.

One lady spoke up and said enthusiastically, "I would dedicate all of my remaining time to serving God, my family, my church and my fellow man with a greater conviction."

"That's wonderful," the group leader commented, and all the group members agreed, that would be a very good thing to do.

But one gentleman in the back finally spoke up loudly and said, "I would go to my mother-in-law's house for the 4 weeks."

Everyone was puzzled by this answer, and the group leader ask, "Why your mother-in-law's home?"

"Because that will make it the longest 4 weeks of my life!"

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7. Websites

A. What American accent do you have? If you've always wanted to find out, please click:

http://www.gotoquiz.com/what_american_accent_do_you_have

If you tell me yours, I'll tell you mine. I did find it pretty accurate.

B. I think a lot more about Dawn, the product, after watching this commercial:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GGcZrqP4f9g>

The accompanying music is great, too.

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

In case you've missed some of the stuff on the left side, just take your cursor and move it down any of the headings on that side of the homepage . . . when doing so, make sure you look at my eyes as you do . . . they're watching YOU!

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8. Computer tip

I've recently been touting how much I like Firefox as my Internet browser . . . make sure you check the following website that has more than 5,000 add-ons that are available:

<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/>

You can also access the above from within Firefox by pulling down the Tools menu, selecting Add-ons and then clicking on Get Add-ons.

There's even one that puts up-to-date weather information in the status bar, including the current weather and precipitation, as well as forecasts for the next two days . . . it can be found by clicking:

<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/398>

If you try an add-on and don't like it, you can simply uninstall or disable it from Firefox.

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9. If my body was a car

If my body was a car, this is the time I would be thinking about trading it in for a newer model. I've got bumps and dents and scratches in my finish, and my paint job is getting a little dull. But that's not the worst of it. My headlights are out of focus, and it's especially hard to see things up close.

My traction is not as graceful as it once was. I slip and slide and skid and bump into things even in the best of weather.

My whitewalls are stained with varicose veins. It takes me hours to reach my maximum speed. My fuel rate burns inefficiently.

But here's the worst of it: Almost every time I sneeze, cough or laugh, either my radiator leaks or my exhaust backfires.

So it seems that with respect to CASH FOR CLUNKERS . . . I QUALIFY. How about you?

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10. A quote I like

Keep a fair-sized cemetery in your back yard, in which to bury the faults of your friends.--Henry Ward Beecher (1813 -1887), Congregationalist clergyman, social reformer, abolitionist and speaker

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11. Thought for the day

Mindset list for the Class of 2013

Some highlights:

For these students, Martha Graham, Pan American Airways, Michael Landon, Dr. Seuss, Miles Davis, The Dallas Times Herald, Gene Roddenberry and Freddie Mercury have always been dead.

Dan Rostenkowski, Jack Kevorkian, and Mike Tyson have always been felons.

The Green Giant has always been Shrek, not the big guy picking vegetables.

They have never used a card catalog to find a book.

Margaret Thatcher has always been a former prime minister.

Salsa has always outsold ketchup.

Earvin "Magic" Johnson has always been HIV-positive.

Tattoos have always been very chic and highly visible.

They have been preparing for the arrival of HDTV all their lives.

Rap music has always been main stream.

Chocolate chip cookie dough ice cream has always been a flavor choice.

Someone has always been building something taller than the Willis (née Sears) Tower in Chicago.

SOURCE--and for the complete list:

<http://www.beloit.edu/mindset/>

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12. Advance planning department

A. George Hartpence, one of my favorite New Jersey/Pennsylvania actors, will be starring in "Dangerous Corner" from Aug. 21-Sept. 12 at the Langhorne Players in Langhorne, PA . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.georgehartpence.com>

B. On Monday, August 24, Bucks County Community College Foundation will be holding its 15th Annual Golf Classic at Philmont Country Club NORTH Course in Huntingdon Valley, PA. Lunch and dinner are included with

registration.

New this year: forecaddies for each foursome and an action swing video of each golfer's swing. Golf Classic proceeds support the College's general scholarship fund and contribute toward the completion of innovative campus projects and programs, both academic and athletic, that are not funded through traditional resources. Since 1995, the Golf Classic has raised \$425,000. Sponsorships are still available. Registration fee is \$350. For more information or to register go to:

<http://www.bucks.edu/foundation>

Or call 215.968.8224.

C. Yours truly will be presenting a hypnosis overview on Tuesday, August 25, at a Bucks County location soon to be announced . . . the time will be 6:30 p.m. . . . sometime after, during the week, I will be available to work with you on a one-on-one or small group basis on such issues as smoking cessation, weight loss, etc. . . . if you'd still be interested in joining me, you MUST first contact me via email . . . I can be reached at bginbc@aol.com . . . please put AUGUST 25 in subject line_

D. The Book Group lineup for Fall 2009

We meet in the Rollins Center Quiet Study Room, next to the Fireside Lounge at Bucks County Community College, Newtown, PA from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. All are welcome to join us on the second Thursday of each month to share your thoughts and questions about any or all of the selections. For more information, call 215.968.8164 or send email to: hennesse@bucks.edu

The schedule is as follows:

Sep. 10: **The Gift of Rain** by Tan Twan Eng

Oct. 8: **The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair that Changed America** by Erik Larson

Nov. 12: **Five Quarters of the Orange: A Novel (P.S.)** by Joanne Harris

Dec. 10: **The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society** by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows_

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

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#671

8.10.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had the pleasure of hosting her brother Alan for a few days on his first visit to our place in Asheville . . . we had a fun time, showing him around.

On one day, we went to DuPont State Forest in Brevard to hike and see the several beautiful waterfalls that are located there . . . that's the three of us (Alan is on the left) at the beginning of our trek:



For more information about this locale, please click:

<http://www.dupontforest.com>

We also went into nearby Hendersonville to have dinner at the Black Rose Public House . . . the food was pub-like (quite good, too) and portions were generous . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.blackrosepublichouse.com>

From there, we went to one of the Monday night Street Dances that are held throughout the summer . . . when they asked for volunteers, Cynthia and I actually got up and did some old-fashioned clogging--or make that, we attempted to do some . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.historicehendersonville.org>

B. Perhaps the high spot of my week was when I journeyed to Marlborough, MA for the annual conference of the National Guild of Hypnotists (see also the "Blainesworld Best Award," immediately following Section 1D).

I've been to a lot of conferences in my life, but this was by far the best . . . I actually attended just about every workshop, including one on the very last day at 3 p.m.

This was the first Guild event I have attended; it certainly won't be my last.

I learned sooooo much, especially when I got to meet and learn from such top professionals as Don Mottin . . . that's me with him at his booth:



C. At one full-day workshop, I received special certification in the field of smoking cessation . . . Jacob Blimblich was

the presenter, and he was excellent.

At another workshop, I came up with ideas on how to respond to folks who have questions about what I'll be doing.

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

I'd be very much interested in your reaction to the following two statements:

* When asked what I do, I'm thinking of responding:

I'm a hypnotist, and I help you lose your baggage without going to the airport.

* When asked: Will you make me do something I don't want to do; e.g., sound like a duck?

I would reply: What does a duck sound like?

Person would reply: Quack. (Or something like that.)

My response: See, you did that . . . and I haven't even hypnotized you yet!

D. I caught a big break on the van back to Logan Airport . . . my traveling companion was William Mitchell, who I had heard (and admired) at one of the sessions . . . he really knows his stuff, and he was most gracious in sharing many of his ideas and technique with me . . . my only regret is that he practices hypnosis and trains students in Illinois . . . if he were closer, I'm sure I would want to take additional coursework with him.

MY OFFER REMAINS:

Let me know if you'd like to be hypnotized for smoke cessation, weight reduction or any other habit you want to kick . . . as you may know, I'm in the process of becoming a certified hypnotist . . . so I'm making this FREE offer . . . (if "up North") attend a group session on Tuesday, August 25, in Newtown, PA at 6:31 p.m., then a private session . . . (or if in NC) work with me at a mutually convenient time . . . either way, email me if interested . . . please use this address: bginbc@aol.com and put "SPECIAL INVITATION" in subject line.

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

This week, it goes to Eric Newhall--a member of the Member Services Department of the National Guild of Hypnotists (see also Section 1B).

When I was deciding whether to register for the annual conference, Eric was a big factor in helping me make my decision to attend . . . he answered all my questions, and I was particularly appreciative of the fact that he was never pushy.

In addition, I got to meet him personally at the conference and found him helpful there as well . . . he answered still more of my questions (about various books and other materials that were being sold) and, in general, helped make me

excited about becoming a member of this fine organization.

I should also mention that all the other Guild staffers did an excellent job in handling registration and other details . . . one other employee, Toni, was most helpful to me when it came to buying tickets for the various programs.

Should you want more information about the National Guild of Hypnotists, please click:

<http://www.ngh.net/>

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2. FYI

Beware if you ever get the following email or text message: NSFW . . . if you don't know what it means, join the crowd . . . I didn't either until I clicked:

<http://netlingo.com/>

According to THE NEW YORK TIMES, this is one of the best online slang sites . . . I agree.

And if you're too lazy to check, NSFW is shorthand for "Not safe for work" . . . you'll find more than 2,000 other terms there, including:

UG2BK: You got be kidding
GBTW: Get back to work
NMP: Not my problem
PIR: Parent in room
GFTD: Gone for the day
FYEO: For your eyes only
BI5: Back in five minutes
DEGT: Don't even go there

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL ran an excellent article on this topic on August 5 ("Quick! Tell us what KUTGW means" by Stephanie Raposo . . . you can read it for the next seven days by clicking:

<http://tinyurl.com/otat8p>

FYI, part 2

* I was delighted to read the following article about Natalie Kaye, my good friend from Bucks County:

<http://tinyurl.com/ow7ktd>

Even if you don't know Natalie, please read it if you want to be inspired as to what can be done in life--at any age.

* Howard in Florida:

Among other things, I am an "early adopter" (Amazon's words, not mine) of the Kindle reading device from Amazon. In checking books I would like to have available for download to my Kindle, I came across your review of Choosing Civility.

Anyway, I thought you might find a recent post at my blog "Communicators & Communications" of particular interest as relates to Dr. P.M. Forni, and in a way to the book you reviewed:

<http://tinyurl.com/n5hp9e>

* Bill in Connecticut (commenting on a name used in a joke in last week's issue):

Bertha is a female Germanic name, from Old High German bertha meaning "bright one." It is quite different from nicknames used to demean someone.

Also, my mother's name.

Sometimes used by prejudiced people as a stereotype.

A prejudice is an implicitly held belief, often about a group of people. Race, economic class, gender or sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age and religion are other common subjects of prejudice.

It is my hope that all prejudices will some day be illuminated by the glaring sun of truth, tolerance, and sensitivity.

MY TWO CENTS:

My apologies to Bill or any other reader if I offended them with the name that I used in that particular joke . . . it was certainly not my intent . . . however, that said, I should mention that I did not come up with the name used in that or any other joke that I run; i.e., it was used by the original author . . . and I guess any name could be ridiculed if that was the intent of the original joke . . . that was not the case here.

* Sally in North Carolina:

I really enjoyed 500 DAYS OF SUMMER. It's a charming movie.

* Cathy in Pennsylvania:

We really, really need people to volunteer to staff the table at the Grange Fair In Penns Park, PA. If you have never been there before please volunteer your time at the CFPA table and then check out the rest of the fair. We are providing free parking passes so you don't even have to pay to get in. You can link to the website here:

<http://www.grangefair.org/>

The theme this year is abolishing nuclear weapons. We will have some great handouts for you to give to people as well as pinwheels for the kids. They estimate that 60,000 people walk through the fair every year so this is great exposure for Coalition for Peace Action. We need you to help spread our message of peace.

We like to have two people at the table at all times if we are able. The shifts

we still need people for are:

Thursday August 13
6 p.m. until closing

Friday, August 14
10 a.m. to 1 p.m., 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. to closing

Saturday, August 15
3 p.m. to 6 p.m. and 6 p.m. to closing

Sunday, August 16
10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Please consider volunteering your time for this event by emailing me at: cfpabuxmont1@aol.com.

* Barbara in Pennsylvania:

You did it again! Check it out:

Debra Winger and David Keith were also outstanding in this film that has as fine an ending as you'll ever see . . . rated R. Why didn't you just leave it at: Debra Winger and David Keith were also outstanding in this film... rated R

You bring the ending of a really good story into the "beginning" of the film this way..... I love your recommendations, but the story is ruined a lot of times when you comment on "the ending" or "you'll be surprised in an area of this movie." It takes the suspense and throws it out the window!! I'm waiting to see what you mean and lose focus!!

* Maria in Pennsylvania:

I read where you use a "No Hassle" card; that to me means Capital One. Beware of that card and that company. They can do nasty things if you're late by hours. I have a friend who really got in a mess with them. She was laid off from work, so she called them to cancel the card and to work out a payment agreement. They told her they don't do that. With interest and penalties (she eventually could not pay the minimum), they told her the only way to handle the situation was to increase her limit, thereby increasing her debt! Others were much more accommodating--including utilities, and that is saying a lot for PECO and PGW!

Her credit was saved--except for Capital One.

Capital One is also known for checking credit ratings of everyone with good credit. Constant checks can lower your credit rating. Consequently, if there's one company you want to stop getting offers from, it's them. Beware of suggesting that card to anyone.

* Andrew in New England (and Germany, too):

I just wanted to let you know that my book LEISUREVILLE: ADVENTURES IN A WORLD WITHOUT CHILDREN (Grove Atlantic) has just been released in paperback with a dandy new cover to boot!

MY RECOMMENDATION:

Loved this book when I reviewed it in BLAINESWORLD #609 . . . it is a "must read" for anybody approaching retirement age (or already there) and

who might be thinking of moving into a 55-and-over community . . . I know it had a big impact on our decision; i.e., not to move into such a development.

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3. Wired

The preacher was wired for sound with a lapel microphone, and as he preached, he moved briskly about the platform, jerking the cord as he went. Then he moved to one side, getting wound up in the cord and nearly tripping before jerking it again.

After several circles and jerks, a little girl in the third pew leaned toward her mother and whispered, "If he gets loose, will he hurt us?"

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4. Reviews

A. *JULIE & JULIA* is almost a great movie . . . it's a comedy/biopic about Julie Child and the woman who attempts to recreate all her recipes--and blog about them . . . Meryl Streep is fantastic as Child; methinks she deserve at least another Oscar nomination for her performance . . . Stanley Tucci, as always, was great in a supporting role . . . Amy Adams was cute as Julie; however, her part of the film was just not as strong as the other part . . . rated PG-13.

B. *17 AGAIN* is now out in DVD format . . . my review from *BLAINESWORLD #657* follows:

I've always liked films that ask the question: What would you do if you got a second chance at life? So I thought I might like *17 AGAIN*, given that its premise had a middle-age guy getting a second chance to right the big mistake that he made as a kid.

Yet overall, I was disappointed with it . . . although there were a few funny parts, the whole thing felt contrived . . . and the old guy (Matthew Perry) who become young (Zac Efron) didn't even look remotely alike. . . . yet that said, I did like Efron's work--along with that of Leslie Mann as the Perry character's wife . . . rated PG-13.

C. I'm prejudiced toward Jeffrey Zaslow.

I have been a longtime fan of his articles in *THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*. And his previous book, *THE LAST LECTURE*, was one of my favorites of the past few years.

So when I read an excerpt from his latest effort, *THE GIRLS FROM AMES*, I knew that was something else by Zaslow that I had to read . . . it's another winner.

This is the touching and true story of 11 girls who were friends since childhood in Ames, Iowa . . . they all stayed in close contact as they grew older and with the exception of one girl who died in her 20s, still remain close friends.

Zaslow, both a husband and father of several daughters, seems to "get" these women in a way that surprised me . . . I first wondered how he, as a guy, could have such insight . . . then as I read more into the book, I was also surprised that I grew to care for these women as much as I did.

I was moved by many of the passages in THE GIRLS FROM AMES, such as when one of the girls left for college:

* Marilyn was near tears. "But you'll be so far away from me."

"No, don't think of it that way," her dad told her. "Here's what we'll do. We're going to keep you at the end of our fishing line. And if you ever need anything, you just give a little tug and we'll reel you back in."

Then there was this insight on how the girls were able to stay as friends:

* The girls are proud that they resist getting into political arguments or combative philosophical debates. That would defeat one of the reasons they get together. As Kelly explains: "When I am with them, I am reduced to someone who simply experiences joy in the moment. It is like walking into a party where everyone knows each other and everyone is having fun. My gut aches from laughing when I am with them. How often do any of us experience exhilarating moments of happiness? So consider this: Every time I am with these women, even when mourning brings us together, I am lifted up with joy."

Lastly, toward the end, I was moved by this note that one of the women went to another when she learned of her cancer:

* I am standing before you and saying with absolute certainty that next summer we will again climb mountains together. And if you become weary, I will carry you. When we both start to stumble, our sisters will be there, walking beside us, ready to catch us and help carry us up that mountain.

As you go through this deeply personal journey, there will not be one moment when you are alone; not one moment when you are without unconditional love. We are always with you, Angela, always beside you.

D. Enjoyed the CD program, JUMP AND THE NET WILL APPEAR--written and read by Robin Crowe.

The author, a speaker, entrepreneur and guitarist, contends that making a few simple changes will bring about quantum leaps in our performance . . . he then proceeds to share many entertaining stories, detailing how he went from a struggling musician to national recording guitarist.

As a result, I gained an awareness of what Crowe considers are the keys to being successful:

* The first . . . is to develop great habits.

Among the many other useful tidbits I gained from listening were these:

* Leave yourself no option to finish what you have started.

* We get satisfaction when we overcome our fears that are holding

us back.

* If you have a powerful goal and a big enough reason why, you will find a way to accomplish anything you can dream of.

* Define your values and then live by those values.

* When we reach out and share our blessings, we receive the richest blessing of all--a sense of meaning and purpose during our stay in this world.

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

<http://www.achievementlibrary.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. TV alert

A. THE LOST SON OF HAVNA is a documentary about Red Sox pitching great Luis Tiant's return to Cuba after 46 years of exile . . . notes THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, "It is the sounds and images of his return to Cuba that are most poignant and elevate the film to far more than a sports documentary." . . . Monday at 10 p.m. on ESPN; repeated on August 23 at 8 p.m. on ESPN CLASSIC.

B. NEIL DIAMOND--HOT AUGUST has the singer in a Madison Square Garden concert . . . Friday at 8 p.m. on CBS.

C. WOODSTOCK: NOW AND THEN is a new documentary that, according to TV GUIDE, is "filled with terrific vignettes, ranging from comic to tragic--all usually involving drugs--which capture the chaos and spontaneous musical bliss that a new generation of fans can only dream about" . . . Friday at 9 p.m. on VH!

D. MAD MEN has its season premiere on Sunday at 10 p.m. on AMC . . . enough said . . . in unlikely event you've never seen the show before, be there!

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6. Polite conversation

A little old lady was sitting on a park bench in The Villages, a Florida over-55 community.

After a few minutes, a man walked over and sits down on the other end of the bench. Attempting to be polite, the woman asks, "Are you a stranger here?"

He replies, "I lived here years ago."

"So, where were you all these years?"

"In prison," he says.

"Why did they put you in prison?"

He looked at her, and very quietly said, "I killed my wife."

"Oh!" said the woman. "So does that mean . . . you're single?"

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7. Websites

A. To compare travel prices on 13 different websites, your best might well be the following:

<http://tinyurl.com/mvtqmr>

Included are Priceline, Travelocity, Orbiz, Hotwire and a whole lot more . . . but make sure you check fees . . . they often vary and so, I recently saw a low price--only to find out that it was more than offset by other, rather hefty charges.

Two other suggestions:

* If you use AOL, check "AOL travel" for some good deals . . . or if you don't use AOL, click:

http://travel.aol.com/?icid=navbar_Travel

Other service providers offer similar deals.

*Also check individual airlines . . . sometimes, but not always, you can get great deals--often at the last minute.

B. Imagine taking a picture of your baby every day during his or her first year--then posting all the pictures on the Internet . . . that's exactly what Zachery Bir and Amber Smirnow of Richmond, VA did . . . and the results are delightful:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVDXC1dOB9E>

Make sure you put your sound on when you view; the accompanying song is great!

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

In case you've stayed awake nights to wonder how many others visit the above, please check the counter in the lower left hand corner of the home page.

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8. Computer tip

THANKS TO Ed in West Virginia for keeping me informed on how to secure my Web browser . . . you can become more knowledgeable about this topic by clicking:

http://www.cert.org/tech_tips/securing_browser/

I particularly liked the step-by-step instructions that are provided, along with the accompanying snaps of the computer screen.

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9. My dear husband

NOTE:

The following is dedicated to everyone who ever attempted to get into a regular workout routine. It is a spin on a similar entry that appeared in BLAINESWORLD #183. (That one featured the husband, commenting on his wife's gift.)

Dear Diary,

For my birthday this year, my Husband (the dear) purchased a week of personal training at the local health club for me.

Although I am still in great shape since being a high school football cheerleader 43 years ago, I decided it would be a good idea to go ahead and give it a try.

I called the club and made my reservations with a personal trainer named Christo, who identified himself as a 26-year-old aerobics instructor and model for athletic clothing and swim wear.

My husband seemed pleased with my enthusiasm to get started! The club encouraged me to keep a diary to chart my progress.

MONDAY:

Started my day at 6:00 a.m. Tough to get out of bed, but found it was well worth it when I arrived at the health club to find Christo waiting for me. He is something of a Greek god--with blond hair, dancing eyes and a dazzling white smile. Woo Hoo!!

Christo gave me a tour and showed me the machines. I enjoyed watching the skillful way in which he conducted his aerobics class after my workout today. Very inspiring!

Christo was encouraging as I did my sit-ups, although my gut was already aching from holding it in the whole time he was around. This is going to be a FANTASTIC week!!

TUESDAY:

I drank a whole pot of coffee, but I finally made it out the door. Christo made me lie on my back and push a heavy iron bar into the air, then he put weights on it! My legs were a little wobbly on the treadmill, but I made the full mile. His rewarding smile made it all worthwhile. I feel

GREAT!! It's a whole new life for me.

WEDNESDAY:

The only way I can brush my teeth is by laying the toothbrush on the counter and moving my mouth back and forth over it. I believe I have a hernia in both pectorals. Driving was OK as long as I didn't try to steer or stop. I parked on top of a GEO in the club parking lot.

Christo was impatient with me, insisting that my screams bothered other club members. His voice is a little too perky for that early in the morning and when he scolds, he gets this nasally whine that is VERY annoying.

My chest hurt when I got on the treadmill, so Christo put me on the stair monster. Why the hell would anyone invent a machine to simulate an activity rendered obsolete by elevators? Christo told me it would help me get in shape and enjoy life. He said some other sh*t too.

THURSDAY:

A*shole was waiting for me with his vampire-like teeth exposed as his thin, cruel lips were pulled back in a full snarl. I couldn't help being a half an hour late . . . it took me that long to tie my shoes.

He took me to work out with dumbbells. When he was not looking, I ran and hid in the restroom. He sent some skinny bi*ch to find me.

Then, as punishment, he put me on the rowing machine . . . which I sank.

FRIDAY:

I hate that bas*ard Christo more than any human being has ever hated any other human being in the history of the world. Stupid, skinny, anemic, anorexic little aerobic instructor. If there was a part of my body I could move without unbearable pain, I would beat him with it.

Christo wanted me to work on my triceps. I don't have any triceps! And if you don't want dents in the floor, don't hand me the damn barbells or anything that weighs more than a sandwich.

The treadmill flung me off, and I landed on a health and nutrition teacher. Why couldn't it have been someone softer, like the drama coach or the choir director?

SATURDAY:

Satan left a message on my answering machine in his grating, shrilly voice wondering why I did not show up today. Just hearing his voice made me want to smash the machine with my planner; however, I lacked the strength to even use the TV remote and ended up catching 11 straight hours of the Weather Channel.

SUNDAY:

I'm having the Church van pick me up for services today so I can go and thank GOD that this week is over. I will also pray that next year my husband (the little sh*t) will choose a gift for me that is fun--like a root canal or a hysterectomy. I still say if God had wanted me to bend over, he would have sprinkled the floor with diamonds!!!

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10. A quote I like

You can preach a better sermon with your life than with your lips.--Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774), Anglo-Irish writer, poet and physician

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11. Thought for the day

How to Keep Yourself Motivated
by Jim Donovan*

One of the questions I am asked over and over by radio and TV interviewers and reporters is "How can a person motivate themselves?"

While there are no simple answers to this question--we all develop methods that work for us--we can use a powerful technique known as leverage. Archimedes said he could move the world if he had a big enough lever.

In the case of self-motivation, the leverage comes from having completed a commitment exercise. If you have not yet done this, it's quite simple.

Choose the particular goal or area of your life in which you need motivation. Take a page in your journal and write down everything you will gain by taking the action.

In the case of building your business, your list might include financial freedom, more time with your family, freedom to live and work wherever you choose, the opportunity to work from home, the opportunity to do work that you love, being able to make a difference in people's lives and on and on.

Write down as many things as you can think of. List every benefit, reward and pleasure you will receive from reaching this goal. This is your "carrot."

Next, write down everything you are presently giving up and missing out on by not already having reached this goal. Things like working at a job you dislike, being away from your family, not having enough money, not being able to give your family what they need, always being behind on your bills, etc.

Write as many negatives as you can. What is the pain you experience by not having already reached this goal? This is your "stick."

You can use the power of the carrot and stick to motivate yourself to action. When you feel yourself slacking off or procrastinating, or even if you feel like giving up, take out your lists and reread them.

These "whys" will remind you why you are doing this in the first place. Tony Robbins taught us that everything we do is either to gain pleasure or avoid pain. You can use this pain and pleasure--carrot and stick--exercise to keep yourself on track.

Keep your eye on the goal and keep reminding yourself why you want it. Doing this will keep you taking the actions necessary to reach your goals

and live your dreams. Remember, you can reach any goal if you have a big enough why.

As my friend, John DiLemme said in the title of his wonderful book, FIND YOUR WHY AND FLY.

* Reprinted with permission from Jim Donovan, author of HANDBOOK TO A HEALTHIER LIFE; THIS IS YOUR LIFE, NOT A DRESS REHEARSAL; and STOP LIVING PAYCHECK TO PAYCHECK. Jim is also a motivational speaker and professional coach. A free copy of his inspiring newsletter, JIM'S JEMS, is available at:

<http://www.jimdonovan.com>

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12. Advance planning department

A. The Greenfields of Asheville request the pleasure of your company at the following event:

"Rock-Around-The Lake" 1950's Swing Dance Party
Saturday, August 15, 2009
7-9 p.m.
Biltmore Lake (our development)

Residents Ted and Kimberly Ross will be teaching fun and easy dance steps to use at this rockin' dance party on the basketball court Saturday, August 15. (Rain date is August 16.) Please join us for a free dance lesson in swing and rumba from 7-8 p.m., followed by a 1950's dance party with some line dancing thrown in for added fun! So put on your sneakers, slick back your hair and get ready for a hot time rockin' around the lake!

TO RSVP:

Please send me an email (to bginbc@aol.com) with this in the subject line: SWING DANCE PARTY.

B. Vilasi in New Jersey:

Possibilities . . . under the stars . . . presents:

New Orleans Jazz Night!

A fresh air social gathering to meet new people & try new things

Saturday, August 15th

7-11 p.m. (in case of inclement weather, call ahead!)

Location: Experience Nirvana Holistic Wellness Center
95 Barbertown Point Breeze Rd., Frenchtown, NJ
Please see website for directions:

<http://www.ExperienceNirvana.com/directions.html>

\$20 per person includes...

Exquisite ambience, phenomenal food, & open mic
for the passionate amateurs

Open to 21 years. & up; BYOB
RSVP by Wed. Aug. 15th at:
Experience.Nirvana@yahoo.com or 908.996.7536

C. Invite from yours truly:

I'd love to have you join me on Sunday, August 16, at 1 p.m. as
I ask the question:

What's the difference between a left-handed and right-handed pencil?

Program description:

Come find out the answer to that burning question--and a lot more--as
Blaine Greenfield discusses the topic of "Four-mula 4 Success" . . . the
4 things anybody can do on a daily business that will take no more
than 15 minutes.

Location:

Congregation Beth HaTephia, 43 N. Libert St., Asheville, NC

To RSVP:

Please send me an email (to bginbc@aol.com) with this in the subject
line: AUGUST 16 PRESENTATION.

D. September 9 deadline is rapidly approaching to enter the
Perfect Pitch 2009 competition.

Three entrepreneurs will get the opportunity to pitch their business ideas
to a conference full of venture capital and angel investors, including Sir
Richard Branston.

The top three receive round-trip airfare to LA, a private business
coaching session, opportunity to pitch investors, etc.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.perfectbusiness.com/theperfectpitch/>

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers
back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel
and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

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#670

8.3.2009

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-

1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I are blessed to have so many wonderful neighbors . . . we get together with them on a fairly regular basis; e.g., as we did this past week when a bunch of us went to Asheville for dinner at Carmel's . . . we dined on delicious appetizers (that we all shared), salads and a tasty thin crust pizza . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.carmelsofasheville.com>

Naturally, for dessert, we walked down the block for ice cream at Kilwin's.

We also had the pleasure of hosting Terry, Cynthia's friend from New Jersey, who came down for a visit . . . on one night, we saw a comedy show put on by The Feral Chihuahuas . . . it featured a standup routine by George the Bas*ard, who had this one line about a fellow performer that was clean enough for me to share:

He just got a Bachelor of Science in Creative Writing or as I like to say . . . Food Service.

In addition, there were several funny sketches and videos . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.feralchihuahuas.com>

Afterward, we even found a new (for us) ice cream store: the Hop Ice Cream Shop . . . I tried for the first time a flavor called salty caramel; it was outstanding . . . for more information, please click:

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

B. During the week, I attended a production of HOME AGAIN at the Southern Appalachian Repertory Theater in Mars Hill . . . it

tells the fascinating story of Thomas Wolfe, one of Asheville's most famous sons . . . Kay Galvin is excellent as Tom's mother, as was Peter Tamm as Wolfe's editor Maxwell Perkins . . . Waylon Wood was a bit shaky, at times, as Wolfe but I can see him growing more into the part as the play continues its run through August 9 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.sartplays.org>

C. Over the weekend, I completed the second part of my hypnosis training . . . after I complete the required hours of practice, I will be fully certified . . . so toward that end, please feel free to accept this SPECIAL INVITATION:

Let me know if you'd like to be hypnotized for smoke cessation, weight reduction or any other habit you want to kick . . . as you may know, I'm in the process of becoming a certified hypnotist . . . so I'm making this FREE offer . . . (if "up North") attend a group session on Tuesday, August 25, in Newtown, PA at 6:31 p.m., then a private session . . . (or if in NC) work with me at a mutually convenient time . . . either way, email me if interested . . . please use this address: bginbc@aol.com and put "SPECIAL INVITATION" in subject line.

D. CONGRATULATIONS to Clark Shuster, president of the Lower Bucks Chamber of Commerce, on his June 20 marriage to Jane . . . may the best of your past be the worst of your future!

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

This week, it goes to Brett Ballard--Customer Service Superintendent for Biltmore Farms (the development where we live).

Brett recently came by for our 10-month warranty visit . . . this is where you go through the home and point out anything that's not right or needs to be fixed.

The good news is that there was precious little that needed to be done . . . the even better news is the way that Brett handled himself . . . he was both friendly and informative, and he went out of his way to make sure that we were satisfied customers.

This is not the first time we have gotten to meet with Brett . . . in each instance, he has helped reinforce our decision that we have bought a fine home.

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2. FYI

Shop around for the best credit card "deal" you can get; e.g., with respect to what you can do with the points you accumulate . . . then use your credit card for every purchase, and I mean every single one . . . for example, I use my Visa card for postage, gum, etc. . . . just about anything that costs a buck or more.

The points do mount up . . . recently, I cashed them in and when I did so, I found that all the charges paid for several trips that Cynthia

and I took over the past year.

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

We use a "No Hassle Rewards" VISA card because it seems to give us a lot of flexibility . . . however, do you use some other card? If so, what's your reaction to it?

FYI, part 2

* Back by popular demand--a cartoon from Pat in Pennsylvania:



I'm much obliged to Pat Achilles for providing the above . . . she does comics, greeting cards, artwork for children's books and so much more . . . for more information, call her at 215.348.4837 or email her at: patachilles@aol.com . . . you can also get a FREE weekly cartoon delivered to your email by clicking:

<http://www.achillesportfolio.com/freecartoonsignup.htm>

* Jean in Pennsylvania:

I used to eat a lot of natural foods until I learned that most people die of natural causes.

* Sharon in North Carolina:

Just came home after watching the new Harry Potter. I hate to admit it, but I think this is the first Harry Potter movie that makes me prefer the book all the way. They changed and cut out so much (understandably with the time limits), but they cut out so much of the cool or interesting moments too. (Sigh!) The story just seemed slower in the movie than I remember the book being. Weird.

* Dana in Pennsylvania:

The best cheeseburger and fries are from Five Guys Burgers & Fries in NJ! Anyone else agree?

FOR OTHER LOCALES NEAR YOU, INCLUDING ONE IN ASHEVILLE:

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

* Kathy in Florida:

One of my daughter's friends put Firefox on my computer, and I like it so much better than Internet Explorer.

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3. Bragging rights

A priest, a minister and a rabbi want to see who's best at his job. So they each go into the woods, find a bear and attempt to convert it. Later they get together.

The priest begins: "When I found the bear, I read to him from the Catechism and sprinkled him with holy water. Next week is his First Communion."

"I found a bear by the stream," says the minister, "and preached God's holy word. The bear was so mesmerized that he let me baptize him."

They both look down at the rabbi, who is lying on a gurney in a body cast. "Looking back," he says, "maybe I shouldn't have started with the circumcision."

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4. Reviews

A. If you liked BORAT (and I did), you might like BRUNO . . . if you didn't like BORAT, then don't bother seeing Sacha Baron Cohen's follow-up to his widely successful first mockumentary . . . this latter effort portrays the life of a gay Austrian model who brings his antics to this country . . . a few scenes are very funny; however, overall, I did not get that many laughs out of BRUNO . . . in fact, I almost walked out on it . . . rated R . . . please also be advised that if you're easily offended, then this is not the film for you.

B. There's precious little new stuff out for DVD rental, so I'll instead recommend you track down a film that Cynthia and I just revisited: AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN . . . this 1983 romantic drama is the story about a guy who wants to become a jet pilot, but finds out that he can't do it alone; i.e., that he needs the support of others . . . Richard Gere is as good as he's ever been; I was disappointed that he did not get an Oscar for his work . . . Louis Gossett, who played his sergeant, deservedly did get one . . . Debra Winger and David Keith were also outstanding in this film that has as fine an ending as you'll ever see . . . rated R.

C. WAITING FOR AUTUMN is an autobiographical parable by Scott Blum that tells of his meeting with a mysterious, cardboard-sign-toting homeless man who has a sleepy black Lab puppy at his side and the ability to change lives.

The story is an interesting one, though a bit heavy on the metaphysical side . . . that said, if you can put aside your do butts,

methinks you'll find the book thought-provoking . . . and some of the dialogue is particularly well written, such as this one line:

* "Religion is the knowledge of truth," he interrupted, "and spirituality is the wisdom of truth."

I also liked how the author described his feelings about food:

* "It's just that most restaurants don't care about intention. That's why a home-cooked meal always tastes better." She caught her breath for a moment and then added, "If I had a restaurant, I'd force the employees to go home if they came to work in a bad mood. You can't have a restaurant and let chefs put their bad energy in the food that's served to customers. I guess now I have to start my own restaurant! Do I have to do everything myself?" She laughed and her blue eyes sparkled.

There's a surprise ending that I won't give away, other than to say that it will touch your heart.

D. Who says that to be perfectly organized is the way to greater success?

Eric Abrahamson and David H. Freedman contend otherwise in *A PERFECT MESS*, an engrossing book that I recently got a kick out of listening to on CD . . . it got me rethinking the concept that an orderly existence is the only way to go . . . rather, the authors contend that a little disorder can actually be good for us.

Through the use of examples from business, parenting, cooking, the world of terrorism and even the career of Arnold Schwarzenegger, you begin to see that messy systems often use resources more efficiently and yield better results.

I was hooked from the beginning when I heard about this one speaker at a conference of the National Association of Professional Organizers . . . he actually told members not to confirm appointments because doing so gives them the opportunity to cancel others . . . you should instead just show up . . . that's not necessarily the "cleanest" way to handle things, but it is often the best way to do so.

Among the other tidbits that caught my attention were the following:

* A jazz group can improvise and go into different areas, whereas a symphony orchestra can't.

* Good boxers move randomly around their opponents.

* The best way to see a city is to wander around rather than to see tourist spots.

* The authors' rule for organization: ACE . . . Awwwwwww, relax; Carve out some time; and Eject some stuff.

* A 50 cent magnet can be your most valuable organizing tool. Use it to put up pictures, soccer schedules, etc. on your refrigerator.

And my favorite:

* Some would say that making your bed in the morning is like tying your shoe after you've taken it off.

Do yourself a favor and get a copy of A PERFECT MESS . . . then, if you can find where you put it, read it for many useful ideas.

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5. TV alert

A. DRAGON'S DEN begins a new season crammed with entrepreneurs and their business plans . . . each week, several of them face a stern row of British tycoons and sweat their way through pitches for investment . . . Tuesdays at 9 p.m. on BBC AMERICA.

B. According to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, watching BOY INERUPED (a documentary about a boy with bipolar disorder) will leave us with "a renewed appreciation of our ability to enjoy life" . . . Thursday at 8:45 a.m. on HBO . . . for other times, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/nsluof>

C. Joan Rivers asks folks, HOW'D YOU GET SO RICH? on her new show on TV LAND on Wednesdays at 10 p.m. . . . on Sunday at 10 p.m. on COMEDY CENTRAL, she is again on TV on the ROAST OF JOAN RIVERS.

D. BOLLYWOOD HERO features Chris Katten in a 3-part miniseries that TV GUIDE calls "kicky" and "clever" . . . he plays himself filling a musical in Mumbai . . . Thursdays at 10 p.m. on IFC.

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6. How to install a home security system

1. Go to a secondhand store and buy a pair of men's used size 14-16 work boots.

2. Place them on your front porch, along with a copy of Guns & Ammo Magazine.

3. Put a few giant dog dishes next to the boots and magazines.

4. Leave a note on your door that reads:

Bubba,

Bertha, Duke, Slim, & I went for more ammo and beer. Be back in an hour. Don't mess with the pit bulls; they attacked the mailman this morning and messed him up bad. I don't think Killer took part, but it was hard to tell from all the blood. Anyway, I locked all four of 'em in the house.

Better wait outside. Be right back.

Cooter

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7. Websites

A. THANKS to Scott in Pennsylvania for providing this great website for free classical music:

<http://www.classiccat.net/>

Classic Cat is a directory with links to over 5000 free to download classical performances on the Internet, sorted by composer and work.

How to navigate this site:

1. Select a composer.
2. Select a work
3. Go to the mp3 section.
4. Click a button.

After clicking the Button, you are transported to the Page of the musician(s) where you can download the music.

B. If you've ever been to a baseball game, you have probably seen fans make catches of foul balls . . . but I guarantee you have never seen anything quite as amazing as this one:

<http://tinyurl.com/lxsqgz>

NOTE:

Click on arrow to make it play . . . it sometimes stalls, so if it does, then click on the arrow at the bottom.

And on the subject of great catches, there was also this one by Dewayne Wise that saved Mark Buehrle's perfect game:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEcE-APJHEQ>

C. Last week's issue featured a happy couple at their wedding . . . as you might expect, not soon thereafter youtube had the following parody on what happens down the road--in divorce court:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbr2ao86ww0>

This time, there are trained dancers . . .so the professionalism is there, though there's not the same heartfelt emotion that was in the original.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

If you ever miss an issue and/or just want to revisit something you already saw, make sure you look at "Past Issues" on the left and then "Archives" . . . a great "Search Newsletters" option at the top enables you find, say, a great quote on happiness that initially ran in BLAINESWORLD #471:

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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8. Computer tip

Last week, I mentioned that I am using Firefox as my Internet browser . . . the more I use it, the more I like it . . . it very easily stores your passwords, so that you don't have to keep typing them in each time you go to a website that asks for this information . . . and if your computer ever gets shut down unexpectedly (say because of a crash), Firefox gives you the option to restore your previous session with all the websites that you were looking at . . . lastly, I like how Firefox keeps all the websites you're working on right at the top of the screen, making it very easy to go back and forth.

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9. Geography lesson for today

GEOGRAPHY OF A WOMAN

Between 18 and 22, a woman is like Africa: half discovered, half wild, fertile and naturally beautiful.

Between 23 and 30, a woman is like Europe: well developed and open to trade, especially for someone of real value.

Between 31 and 35, a woman is like Spain: very hot, relaxed, and convinced of her own beauty.

Between 36 and 40, a woman is like Greece: gently aging but still a warm and desirable place to visit.

Between 41 and 50, a woman is like Great Britain: with a glorious and all conquering past.

Between 51 and 60, a woman is like Israel: has been through war, doesn't make the same mistakes twice, takes care of business.

Between 61 and 70, a woman is like Canada: self-preserving, but open to meeting new people.

After 70, she becomes Tibet: wildly beautiful, with a mysterious past and the wisdom of the ages, an adventurous spirit and a thirst for spiritual knowledge.

GEOGRAPHY OF A MAN

Between 1 and 90, a man is like Iran, ruled by nuts.

THE END.

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10. A quote I like

When preparing to travel, lay out all your clothes and all your money. Then take half the clothes and twice the money.--Susan Heller

WHO IS SUSAN HELLER?

I wasn't able to obtain any more about this person, other than that she is credited for this quote . . . does anybody know more about her? If so, what?

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11. Thought for the day

Giving thanks

I dreamt that I went to Heaven and an angel was showing me around. We walked side-by-side inside a large workroom filled with angels. My angel guide stopped in front of the first section and said, "This is the Receiving Section. Here, all petitions to God said in prayer are received."

I looked around in this area, and it was terribly busy with so many angels sorting out petitions written on voluminous paper sheets and scraps from people all over the world.

Then we moved on down a long corridor until we reached the second section.

The angel then said to me, "This is the Packaging and Delivery Section. Here, the graces and blessings the people asked for are processed and delivered to the living persons who asked for them."

noticed again how busy it was there. There were many angels working hard at that station, since so many blessings had been requested and were being packaged for delivery to Earth..

Finally at the farthest end of the long corridor we stopped at the door of a very small station. To my great surprise, only one angel was seated there, idly doing nothing. "This is the Acknowledgment Section," my angel friend quietly admitted to me. He seemed embarrassed

"How is it that there is no work going on here?" I asked.

"So sad," the angel sighed. "After people receive the blessings that they asked for, very few send back acknowledgments ."

"How does one acknowledge God's blessings?" I asked.

"Simple," the angel answered. Just say, "Thank you, Lord."

"What blessings should they acknowledge?" I asked.

"If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep you are richer than 75% of this world. If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy .

"And if you get this on your own computer, you are part of the 1% in the world who has that opportunity.

"If you woke up this morning with more health than illness . . . you are more blessed than the many who will not even survive this day ."

"If you have never experienced the fear in battle, the loneliness

of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation . . . you are ahead of 700 million people in the world.

"If you can attend a church without the fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death you are envied by, and more blessed than, three billion people in the world .

"If your parents are still alive and still married . . . you are very rare .

"If you can hold your head up and smile, you are not the norm, you're unique to all those in doubt and despair."

Ok, what now? How can I start?

If you can read this message, you just received a double blessing in that someone was thinking of you as very special and you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world who cannot read at all.

Make it a great day, count your blessings, and if you want, pass this along to remind everyone else how blessed we all are .

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. Invite from yours truly:

I'd love to have you join me on Sunday, August 16, at 1 p.m. as I ask the question:

What's the difference between a left-handed and right-handed pencil?

Program description:

Come find out the answer to that burning question--and a lot more--as Blaine Greenfield discusses the topic of "Four-mula 4 Success" . . . the 4 things anybody can do on a daily business that will take no more than 15 minutes.

Location:

Congregation Beth HaTephia, 43 N. Libert St., Asheville, NC

To RSVP:

Please send me an email (to bginbc@aol.com) with this in the subject line: AUGUST 16 PRESENTATION.

B. Rebecca in New Jersey:

Please save this date for the opening reception of an art show at Bucks County Community College on Thursday, September 17 . . . you can take a peek online, page 55:

<http://www.tinyurl.com/bcw-aug-2009>

C. Jim in Pennsylvania:

"Money Matters"

A free seminar to help you learn ways to take charge of your finances and create the life you were born to live.

Hosts: Jim Donovan and Joe Paretta

During this fast-paced, fun-filled evening, you will learn specific techniques you can use to reduce your debt and increase your income, starting right now!

If you are drowning in credit card debt, barely paying your bills or simply want to have some extra money at the end of the month, this workshop is for you! If you want to know simple, proven ways you can make more money without quitting your job or risking your savings, reserve your seat now.

Date: Thursday, September 17, 2009

Time: 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Location: TranquiliTea House, 104 North 4th Street, Easton, PA

For more information, please email: webcontacts@tranquilliteahousepa.com

D. Natalie in Pennsylvania:

Get your tickets now to hear Nikki Giovanni, acclaimed poet and writers, peaking on "The Balm that is Poetry" and reading from her new book BICYCLES on Friday, September 25, 7:00 in the Gateway Auditorium at Bucks County Community College in Newtown, PA. Also on the program is Kim Allen of Sister Sledge "We are Family." Tickets, \$10.00; \$5 for students. Go to:

<http://www.bucks.edu/tickets>

or contact Natalie Kaye, 215.968.8015 or kayen@bucks.edu.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#669

7.27.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I chose not to go into Asheville for this year's Bele Chere celebration . . . for those not familiar with the event, that's when thousands of folks come into town to enjoy four stages of free live music, street entertainers, arts, crafts and a lively children's area . . . for more information or in case you want to come next year (when we'll probably check it out again), please click:

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

Instead, on Saturday, we went with our friends Bob and Leslie for dinner at Thai Spice in Hendersonville . . . we had originally planned to go elsewhere, but when we couldn't get a reservation at the original place, we chose this one . . . and we were all pleasantly surprised.

The decor is attractive, the service is friendly and the food is excellent . . . we liked the fact that each of the dishes contained a lot of vegetables (something you often don't see), and there's another nice feature . . . for almost any dish, you can have your choice of sauces . . . in addition, these sauces can be served with no spice up to a lot of spice.

For more information, please click:

www.thaispicenc.com

From there, we went a few blocks to the Hendersonville Little Theater . . . this is the third time we've been there, and we have never seen a show that we didn't like.

The string continued with ON GOLDEN POND, the love story between a couple who have come for the 48th year to spend the summer in their home on the water . . . you may be familiar

with the movie version of this play, starring Henry Fonda and Katherine Hepburn . . . those roles here were played by Sy Berg and Nancy Colangione, and they both did an excellent job . . . we also liked the work of Charlie Martin, who nearly stole every scene he was in.

Unfortunately, we saw the above on the last night of its run . . . however, do be on the lookout for the upcoming production of GOD'S FAVORITE by Neil Simon . . . it's slated to run from September 18 to October 4 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.hendersonvillelittletheatre.org>

B. On Sunday, we visited our friends Debbie and Nick's "Hole in the Sky," the name they call their home in Burnsville . . . we thought we'd have a nice relaxing day, but can you believe it they put us to work?

We had to do some farming, tend to the goats, operate the tractor, etc. . . . in fact, that's us hard at work:



OK, ok . . . just kidding about the work part . . . that picture was somewhat "staged," in case you could not figure that out . . . but overall, we had a blast . . . and their home, which they built from scratch, just had to be seen to be believed.

The views, in particular, were breathtaking . . . the home is located some 4,500 feet up in the air . . . see below for a picture of our gracious hosts on their deck, giving you some idea of what we could see:



C. I'm so glad to be able to reports lots of good news . . . personally, I came back with some better numbers from my recent visit to the doctor . . . my cholesterol numbers, while still not where I want them to be, have improved dramatically from where they were a year ago . . . I'm now at 226, total; 146, LDL; 70, HDL; and 49, triglycerides . . . my Vitamin D level was tested for the first time ever (something that I'm glad my new doctor, Dr. Weizman, had checked) . . . that result came back at 20.6, which is low . . . so I was told to start taking 2000 IU of Vitamin D3 on a daily basis.

Overall, Cynthia and I have been impressed by Dr. Weizman and his staff . . . for more information and/or an appointment, call 828.252.2511.

CONGRATULATIONS to my following friends and colleagues at Bucks County Community College:

* Allen Hoey, whose eighth book, ONCE UPON A TIME AT BLANCHE'S, was recently published by Tamarack Editions . . . for more information and/or to order your own copy, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/mgrekz> .

* Kathleen Dominick, who was elected board president of the Bucks County Economic Development Corporation, the first woman to hold the post in its 51-year history.

* Kat Morgan, who won a scholarship to attend the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania's annual convention June 22 -23. She is the grandmother of a survivor. Plans are underway to start a support group in Upper Bucks for teens and young adults with TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury). Contact Kat at 215.968.8144.

* Kelly Gredone, Business Studies, Marilyn Puchalski, Learning Resources, and Jim Sell, Lower Bucks Campus, who won a prestigious Judges' Choice Award June 11 at the New Media Consortium Conference in Monterey, Ca., for their Mashing It Up interactive session. Mike DiFiori, Public Relations and Marketing Communications, developed the graphic

used on postcards, posters and tee-shirts.

And, also, KUDOS to two of my friends not affiliated with the College:

* Anh Le Molloy, who was named District Manager for Arbonne.

* Edwin Knight, whose company (EventQuip) recently received the 2009 Philadelphia International Special Events Society Award for Best Tenting Production.

D. CONDOLENCES to Betsy Sell and family on the loss of Betsy's mother, Susan Edwards . . . the family requests memorial donations be made in her name to the Katherine Sell Memorial Scholarship, c/o Bucks County Community College Foundation, 275 Swamp Road, Newtown, PA 18940.

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

This week, it goes to Caroline Witek--a Customer Support employee with one of my favorite online companies (restaurant.com).

I recently had a problem with a discount coupon I had purchased from restaurant.com . . . it was not that firm's fault; rather, a restaurant in my area had closed--and I therefore could not use the coupon that I had.

Caroline immediately returned my email . . . she solved my problem quickly (sending a replacement coupon) and offered to be of further assistance . . . she subsequently helped me with another minor problem that I was having that involved promotional materials not being sent to my account.

WHAT THAT PROBLEM WAS/AND A RECOMMENDATION:

I typically get an email from restaurant.com every week or so, alerting me about sales . . . I REALLY like this information and look forward to it . . . so when I noticed that I haven't been getting this information lately, I naturally contacted Carol who is now in the process of resolving the problem for me.

And how many folks write to companies about the fact that they are not getting advertising?

You will; i.e., if you join me in becoming a restaurant.com fan . . . you get \$10-\$50 coupons off the price of meals at hundreds of restaurants at a cost to you of \$10 or less . . . I've been using these for several years now . . . they're great.

That's the recommendation! For more information, please click:

<http://www.restaurant.com>

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2. FYI

There are four major Types of Annuities and each one has their advantages and disadvantages. A good/smart Financial Consultant

can determine if one of the four or a combination of the four is right for you.

The four types are Fixed, Indexed, Variable, and Immediate Annuity. The main advantages of all four are the guarantees that are built in and the tax advantages of each one. You do pay a small fee for some of the guarantees.

Many of my clients own all four depending on their goals and needs .

Basically, an Annuity is sold by a Life Insurance Company, and we make sure we only deal with the companies with the highest ratings. This is why the Annuity can have the guarantee attached to it. If you Acquire a Variable Annuity, you must see and read the prospectus and YOU must know that past performance does not guarantee future performance.

If you want my informative booklet on Annuities, feel free to email me your address, and I will mail one out. Or of course, feel free to call me, and we can discuss if an Annuity is right for you. I will also mail you a report on CDs and what your Banker does NOT want you to know.

Jerry Gross
grossfin@aol.com
215.355.4544

<http://www.jerrygrossfinancial.com>

PS. There was a recent article in THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, dated 7.22.09. Its heading says it all: "Long Derided, This Investment Now Looks Wise." It is all about annuities and is an article you will want to read.

MY TWO CENTS:

Annuities are not for everybody . . . but they are definitely something to consider, especially as you approach retirement age (or at least start contemplating that possibility) . . . I invested somewhat heavily in them several years ago and was glad that I did, given the present state of the economy . . . the guaranteed rates of return that I locked into then, in large part, have helped make my retirement possible.

FYI, part 2

* Jean in Pennsylvania:

Neat idea: Companies encourage employees to stimulate the local economy by giving them \$2 bills to spend locally. When you come across a \$2 bill in circulation at a neighborhood business, you'll know it's the "people's stimulus." You might want to share this site with readers, especially business owners.

<http://peoplesstimulus.org/>

* Scott in Pennsylvania:

Sage Hospitality Specials . . . give a day get a night promotion, volunteer and receive 50% or a complimentary room at all 53 Sage hotels

For more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/n9xry2>

* Sally in North Carolina:

In case you hadn't heard, Buster did not win the Last Band Standing competition, but they did great, and the show was a blast.

Their latest attempt at glory is to be voted Asheville's best rock band in the MountainX.

Click on the link below and fill out the form. It is kind of a pain because you have to vote for a minimum of 30 things. I filled in all I could think of, and it was 49. Didn't have to strain my brain too hard. So if you're willing to take a few minutes to vote for Buster in the rock band category, that would be great!

Please click:

<http://www.mountainx.com/bestof/vote>

Thanks so much for your vote!

* Two readers provided me with the answer to my question of last week about the difference between MY SISTER'S KEEPER, the movie and the book . . . SPOILER ALERT!

Hillary in New Jersey:

In the book version of MY SISTER'S KEEPER, the younger sister is killed in a car accident with her lawyer driving. Her kidney is then donated to the dying sister, and she lives.

I preferred the book, but I cried through the whole movie.

Robin in Pennsylvania:

Haven't seen My Sister's Keeper but I'm aware of the ending as a friend and fellow book group member told me about it. Both endings are a cop out to my way of thinking because they get to avoid the ramifications of the donor sister taking legal action to protect her body from being used to help her sister. In the book, the donor sister is killed in a car accident. The sick sister gets what she needs and goes on to live a long, healthy life.

* Andrew (Blechman):

* I just wanted to let you know that my book, Leisureville: Adventures in a World Without Children (Grove Atlantic), has just been released in paperback (with a dandy new cover to boot!).

MY RECOMMENDATION:

This is a great book to read if you've ever visited or wanted to visit The Village in Florida . . . or if you're contemplating moving into any 55+ community.

* Earl in Pennsylvania (on the trick in Section 7A of last week's issue):

The secret is easy. What is the difference of your subtracted number from the original? Hmmm . . . a multiple of nine, I'd guess . . . like it has to be ! LOL . . . it's math!

* Janeen in Pennsylvania, providing still more of an explanation:

Ask any math teacher friend of yours, and they will tell you that as long as you choose any two digit number and subtract itself, the answer is always the same. It is hard for me to explain, but I had a teacher in high school that taught us that trick.

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3. Some rules just need revisiting

Mr. T hates playing "Rock Paper Scissors" because he doesn't believe anything can beat rock. He always chooses rock, and when someone throws paper, he says, "I win."

If someone is foolish enough to dispute this, he takes his clenched fist and punches them in the face, then says, "I thought your paper would protect you."

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4. Reviews

A. THE UGLY TRUTH is a romantic comedy about a morning show TV producer, Katherine Heigl, who has never been able to find Mr. Perfect . . . things only get worse when she gets paired with a male chauvinist, Gerard Butler, who has been brought in to help the show's sagging ratings . . . yet they soon strike up a friendship of sorts and Heigl even starts taking the dating advice of Butler . . . if this all sounds formulaic, it is because it is . . . yet I had a fun time watching this film and actually laughed out loud at several spots (as did many others in the audience) . . . forget that most of the critics bombed it; methinks you'll enjoy it--particularly because of the banter between two leads . . . rated R.

B. CONFESSIONS OF A SHOPAHOLIC is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #647 follows:

CONFESSIONS OF A SHOPAHOLIC, a romantic comedy about a shopaholic who accidentally gets a job writing a column for a finance magazine, surprised me. . . . I went into it not expecting much; by the end, I appreciated the fact that it made me laugh . . . and, also, it had me caring for the main character--a very funny Isla Fisher (who first caught my attention in WEDDING CRASHERS) . . . my only disappointment was that Joan Cusack, one of my favorite actresses, was wasted in a role that had too few lines . . . rated PG.

C. I've probably read every book that John Grisham has ever written and can say that I've enjoyed them all . . . that is, until his latest: THE ASSOCIATE.

It starts out promisingly enough . . . a young lawyer has a dark secret that others know about . . . so they blackmail him into taking a job he doesn't want . . . so now he not only has to work ridiculously long hours, but he also must steal company secrets.

I was interested for the first 100 pages or so, then it fell apart completely . . . the ending, in particular, was terrible . . . it's almost as if Grisham called it into his publisher while he was perhaps working on his next novel.

The main character, Kyle McAvoy, at least held my interest . . . I also liked learning about the grind the he and many others young lawyers face as they begin their ascent up the corporate ladder.

However, most of the other characters were poorly underwritten, and I was also surprised how they got moved out of the plotline (too often just disappearing and leaving me wondering what happened to them).

If you want to read a good legal thriller, start with THE FIRM (one of Grisham's first novels) if you've never read it or virtually anything else he wrote in the 1990s . . . you might also like his one piece of non-fiction, THE INNOCENT MAN, written in 2006.

D. I've read several books by Richard North Patterson, but for some reason had missed DEGREE OF GUILT . . . that's unfortunate, too, in that it was written prior to some of the other stuff I had read by this gifted author

And so I recommend that if you're in the mood for a well-plotted legal thriller, read this one first if for no other reason that you'll get to meet Judge Caroline Masters (who later appears in FINAL JUDGMENT and if memory serves me correctly, probably some of his other books as well).

This particular story involves the murder of a celebrated novelist by a famous TV journalist . . . you know she killed him, but that's what makes this such a fascinating tale . . . how guilty was she or if you will, what's her degree of guilt?

She's defended by Christopher Paget, a lawyer who also appears in other novels by Patterson . . . he just so happens to be the defendant's former lover.

There are plenty of twists and turns, as well as riveting courtroom scenes . . . the ending doesn't disappoint, either . . . I also enjoyed the fact that I got to listen to this book while driving, and that the narration by one of my favorite character actors (Ken Howard) was excellent.

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5. TV alert

A. THE SECRET LIVES OF CHARLES LINDBERGH
airs on Monday at 9 p.m. on NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
CHANNEL . . . to those that think they know everything worth
knowing about the once-celebrated aviator, THE WALL STREET
JOURNAL notes that it "provides documentary material
that argues otherwise, and then some" . . . for other times
it will be shown, please click:

<http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/tv-schedule>

B. KATHY GRIFFIN: MY LIFE ON THE D-LIST airs every Monday at 10 p.m. on BRAVO . . . it is one of my favorite comedies . . . you can still catch a recent episode that I found particularly funny: "Kathy at the Apollo" . . . she is trying to reach out to the black community via a gig at the legendary Apollo Theater in Harlem, only to find out that it's on amateur night . . . repeats are on Saturday at 1 p.m. and on Monday at 4 p.m.

C. BLOOD IN THE WATER is a historical docudrama that inspired both the book and movie JAWS . . . it tells the story of the 1916 feeding frenzy along the Jersey shore . . . Sunday at 9 p.m. on DISCOVERY.

D. DEFYING GRAVITY stars Ron Livingston in a thriller about eight astronauts embarking on a mysterious mission to Venus . . . Sunday at 9 p.m. on ABC.

Does name of that actor sound familiar? He was the star of the classic OFFICE SPACE, but also look for him in another film that you probably never about: MUSIC WITHIN . . . it's about a guy who was one of the movers behind the Americans with Disabilities Act that's accompanied by a great soundtrack.

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6. Palin update

The November election is now just a memory.

The rest of the world cannot understand how, after bitter election campaigns, American politicians can kiss and make up. But that they do!

Governor Sarah Palin, who ran for Vice President on John McCain's Republican ticket, is doing her part to do just that. For example, she has invited the men who defeated her, Barack Obama and Joe Biden, to visit her great state of Alaska, now that she has more time after resigning from her post.

To celebrate her new-found freedom from the toils of office, she has set up a moose hunting trip for their enjoyment and hired three prominent experts in their field to assist them:

- * Dick Cheney will lead them on the hunt;
- * Ted Kennedy will drive them back to their cabins each evening; and
- * Bill Clinton will entertain their wives and daughters.

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7. Websites

A. Even if dancing is not your thing, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/l6hup2>

It features a couple getting married that you may have seen on the TODAY show or via emails that have been circulated . . . but

even if you have already seen it, view it again if you'd like a guaranteed smile for the day . . . I can't believe that some folks actually didn't like it because they thought it was "inappropriate" for a church ceremony

For a very different dance performance--this one a breast cancer tribute that was on SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE--please click:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBIRvriWC-4>

To hear what the judges had to say about the performance, please click:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1pWv-WhapM0>

B. THANKS to Pat in Pennsylvania for submitting the following:

Of all the things I've sent, this is probably one of the neatest!

Put your viewing on full screen when you view the link below and be sure your sound is up. (Watch it on a PC and not a cellphone.) Very relaxing. And good for meditation and a real show of God's gifts.

Check out the divers on the left side at the bottom inside the tank. They give you a perspective on how large this is. Enjoy!

<http://tinyurl.com/lpcesh>

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

In case you've always wondered how many others have viewed this particular website, make sure you look to the bottom left of your screen.

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8. Computer tip

I've recently taken the suggestion of Danny Brice, my computer guru . . . he said to give Firefox a try as my Internet browser . . . I find it quicker than Internet Explorer, and it has a lot of additional features; e.g., option to keep several windows in use at the same time, a most visited icon (showing you sites you've used), etc.

For more information, please visit:

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

I also tried another browser that Danny mentioned: Chrome, put out by the folks at Google . . . that was good, too, but there was one big problem with it; i.e., there was no toolbar at the top to do such things as File, Edit and the like . . . but do feel free to see it for yourself by clicking:

<http://www.google.com/chrome>

Let me know what you think about both of the above and/or any other browsers you use, including Internet Explorer.

YOU WON'T GO WRONG:

Should you ever need any computer help, do contact Danny . . . he is great on networking, as well as being able to help personalize new systems to meet your needs . . . perhaps best of all is the fact that he can solve many computer problems via a remote log-in capability, which means that you often won't have to give up your system to get it repaired.

For more information, call him at 828.683.4912 or via email, dnbrice@gmail.com.

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9. Couplets

These are couplets taken from the Rhyme Zone where there's this competition for writing the most romantic first line and most unromantic second:

Roses are red, violets are blue, sugar is sweet, and so are you.
But the roses are wilting, the violets are dead, the sugar bowl's empty
and so is your head.

After you, my love, my only prize.
Would be a bullet between my eyes.

Of loving beauty you float with grace.
If only you could hide your face.

I thought that I could love no other.
Until, that is, I met your brother.

Kind, intelligent, loving and hot.
This describes everything you're not.

I love your smile, your face, and your eyes
Damn, I'm good at telling lies!

Every time I see your face.
I wish I were in outer space.

My darling, my lover, my beautiful wife:
Marrying you screwed up my life.

Beauty is on the inside, but some may doubt,
If it's true, I'd prefer you inside out.

I see your face when I am dreaming.
That's why I always wake up screaming.

My love you take my breath away.
What have you stepped in, to smell this way.

My feelings for you no words can tell.
Except for maybe "go to hell."

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10. A quote I like

Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.--Mark Twain (1835-1910), American author and humorist

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11. Thought for the day

Morning view

A young couple moved into a new neighborhood. The next morning, while they were eating breakfast, the young woman saw her neighbor hanging the wash outside. "That laundry is not very clean," she said. "She doesn't know how to wash correctly. Perhaps she needs better laundry soap."

Her husband looked on, but remained silent. Every time her neighbor would hang her wash to dry, the young woman would make the same comments. About one month later, the woman was surprised to see a nice clean wash on the line and said to her husband: "Look, she has learned how to wash correctly. I wonder who taught her this."

The husband said, "" got up early this morning and cleaned our windows."

And so it is with life. What we see when watching others depends on the window through which we look.

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. Cathy in Pennsylvania:

Hiroshima Day Events

* Tuesday, August 4, 2009

2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Pennswood Village (Next to George School)

Rt. 413/ Langhorne, PA

Two survivors of the Hiroshima/Nagasaki bombings will be speaking on their personal experience of this horrific event. Please join us to hear Mr. Tanaka and Mr. Nagahisa for this informative, moving talk.

All are welcome, refreshments will be served.

Cosponsored by BuxMont Coalition for Peace Action and The Bucks County Chapter United Nations Association-USA

* Thursday, August 6

6:30 p.m.

BuxMont Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
2040 Street Road, Warrington, PA

Commemoration of the Anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing:

Coalition for Peace Action's Associate Director, Ward Wilson, a nuclear weapons scholar who is increasingly the source of fundamental challenges to the nuclear status quo will speak about rethinking nuclear weapons in light of Hiroshima. His work has been described as "some of the most original and exacting thinking being done about nuclear weapons today."

The movie "Above and Beyond," a fictionalized account of the B-29 unit chosen to drop the first atomic bomb over Hiroshima, and the effect it had on the personal life of the pilot, Paul Tibbetts will be shown following Ward's presentation. This is a powerful program that will educate as well as provide opportunity for reflection.

B. Lorraine in New Jersey:

* August 5. **Start a New Business Question & Answer Workshop** . 10:00-12:00 p.m. The College of NJ. **REGISTER HERE**

* August 18. **Doing Business with Mercer County: For Contractors Only: Heating System**. 6:00-8:00 p.m. Lawrence Township Library, Darrah Lane. **REGISTER HERE**

* Doing Business in Mercer County en Espanol
"Crezca Su Negocio en el Condado de Mercer"

New program sponsored by the Mercer County Office of Economic Development and Sustainability and supported by the following partners to help our growing Latino community start and develop their businesses here in the region: UCEDC, Regional Business Assistance Corporation, Princeton Public Library, Mercer County Connection, Mercer County Library's Hightstown Memorial branch, YWCA of Trenton, and RISE Inc.

August 5. Como Financiar Su Negocio en el Condado de Mercer (How to Finance Your Business in Mercer County), Princeton Public Library. 6-8 p.m. **REGISTER HERE**

August 11. Como Iniciar Su Pequeño Negocio de A-Z (How to Start a Business from A-Z). Mercer County Connection. 6-8 p.m. **REGISTER HERE**

August 12. Consulta Individual (One-on-One Counsel), Princeton Public Library. Debe hacer una cita previa. Llame al 609.771.2947. (Appointment required. Call 609.771.2947.)

C. Adrienne in Pennsylvania:

On Monday, August 24, Bucks County Community College Foundation will be holding its 15th Annual Golf Classic at Philmont Country Club North Course in Huntingdon Valley, PA. Lunch and dinner are included with registration. New this year: forecaddies for each foursome and action swing video of each golfer's swing.

Golf Classic proceeds support the College's general scholarship fund and contribute toward the completion of innovative campus projects

and programs, both academic and athletic, that are not funded through traditional resources. Since 1995, the Golf Classic has raised \$425,000. Sponsorships are still available. Registration fee is \$350. For more information or to register, go to:

<http://www.bucks.edu/foundation>

or call 215-968-8224.

D. Berta in New Jersey:

"Visions of a Better World Conference"

October 10, 2009 at Seton Hall University in South Orange, NJ

The purpose of the conference is to inspire a humanitarian consciousness and to motivate people to make a personal contribution to creating a better, more compassionate world. It could be something as easy as smiling more at others to brighten their day.

There will be free Seminars, Movies and Workshops all day. We are showing people how they can make a difference in the world through small acts. Many gifts will be presented to attendees, to demonstrate random acts of kindness. More information online:

<http://www.sunfprograms.iwarp.com/index.html>

ADDED BONUS:

Berta will presenting at least one workshop, and that's something you won't want to miss . . . in addition, she'll be coordinating the "kindness room."

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#668

7.20.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I bid farewell on Tuesday to her sister Joyce and brother-in-law Marty . . . before they left, we spent a day in downtown Asheville where we shopped and observed various street performers (always a fun thing to do) . . . from there, we went to one of our favorite movie theaters in the area: Cinebarre to catch a flick . . . it's unique, in that you can also watch a first-run film and grab some beer or wine, as well as some food that was surprisingly good . . . we generally get the burgers and/or salads, and we like them both . . . for more information, please click:

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

B. We have also discovered another unusual place to watch movies; i.e., the Carolina Cinemas . . . they have couches in four of the theaters, which makes for very comfortable viewing . . . the only problem is that it is difficult to determine what films are playing in the theaters that have the couches . . . you can't find it out on the Internet; instead, you have to call the office to find out: 828.274.8811.

C. We revisited a restaurant we had first dined at when thinking about moving to North Carolina: Flat Rock Grille in Asheville . . . Cynthia's salmon was excellent, as was my tilapia . . . the latter portion was particularly generous . . . our salads were also quite good . . . in addition, Mallory did a fine job as our server . . . and KUDOS, too, to Kristin the hostess who greeted us most enthusiastically . . . you'll be able to recognize her if you just seek out the lookalike for Britney Spears' teen sister Jamie Lynn!

For more information about the restaurant, please click:

<http://www.flatrockgrille.com>

D. Lastly, we saw MARRIED ALIVE! at the Parkway Playhouse in Burnsville . . . it's a delightful musical about two different couples and the various stages of their marriages . . . we knew nothing about it, prior to attending, so we had no expectations . . . were we ever pleasantly surprised . . . the performers were all great, and the songs were catchy . . . best of all, you can still see a performance this coming weekend . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.parkwayplayhouse.com>

We next stopped at our favorite pizza place: Mellow Mushroom . . . you'll almost always have to wait to be seated, but do take the time to do so . . . you won't be disappointed.

Though a chain operation, it doesn't feel like it . . . for more information, please click:

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

Then before returning home, we checked out the Sky Bar in Asheville, which provides a beautiful view of the area:



You can order drinks and sandwiches at this locale; for more information, please call 828.225.6998.

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

This week, it goes to Arlene Shaw--an underwriter with Hiram Cohen & Son, Inc. in Williston Park, NY.

Arlene recently was a big help in dealing with insurance needs that my brother and I had for my mother's apartment in Floral Park . . . she not only provided great advice, but she did so in a prompt and friendly manner . . . in fact, it seemed that we had answers to our many questions often before we emailed them to her.

Arlene's firm handled all the insurance for our folks for many years . . . they often told me how appreciative they were of the way they were treated and, in particular, of the fine service provided by Ron Cohen.

For more information, please click:

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

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2. FYI

I like to think that I'm a pretty savvy consumer, but even I was almost fooled by a very realistic-looking rebate check that I received from the folks who sell Snuggles (the sleeved blanket) . . . it looked like I was due back \$8.95 and since I had purchased the item, I thought it was legitimate . . . that is, until I read the very small print on both the front and back . . . it seems that if I cashed the rebate check, I would have been billed \$149.99 for joining an organization called Great Fun.

I then did some additional research and found this great article on the subject:

<http://tinyurl.com/lh4bfy>

Methinks that if you ever get a rebate check, you need to remember not to cash it . . . in addition, always keep in mind that THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A FREE LUNCH!

FYI, part 2

* Back by popular demand--a cartoon from Pat in Pennsylvania:



I'm much obliged to Pat Achilles for providing the above . . . she does comics, greeting cards, artwork for children's books and so much more . . . for more information, call her at 215.348.4837 or email her at: patachilles@aol.com . . . you can also get a FREE weekly cartoon delivered to your email by clicking:

<http://www.achillesportfolio.com/freecartoonsignup.htm>

* Harry in California:

Starting a new promo in a couple of days for INSTANT TURNAROUND!
My coauthor, Ross Reck, and I are declaring war on bad bosses.
You can go to:

<http://www.bosstrenz.com>

and we will tag your boss as a bad boss. For \$30 we will send them, anonymously, a copy of the book with a big yellow Bad Boss tag. Check it out.

* Jean in Pennsylvania:

I love my husband's "Polish Paella," especially as leftovers for lunch!

SPECIAL THANKS:

To Jean for then giving me permission to run the recipe for the above:

Diced kielbasa blackened in cast-iron, then folded into rice with red beans, tomatoes, tomato sauce, hot sauce, and whatever else he throws in. He never wrote it down so it's different every time.

Ken says there is no recipe, Blaine. You're welcome to run my description. He uses canned tomatoes, often stewed (the tomatoes, not the cook).

* A message from the Goodnoe family:

Goodnoe's has opened its ice cream parlor! Third generation, Colin and Kendall, are dipping ice cream "Bucks County Style." All the same ingredients and all the same recipes, you won't know Skip handed it over. Now located at 4 S. Sycamore Street, Newtown (between Swamp Road and Newtown-Richboro Road). We hope you visit us for your favorite ice cream treat.

* Diane in Pennsylvania (with an update on her husband Bill Lewis):

Just an update on Bill. He had an appointment this morning with the surgeon and had all the stitches and staples removed. It will only be a matter of a few days before he is transferred out of Meadow Springs and on to Magee for two weeks of therapy. After that it will be Home Sweet Home.

It will be nice to have him home finally!

It is hard to believe that it has almost been one year since Bill's accident.

I want to thank everyone for all your prayers and get well cards that were sent to Bill to our home and at Meadow Springs.

I will continue to keep everyone posted, and I will let everyone know when Bill comes home.

God bless you all.

TO REACH BILL:

His phone number is 267.912.1458, and his email address remains: billL@steen.com.

* Marsha in New Jersey:

Even if you are not one of the multitudes of Harry Potter enthusiasts, perhaps you will join my enthusiasm of my daughter Becca's short promo commercial

airing daily on MTV. Just click on the link and wait for the youtube film to load:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CsuPnextlgc>

* Sharon in North Carolina (on the new Harry Potter movie):

While I admit that I don't find J.K. Rowling the best writer ever, she does have some cool ideas. Unfortunately, the writer and director of the movie left those out and left the boring stuff in. The reason why it is rated PG this time is because it is more dealing with all the relationships between the teens (romantically) and little dealing with the actual danger of the bad guy Voldermort. The book had so much background explaining why and how he became "evil," and they skipped 90% of that for teen drama/angst. Taking out the big fight scene at the end that was in the book and changing a few other elements left some big plot holes and didn't explain how or why certain people knew who or what the half-blood prince was.

* Lana in Ohio:

GREY GARDENS is a fantastic movie. Excellent recommendation!

* Sally in North Carolina:

Interesting newsletter, Blaine. Very informative. How do you find the time?

Thank you for the plug for Buster. They're one of my favorite bands in town too.

And I agree with your recommendation of GREY GARDENS. I was completely blown away. Amazing story. Amazing performances. I'd like to own that one. After watching it, Bob and I rented the original documentary from Netflix. Drew Barrymore and Jessica Lange were dead on.

I heard the two Michaels from the new Comedy Central show interviewed on "Fresh Air" on NPR this afternoon. Neat guys--should be a good show. I'll have to remember to record it.

* Debbie in Pennsylvania:

I get the biggest chuckle out of reading your newsletter . . . especially what not to say in a job interview!

* Deb in Colorado:

I love this newsletter and have for years. The "Thought" section was particularly lovely this week [#666].

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3. Book report recommendation

What is the thinnest book in the world?

WHAT MEN KNOW ABOUT WOMEN.

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4. Reviews

A. MY SISTER'S KEEPER tells the story of a family forced to deal the fact that one of its members is dying . . . as the storyline might indicate, it's a tearjerker . . . but one that also raises fascinating moral and ethical questions . . . I won't tell you more for fear that I'll ruin the film for you . . . however, I will say that it moved me deeply . . . Cameron Diaz, Abigail Breslin, Alec Baldwin and Sofia Vassilieva (a young actress that I had not seen before) are all superb in their respective roles . . . the accompanying soundtrack was great, too . . . rated PG-13.

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

I understand that the book had a different ending than the movie . . . since I did not also read the book, I can't comment on that . . . but if any reader (who has both read the book and seen the movie) wishes to tell me the differences, I'd be most appreciative . . . I'd also be interested in your reaction to the changes that were made.

B. THE GREAT BUCK HOWARD is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #653 follows:

John Malkovich does his best work in some time (perhaps since BEING JOHN MALKOVICH) in THE GREAT BUCK HOWARD, a charming tale of an aging mentalist--in the tradition of the Amazing Kreskin . . . his corny persona had me chuckling throughout the film . . . I also liked how Emily Blunt lit up the screen every time she appeared as Howard's publicist . . . rated PG, though I have my doubts that young children would appreciate it.

What I did appreciate: How Malkovich constantly screamed "I love this town!" to half-full rooms in such towns as Wausau, Wisconsin, and Bakersfield, California . . . his energetic handshake also is something that still sticks in my mind.

C. It's not easy running a business at any time, but when the economy turns downward, things become even more difficult . . . so that's why BUSINESS SUCCESS IN TOUGH TIMES by Neil Raphael, Janis Raye and Adrienne Raphael is particularly relevant--and helpful to anybody involved in running and/or working for just about any size enterprise.

The authors present many examples of businesses who have faced tough times, but have managed to not only survive--but also prosper . . . I particularly liked the range of organizations that were featured, running the gamut from a doctor practicing medicine the old-fashioned way to a major hotel change.

Some I recognized, such as Netflix; others I had never heard about, such as St. Johnsbury Academy in Vermont . . . and one story (how casino gambling managed to succeed in Atlantic City) got me to see the value of collaboration and the need to:

* Think cooperation, not competition.

Businesses have been joining together in informal groups for many years to act as a larger organization for discounts, obtaining insurance, or joint advertising. You can even collaborate with someone

in the same business as yours--most people want to shop in more than one place for the same kind of goods.

Collaboration, incidentally, is one of the nine chapter headings . . . the others also point to key strategies for business success: Adaptability, Customer Service, Diversity, Growth, Loyalty, Niche Marketing, Perseverance and Planning.

The amazing thing is that nothing you do involves anything more difficult than listening to your customer:

* At Superquinn, Feargal Quinn went a step further than Amazon. He instituted a program to reward customers who found faults with his products or services. Through his loyalty points program, he awarded bonus points to customers who found things wrong in the Superquinn operation. 300 points for a shopping cart with a broken wheel (or, as the Irish would say, a "wobbly trolley"): 400 points for finding milk still in the case after its expiration date; 100 points for a sign with a misspelled word. Quinn claims that by enlisting his customers to find mistakes, he didn't have to hire quality control personnel. His customers did all the work for him.

And sometimes, thinking outside the box helps:

* Figuring out what your business does best and concentrating on that can work on a micro or macro sale. Matthew Burak is a woodworker based in Vermont who started his career doing custom-designed furniture. Over time, he met hundreds of woodworking enthusiasts who enjoyed amateur projects but weren't always able to create the more complex sections that required more skill and technical expertise. He recognized a need for those parts and started a business producing just the table legs. According to Burak, people can make the top of a table out of many different materials, but turning wooden table legs requires equipment most people don't have. His business, Classic Designs by Matthew Burak, specializes in providing wooden table legs of all sizes to both amateur wood workers and professional contractors. In the past ten years, the business has grown exponentially, primarily through Internet sales from its website, tablelegs.com.

My only disappointment in reading BUSINESS SUCCESS IN TOUGH TIMES was that it only contained 142 pages . . . it left me wanting more, which I guess I'll have to wait for until Raphael, Raye and Raphael come out with their next book.

D. If you're a fan of comedian Larry Miller (WAITING FOR GUFFMAN, SEINFELD appearances, etc.), then SPOILED ROTTEN AMERICA: OUTRAGES OF EVERYDAY LIFE is the book for you.

It contains a series of 17 essays that present Miller's views on what's funny in our daily lives . . . it seems that is just about everything, at least according to the author, and I found myself both chuckling and thinking about many of his observations.

For example:

* The American pendulum only swings to extremes. The news is on all day, but we know less and less; there's music in every mall, but we don't hear it; everyone has a phone but nothing to say. The chubbiest of us have the strictest diets, because we can't learn to modulate and moderate. It's all or nothing. One bite of a cookie, and suddenly you're on a plane to Vegas

with a hooker. To the Cranky Nitpickers of America—a club I'd join in a second if I weren't already its president—it's long been understood that the world is going to Hell in a handbasket.

Then there was his take on middle-age drinking:

* When you're in your twenties, you can drink all night and bungee-jump off a bridge the next day. If I drank all night, I'd want to go off that bridge without the cord.

Perhaps best of all, he includes his classic routine on the 5 stages of drinking--written when he was much younger.

One other line really caught my attention:

* Money can't make stupid people smart, but it often makes smart people stupid.

I was fortunate to be given the opportunity to listen to this book on CD . . . this is one time when I preferred that option (to the written version), in that Miller also did the narration--so I got to hear his great delivery.

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5. TV alert

A. RUBY & THE ROCKITS should be fun, if just to see David Cassidy play the irresponsible rocker dad to a teen who shares his musical talents . . . Tuesdays at 8:30 p.m. on ABC FAMILY.

B. PROM NIGHT IN MISSISSIPPI is an HBO documentary that tells the story of a small town that has always had two proms, one for blacks and one for nights . . . actor Morgan Freeman attempted to change things around by offering to pay for the whole party . . . according to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, "The true magic of the film is that it gets us thinking in many directions, perhaps beyond the imagining of the directors." . . . Thursday at 2:30 p.m. on HBO . . . for other times, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/lsohhe>

C. I got to see TED WILLIAMS, another HBO documentary about the hitter many feel was the best to ever play major league baseball . . . it's excellent and a "must-see" for any baseball fan . . . Friday at 8 a.m. on HBO . . . for other times, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/n2fvf3>

D. Debra in Louisiana recommended that I catch DROP DEAD DIVA, a comedy about a wanna be model who drops dead and goes into an overweight attorney's body . . . I took her advice and can tell you that it's a cute show . . . Sundays at 9 p.m. on LIFETIME.

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6. Yesterday (as reported by a friend)

Yesterday, I had a flat tire on the Interstate. So I eased my car over to the shoulder of the road, carefully got out of the car and opened the trunk. I took out two cardboard men, unfolded them and stood them at the rear of my car facing oncoming traffic. They looked so lifelike you wouldn't believe it! They were in trench coats, exposing their nude bodies to the approaching drivers.

I started to change my tire, and to my surprise, cars started slowing down to look at my life-like men. And, of course, traffic started backing up. Everybody was tooting their horns and waving like crazy. It wasn't long before a police officer pulled up behind me.

The officer got out of his car and started walking towards me. I could tell he was not a happy camper! "What's going on here?"

"My car has a flat tire," I said calmly.

"Well, what the &?%\$ are those obscene cardboard men doing here by the road?"

I couldn't believe that he didn't know. So I told him, "Hello-o-o-o, those are my emergency flashers."

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7. Websites

A. Prepare to be amazed when you click:

<http://tinyurl.com/cxyndr>

You'll see a cute online version of an old trick . . . see if you can figure it out by yourself . . . if you can't, and if there's sufficient interest, I'll run the "solution" next week. (Thanks to Natalie in Pennsylvania for sending this to me.)

B. For those who couldn't make the Michael Jackson funeral, here's the program that was distributed:

<http://tinyurl.com/nalyp9>

You can actually download the whole thing yourself. (Thanks to Scott in Pennsylvania for this one.)

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

To see my reviews of books that I've enjoyed, for the most part, go to "Blaine's Best" on the left and then letter "O" . . . click on the second paragraph.

To help me move up in the ratings (I'm now #369 in the Top 500 of all reviewers), please feel free to do the following:

1. Go to:

<http://www.amazon.com>

2. Find my review of a recent book that I read; e.g., CURIOUS GEORGE by John Capoya.
3. Go to that book and then find my review. I believe it is toward the top on the right.
4. If you feel my review was helpful, please click "Yes."

Much obliged!

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8. Computer tip

Might there be a better search engine than Google?

Decide for yourself by trying Microsoft's Bing . . . all you need to do is click:

<http://www.bing.com>

Should you want more information, read what THE NEW YORK TIMES had to say about the two search engines:

<http://tinyurl.com/njkzb6>

And, lastly, there's even a website that lets you do your very own side-by-side comparison:

<http://bing-vs-google.com/>

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9. Things to say in job interviews . . . NOT, Part 3 of 3

Still more memorable interview responses, according to CareerBuilder.com:

29. "I am an alcoholic and do not deserve this job."--Deb Bailey, owner, Power Women Magazine & Radio Show

30. "I'm really not a big learner. You know . . . some people love learning and are always picking up new things, but that's just not me. I'd much rather work at a place where the job is pretty stagnant and doesn't change a lot."--Micheale Charles, Voice Communications

31. When have you demonstrated leadership skills?

"Well my best example would be in the world of online video gaming. I pretty much run the show; it takes a lot to do that."--Rachel Croce

32. Is there anything else I should know about you?

"You should probably know I mud wrestle on the weekends."--Venne

33. When can you start?

"I need to check with my mom on that one."--Bolzan

34. Use three adjectives to describe yourself

"I hate questions like this."--Katrina Meistering, manager of outreach,

National Fatherhood Initiative

35. Tell of a time you made a mistake and how you dealt with it
"I stole some equipment from my old job, and I had to pay for its replacement."--Meistering

36. Have you submitted your two weeks' notice to your current employer?
"What is two weeks' notice? I've never quit a job before, I've always been fired."--Meistering

37. "One guy [said] 'it would probably be best' if I didn't run a background check on him. Of course, I did, and learned all about his long, sordid past of lawbreaking. Our client actually offered him a job as a staff accountant, but quickly retracted the offer when I had to tell them all about his recent arrest for a meth lab in his basement."--Charles

38. "[A] guy said he did not have a mailing address, as he was living in a gypsy camp at the airport."--Sandra L. Flippo, SPHR

39. "I went into the lobby to pick up a candidate. As he stood up, his trousers fell to the floor! [He said] 'Oh, my gosh--they told me I needed a suit for the interview. I've got no money--so I borrowed this thing. It's too big!' "--Beth Ross, executive and career coach

40. "Wow--I'm not used to wearing dress shoes! My feet are killing me. Can I show you these bloody blisters?"--Bolzan

41. "May I have a cup of coffee? I think I may still be a little drunk from last night."--Smith

42. (During a telephone call to schedule the interview) "Can we meet next month? I am currently incarcerated."--Smith

43. "[A candidate] was asked whether he could advocate impartially on behalf of the various universities he would be representing since he had attended one of them. He responded, 'Well, I don't like to poop where I eat, but I thought my education sucked, so I certainly wouldn't put that school above the others.' "--Darby

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10. A quote I like

There is only one success--to be able to spend your life in your own way.--Christopher Morley (1890-1957), American journalist, novelist, essayist and poet

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11. Thought for the day

The classroom

A lesson that should be taught in all schools . . . and colleges!

Back in September of 2005, on the first day of school, Martha Cothren, a social studies school teacher at Robinson High School in Little Rock, did something not to be forgotten. On the first day of school, with the

permission of the school superintendent, the principal and the building supervisor, she removed all of the desks out of her classroom. When the first period kids entered the room they discovered that there were no desks.. "Ms. Cothren, where're our desks?"

She replied, "You can't have a desk until you tell me how you earn the right to sit at a desk."

They thought, "Well, maybe it's our grades."

"No," she said.

"Maybe it's our behavior."

She told them, "No, it's not even your behavior."

And so, they came and went, the first period, second period, third period. Still no desks in the classroom.

By early afternoon, television news crews had started gathering in Ms. Cothren's classroom to report about this crazy teacher who had taken all the desks out of her room.

The final period of the day came and as the puzzled students found seats on the floor of the deskless classroom. Martha Cothren said, "Throughout the day, no one has been able to tell me just what he/she has done to earn the right to sit at the desks that are ordinarily found in this classroom. Now I am going to tell you.." At this point, Martha Cothren went over to the door of her classroom and opened it.

Twenty-seven U.S. Veterans, all in uniforms, walked into that classroom, each one carrying a school desk. The Vets began placing the school desks in rows, and then they would walk over and stand along side the wall. By the time the last soldier had set the final desk in place, those kids started to understand, perhaps for the first time in their lives, just how the right to sit at those desks had been earned.

Martha said, "You didn't earn the right to sit at these desks. These heroes did it for you. They placed the desks here for you. Now, it's up to you to sit in them. It is your responsibility to learn, to be good students, to be good citizens. They paid the price so that you could have the freedom to get an education. Don't ever forget it."

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

MY TWO CENTS:

The above is a true story; see for yourself by clicking:

<http://www.snopes.com/glurge/nodesks.asp>

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12. Advance planning department

A. Two items of interest for this weekend:

* Cheryl in Pennsylvania:

Oh, wow, are audiences ever loving FINIAN'S RAINBOW [at Actor's Net of Bucks County in Morrisville, PA]. And they're just pouring in--last weekend was probably our biggest 4-day weekend every. And this weekend's 5 shows--Thursday and Friday at 8 p.m., Saturday at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sunday at 6 p.m.--are filling up fast. In fact, the Saturday matinee has nothing but folding chairs available. So if you're planning to come, please reserve soon.

Wondering how good it is? Check out the Packet/centraljersey.com review by Bob Brown:

<http://tinyurl.com/nvzur4>

As you'll see, Mr. Brown mentions some performers by name and then praises "the ensemble in general for a performance that showed real joy." And that's what audiences are taking away with them: JOY. And good humor and great tunes to hum, and an irrepressible twinkle in the eye.

Really. Honestly. I know I'm a co-founder of the company and married to the show's director, but I don't think you should miss this one.

For tickets, call 215.295.3694 or email, actorsnet@aol.com.

* Vilassi in New Jersey:

Latin Fiesta Night!
A fresh air social gathering to
meet new people and try new things

Saturday, July 25th
7 p.m. 'til 11 p.m. (rain or shine)
2 Hope Hill Farm Lane, Off Mountain View Rd., Asbury, NJ

\$25 per person includes . . .
Exquisite ambience, phenomenal food, exotic beverages and tantalizing
entertainment.
Bonus! a FREE Salsa & Merengue Lesson!
Private sessions with our gifted clairvoyant will be available for purchase.

RSVP by Friday, July 24th at:
Experience.Nirvana@yahoo.com or 908-996-7536
For more information, visit:

<http://www.experiencenirvana.com/upcoming-events.html>

B. Two of my talented colleagues from Bucks County Community College will be showcasing their talents as follows:

* John Strauss will be playing acoustic at the Zebra Striped Whale Ice Cream and Coffee Shop, 12 S. State St., Newtown, PA, on Sun., July 26, from 4 til 6. Come on by!

* As a follow-up to his Pulitzer-nominated poetry collection Country Music, Bucks County Community College professor Allen Hoey has published Once Upon a Time at Blanche's. Hoey, the 2001 Bucks County Poet Laureate, will read from his new book at 7 p.m. on Thursday, July 30.

Location: Newtown Library Co., Centre Ave., Newtown Borough,
2 blocks east of Starbucks.

C. Jim Donovan invites you to his new tele-seminar, "Wake up and smell the money," on Thursday, July 30 at 8 p.m. Best part: it's FREE. Details:

<http://tinyurl.com/nuc5jg>

D. And here are two other events you might want to catch:

* Rita Olinsky's son is performing again on Thursday July 30th at the Bitter End in NYC with Ippazzi. For more information, please click:

<http://www.ippazzi.com>

* George Hartpence, one of my favorite New Jersey/Pennsylvania actors, will be starring in "Dangerous Corner" from Aug. 21-Sept. 12 at the Langhorne Players in Langhorne, PA . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.georgehartpence.com>

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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

#667

7.13.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had the pleasure of spending this past week hosting visitors . . . first up was my daughter Risa and her husband JP . . . we went to many of our favorite local restaurants (12 Bones, Tupelo Honey Cafe, Cruizer's and Sushi Tai) and, also, got to mine for both gems and gold at The Lucky Strike in Marion, North Carolina . . . that's JP and Risa below, hard at work:

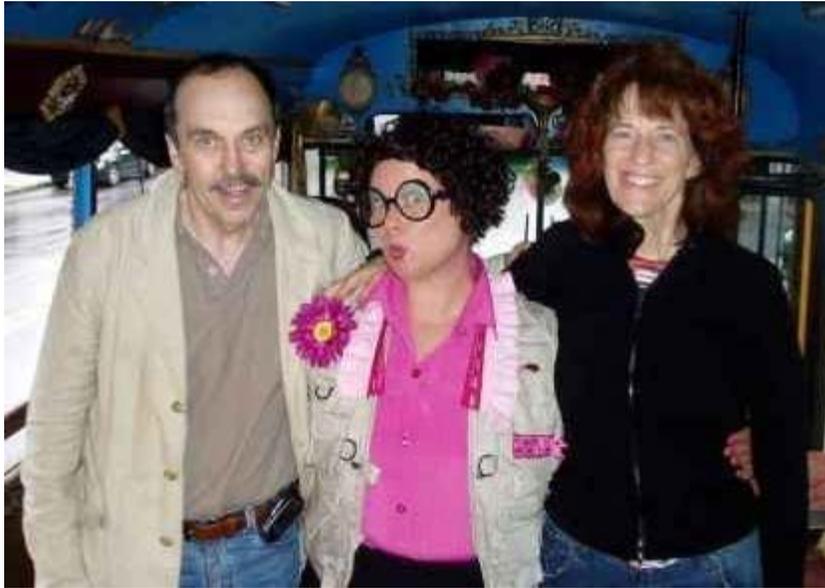


For more information about the latter spot, please click:

<http://www.luckystrikegoldandgem.com>

B. We also took a comedy tour of Asheville, which was not only fun but informative as well . . . what follows is a picture of us

with our tour guide:



If you're going to visit Asheville, we would definitely recommend that you take this tour . . . for information, please click:

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

Afterward, we went to the Orange Peel to see a Last Band Standing competition that featured Buster, one of our favorite local bands . . . though the group did not win, it received much favorable praise from the judges . . . and we look forward to seeing the band again when it appears in our local community on August 29.

C. The day after Risa and JP left, we were joined by Cynthia's sister Joyce and her husband Marty who helped us celebrate our 4th wedding anniversary on Friday night . . . we had a fantastic dinner at Steak and Wine, at which we all feasted on their steaks . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.swsteakandwine.com>

From there, we walked around town--hitting the Drumming Circle that takes place every Friday night and, of course, stopping by for ice cream at Kilwin's.

On Saturday, we toured the River Arts District and got to watch a performance by Jonas Gerard . . . he's an artist who invites you into his studio to watch him paint while he dances to music . . . it's an amazing experience that you'll have to see to believe . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.jonasgerard.com>

We then went for an excellent seafood dinner at Blue Water Seafood in Hendersonville:

<http://www.bluewaterseafood.net/site/>

Cynthia and I will remember the evening because it was the first time we tried fried green tomatoes . . . we liked them, too!

We concluded the day with a trip to the Flat Rock Playhouse to see PERFECT WEDDING . . . this was a farce that had us all laughing throughout the performance . . . we've now seen Scott Treadway, the star, in three plays over the past several months . . . he continues to amaze us with his range, as well as his ability to master lengthy roles in such a short period of time.

Fortunately, the play runs through July 18, so if you get the chance, do catch it if you can . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.flatrockplayhouse.org>

D. On Sunday, we took a drive on the Blue Ridge Parkway . . . the views are magnificent, as can be by the picture below:



We then went to the Pisgah National Park where we saw two local songcatchers who sang, individually and together, Appalachian folk music . . . we went for dinner at the Pisgah Inn . . . Marty and I had meatloaf, which we enjoyed . . . Joyce ordered salmon and Cynthia ordered trout, which they also enjoyed . . . perhaps best was the peach cobbler a la mode for dessert; the only problem was that splitting it four ways was a mistake . . . we should have each ordered our own dish!

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

This week, it goes to Glenn Gleghorn and his entire staff at Glenn M. Gleghorn, CPA--the accounting firm I'm now using in North Carolina.

I have gotten to know Glenn over the past few months and over that time, I've grown to appreciate both his competence and friendly nature . . . in particular, he has asked many insightful questions that helped point out deductions that I would have

otherwise missed.

Glenn is ably assisted by his wife Aretha, as well as by Diane, Sheena and Jennifer . . . all these fine folks have made what otherwise could have been a difficult transition (switching accounting firms) into one that might even be deemed a pleasure if it involved anything else other than having to deal with my taxes.

Should you be in need of an accountant "down South," you certainly won't go wrong by contacting Glenn at 828.254.3943.

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2. FYI

It will take a long time
by Dr. Wayne Dyer

Is this a valid reason, or an excuse not to proceed? If you wish to elevate your life, it really doesn't matter how long it takes, does it? And this is particularly true when you're conscious that you live your life, every single bit of it, in the present moment and only in the present moment. All you ever get is now. Every thought occurs in the present moment, and every change has a defining moment. Often it takes something or someone outside of you to help you realize that.

An entertaining psychiatrist named Dr. Murray Banks does just that with the following little exchange between himself and a woman who has decided not to return to school because she'd be too old when she finished.

"How old would you be in five years if you got that degree by starting now?" he asks her.

"Forty-nine," she replies.

"And how old will you be in five years if you don't go back to school?"

"Forty-nine," she answers, seemingly confused . . . but with the look of one who's become conscious of the excuses she created for not elevating her life.

However long it took you to create any self-defeating habit, you did it all one day, one moment at a time. There's absolutely no proof that anything will take a long time, since even the idea of "a long time" is an illusion-there is only now. Make this awareness a part of your consciousness. The Tao Te Ching reinforces this in perhaps the most famous line in that masterful work: "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." Elevate or move on in your life, not by thinking big and in long time periods, but with consciousness focused on the present moment.

SOURCE:

EXCUSES BEGONE! (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11)

FYI, part 2

* Jean in Pennsylvania:

My nephew's debut album:

<http://www.myspace.com/jesseponnock>

NOTE:

By visiting the above website you can find out all about getting it for free on July 25.

And Jean's nephew will be having a CD Release Concert/Party on July 25 at 7:30 p.m. at Milkboy Coffee in Ardmore . . . for more information about that, please click:

<http://milkboycoffee.com/home/calendar/>

* Rebecca in New Jersey:

To view my artwork, please click:

http://www.inliquid.com/artist/kelly_rebecca/kelly.php

* Barbara in Pennsylvania:

This was a "helluva" newsletter this week!! Blaine, you outdid yourself. I loved it, especially the joke about the porno movie/ music/dog! (I laughed out loud at this one). Thanks for sharing--to steal a phrase of yours.

* Diane in Pennsylvania (with an update on her husband Bill):

A lot of people have been asking me for an update on Bill. As some of you know, Bill has recently been admitted to the hospital for surgery. The surgery was on June 23rd at Roxborough Memorial Hospital where he was there for three days. His (flap) surgery required him having a total of over 70 stitches and staples from his hip down to the bottom of his outer thigh. The total recovery period lasts six to eight weeks. He is recovering at a Skilled Nursing Facility in Plymouth Meeting where he will be there for approximately four to five weeks. After that, he will head down to Magee for two weeks for therapy.

Thank you for everyone's prayers and concerns.

If you would like to write, email or call Bill, here is his information:

Meadow Springs Center
845 Germantown Pike
Plymouth Meeting Pa 19462
ROOM 230w

Cell phone: 267.912.1458

Bill's email address is bill@steen.com.

He has his laptop with him so we checks his messages every day.

YOU'RE IN FOR A TREAT:

If you haven't seen it yet, please view the moving tribute to Bill that was put together by his good friend John Worthington:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJN0Cdbf0IA>

* Arlene in Pennsylvania:

If you remember, I tried to talk you into buying new digs at The Villages, Florida. I so love it there. I think your readers will be interested in a deal they have just offered. Between now and September 30th, offering their newest guest accommodations: the Creekside Cabanas, which opened in February. These spacious homes and villas feature open, 2-bedroom floor plans that allow you to relax or entertain new friends after a day of fun swimming, golfing, shopping or exploring for--get this--\$75.00 a night. No tax. I'm going the beginning of September. Can't wait.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.thevillages.com/ComeVisit/lpp.asp>

MY TWO CENTS:

I think Arlene was the first to tell me about this place . . . we visited it and had a fantastic four day mini-vacation . . . there's even a five day option . . . do check it out sometime, even if you're not interested in moving there . . . it is located not too far from the Orlando area . . . you have to be of retirement age to take advantage of this offer, and you are subjected to a non-pushy tour that methinks you'll actually enjoy.

* And for more on that state, check out this from Ginger in Florida:

See my updated website with some awesome panoramic pictures of Florida:

<http://www.Eisenrod.com>

* Patty in Pennsylvania:

Good youtube worth watching:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jeYscnFpEyA>

I'm mailing in my teacups!

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3. Warning

I haven't checked snopes.com yet to see if this actually works or not . . . but "they" do say:

If you ever get the sudden urge to run around naked, you should sniff some Windex first. It'll keep you from streaking.

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4. Reviews

A. When I was younger, I read every book about gangsters and saw every film about them, too . . . so that's probably why I was disappointed with PUBLIC ENEMIES, in that I knew the whole

story about legendary gangster John Dillinger and how he was tracked down by FBI agent Melvin Purvis . . . also, I just didn't feel anything for the main characters--played by Johnny Depp and Christian Bale, respectively . . . and there was just too much action taking place in the dark . . . 140 longish minutes . . . rated R.

B. GREY GARDENS , the HBO movie, is now out on DVD . . . it features Jessica Lange and Drew Barrymore playing the real-life mother-daughter act of Edith and Edie Bealer, faded East Hampton society belles who are related to Jackie Onassis . . . they are both superb, as is this film, which TV GUIDE calls both "mesmerizing and creepy" . . . I concur . . . though not yet officially rated, I'd say that it would be appropriate viewing for any mature teenager and up.

C. Every time I read a book by Dr. Wayne Dyer, it seems I come away thinking that this is his best . . . and that he won't be able to top it.

Such is the case with his latest, EXCUSES BEGONE! (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11) . . . just about every page had me nodding while I thought to myself, this applies to me--and others that I care about.

Dr. Dyer discusses such classic excuses as the following:
If I changed, it would create family dramas . . . I'm too old or too young . . . I'm too busy and tired . . . I can't afford the things I truly want . . . it would be very difficult for me to do anything differently . . . and I've always been this way . . . but what's so great about Dr. Dyer is the fact that he then presents ways to look at these excuses differently, so that you no longer need to be hampered by them in your daily life.

For example, when it comes to being too busy:

* Change this pattern by never saying or implying that you're too busy. Just drop it, and replace it with the following affirmation I intend to take time for myself to live the life that I came here to live, and to do it without ignoring my responsibilities as a parent, spouse, or employee.

I also liked what he had to say with respect to the need to explain your behavior . . . as he notes:

* Complaining and explaining are the two huge allies of excuse making. Generally speaking, when you resort to complaining you employ an excuse of one kind or another, placing the responsibility for what's upsetting you on something or someone external to yourself. . . . In addition to putting an end to complaints, I recommend that you never attempt to explain. As I've pursued a no-excuses mentality, I've made it my policy to keep the thing that I wish to accomplish a private matter. By doing so, I'm never forced into a stance of having to explain myself. I'm well aware that many of my personal life missions sound strange and outrageous to others. Consequently, I've learned to avoid sharing my intentions with anyone, outside of a select few whom I know and trust at a spiritual level. (Anything I might say to these individuals wouldn't require me to explain myself in any way.)

Lastly, because of my interest in helping others quit smoking, I was blown away by Dr. Dyer's take on the subject:

* Decades ago when I decided to give up smoking, for example, I used

EXCUSES BEGONE! beliefs. It was encouraging for me to realize how much more difficult it was to smoke than not to smoke. The smoker part of me always had to have a pack of cigarettes and an ashtray within easy reach, carry matches or lighters, dispose of ashes, deal with smelly fingers and stained teeth, earn money to pay for this disgusting habit, be careful exhaling noxious fumes, cough up nicotine residue from my lungs, buy lighter fluid and flints, and on and on. The truth was that continuing to smoke was the real difficulty, and changing my habit involved one simple thing: not smoking.

If you have any interest in changing lifelong self-defeating thinking habits, do yourself a favor and buy EXCUSES BEGONE! today . . . if you're not near a store, that's why they invented online retailing--thus taking away any excuse that you might have!

D. Heard the CD version of THE TOYOTA WAY by Dr. Jeffrey Liker, a professor of Industrial and Operations Engineering at the University of Michigan.

Dr. Liker has studied Toyota for some 20 years and, in particular, the 14 management principles and philosophy that drive the company's quality and efficiency-obsessed culture . . . he then proceeds to take his research to show how it can be applied to any organization, whether in services or manufacturing.

The key is to create a culture of continuous learning and improvement . . . best of all, this isn't rocket science . . . as pointed out in the Preface, Dr. Liker remembers asking Fujio Cho (president of Toyota Motor Company) what was remarkable about his company's success . . . his response was simply:

* The key to the Toyota Way and what makes Toyota stand out is not any of the individual elements. . . . But what is important is having all the elements together as a system. It must be practiced every day in a very consistent manner."

Given that I own and love a Toyota (the Avalon), I had a particular interest in this book given that I wanted to see what helped make my vehicle as fine a car as it is . . . THE TOYOTA WAY gave me some valuable insights as to why that was the case . . . in addition, it gave me many ideas with respect to how to better assess what other companies need to do to become better and more competitive in the marketplace.

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5. TV alert

A. Tissue alert: NATASHA RICHARDSON; THE E! TRUE HOLLYWOOD STORY airs on Wednesday at 10 p.m. on E! . . . this show will be a look back at the leading lady whose life was cut far too short in a March skiing accident.

B. Comedians (and friends of 20 years) Michael Ian Black and Michael Showalter star as fictionalized versions of themselves on MICHAEL AND MICHAEL HAVE ISSUES . . . Wednesdays at 10:30 p.m. on COMEDY CENTRAL.

C. J.K. ROWLING: A YEAR IN THE LIFE opens up about her road

from cash-strapped single mom to bestselling author . . . Thursday at 8 p.m. on ABC.

D. Check out either of these made-for-TV movies:

* Laura Leighton (soon to return as bad girl Sydney Andrews on the CW's MELROSE PLACE fall revival) returns to the screen as Angie Dickinson's prodigal daughter in an attempt to save her family's farm from land developers . . . Saturday at 9 p.m. HALLMARK.

* Lindsay Lohan stars as a down-on-her-luck publishing assistant who fakes pregnancy to keep her job . . . Sunday at 8 p.m. on ABS FAMILY.

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6. Tough times

I used to work for the unemployment office until they laid me off. The next day I went back to apply for Unemployment Insurance and waited 1.5 hours in line. When I got to the window, the lady apologized, saying they were a little short-handed today (ouch). When she saw that my last job was at her office, she asked, "If we didn't want to pay you while you were working here, what makes you think we want to pay you when you're not working here?" (ouch-ouch)

SOURCE:

The above was both written and submitted by my friend Les in California . . . fortunately, he reports, it is "totally a recession joke . . . never really happened to me."

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7. Websites

A. You can find safe, healthy and green products by clicking:

<http://www.goodguide.com>

You can also find ratings on ratings on environmental, health and social performance for over 70,000 products. This can be done on items from food, personal care items, toys and household chemicals. Get all the latest news and recalls as well.

B. Discuss Cooking is a forum for food lovers and people who love to cook:

<http://www.DiscussCooking.com>

The bulk of the recipes have been contributed by professional chefs. I liked the fact that you didn't have to register to browse these, and I also thought the accompanying comments (and sometimes even pictures) were great. Now if somebody wants to make me some of the Oatmeal Chippers, I'll be in seventh heaven!

C. BLAINESWORLD, the website, remains up and running . . . to view

it, please click:

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

If you're new to this website . . . or just want to catch up on some pictures of yours truly (along with his friends and relatives), click "Blaine's Best" to the left and then "Pictures" . . . make sure you have your sound on, too, to listen to what's arguably the greatest rock song of all time.

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8. Computer tip

If you're on Facebook, LinkedIn or any other social networking site and want others to join you, I strongly suggest that you always include a note with your invitation . . . remind the person you're inviting of your connection to him or her . . . I get some requests that no matter how hard I try, I don't recall the name or face . . . and in those instances, I typically don't respond that I want to be "connected" with that person until I find out more.

TO THOSE READERS ON FACEBOOK:

Please do feel free to invite me to be your "friend" or have me do likewise . . . you can reach me there by clicking:

www.facebook.com/blainegreenfield

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9. Things to say in job interviews . . . NOT, Part 2 of 3

More memorable interview responses, according to CareerBuilder.com:

15. "If I get an offer, how long do I have before I have to take the drug test?"--Bolzan
16. "When you do background checks on candidates, do things like public drunkenness arrests come up?"--Bolzan
17. "Can I get a tour of the breast pumping room? I heard you have a great one here and while I don't plan on having children for at least 10 or 12 years, I will definitely breast feed and would want to use that room."--Bolzan
18. "So, how much do they pay you for doing these interviews?"--Jodi R.R. Smith, Mannersmith Etiquette Consulting
19. Why are you leaving your current job?
"Because I (expletive) my pants every time I enter the building."--Abbe Mortimore, Human Resources Manager, True Textiles, Inc.
20. "I was fired from my last job because they were forcing me to attend anger management classes."--Smith
21. Why are you looking for a job?
"Cigarettes are getting more expensive, so I need another job."--Pechstein

22. "My parents told me I need to get a job so that is why I'm here."--McGowan

23. Why do you want to work for us?
"Just for the benefits."--Jennifer Juergens, JJ Communications

24. "My old boss didn't like me, so one day, I just left and never came back. And here I am!"--Matt Cowall, communications manager, Appia Communications

25. "I saw the job posted on Twitter and thought, why not?"--Rebecca Gertsmark Oren, Communications Director at The Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity

26. What are your assets? (as in strengths)
"Well, I do own a bike."--Pam Venné, principal, The Venné Group

27. What are your weaknesses?
"I get angry easily and I went to jail for domestic violence. But I won't get mad at you."--Pechstein

28. "I had a job candidate tell me that she often oversleeps and has trouble getting out of bed in the morning."--Linda Yaffe, certified executive coach

(to be concluded next week)

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10. A quote I like

Make this a motto for your thoughts: Do good things, and don't do bad things! Bad thoughts prompt you to engage in self-limiting behaviors; good thoughts, on the other hand, support your desire and capacity to live at high levels of joy, success and health.--Dr. Wayne Dyer in EXCUSES BEGONE! (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11)

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11. Thought for the day

When I REALLY like a book, I'll cite it four separate times in this newsletter thus you can tell my reaction to EXCUSES BEGONE! (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11) by Dr. Wayne Dyer, which contained the following passage:

There is a widely told story that speaks to the value of compassion. It seems that a woman who lived a tao-centered life came upon a precious stone while sitting by the banks of a running stream in the mountains, and she placed this highly valued item in her bag.

The next day, a hungry traveler approached the woman and asked for something to eat. As she reached into her bag for a crust of bread, the traveler saw the precious stone and imagined how it would provide him with financial security for the remainder of his life. He asked the woman to give the treasure to him, and she did, along with some food. He left, ecstatic over his good fortune and the knowledge that he was now secure.

A few days later the traveler returned and handed back the stone to the

wise woman. "I've been thinking," he told her. "Although I know how valuable this is, I'm returning it to you in the hopes that you could give me something even more precious."

"What would that be?" the woman inquired.

"Please give me what you have within yourself that enabled you to give me that stone."

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12. Advance planning department

A. Kathy in New Jersey:

Three great shows will be running this summer at the Kelsey Theatre at Mercer County Community College (West Windsor, NJ):

* JOSEPH & THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT

July 10-19

Andrew Lloyd Webber's campus musical version of the Old Testament story presented by The Yardley Players.

* ASSASSINS

July 24-August 2

Stephen Sondheim's haunting dark musical comedy presented by Cheng/Ferrara Productions.

* MUSICAL OF MUSICALS: THE MUSICAL

August 14-23

This hilarious musical presented by the Pennington Players is a take off of popular musicals.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.kelseyatmccc.org/>

B. Cyndy in Pennsylvania:

Dates for the Summer Circles, which Will All Be Held In Landenberg, PA and running from 6:30-9:30 p.m.:

July 17, July 24, August 14 and August 28

I am very honored and excited that on July 24th, Morning Star, a Medicine Woman from Australia, will join our circle.

To register please contact me at 610.274.3109 or email:

snakdancr@aol.com.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.RhythmOfTheEarth.com>

C. Cathy in Pennsylvania:

Save the Dates-August 4 and August 6

Hiroshima Day programs

There are two programs in the works for Hiroshima Day.

On August 4 from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. we have an event scheduled at Pennswood Village in Langhorne. We will have two survivors of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings that will be speaking.

On August 6, approximate start time will be 6:30 p.m., there is an event being planned at BuxMont Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Warrington. At this event Ward Wilson, Associate Director of Coalition for Peace Action, will give a presentation about nuclear weapons and then there will be a movie shown.

D. Do you know the difference between a right-handed and left-handed pencil? If not, find out more by attending either of the following two Asheville presentations I'll be making in the months to come:

* At Congregation Beth HaTephila on August 16 at 1 p.m.; and

* At the Biltmore Lake Lecture Series on October 23 at 7 p.m.

Details to follow.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINES WORLD

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#666

7.6.2009

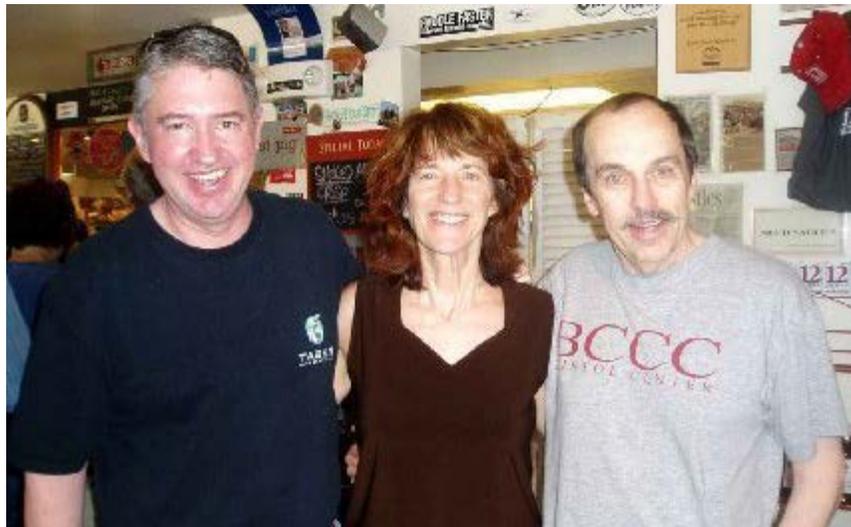
In this issue:

1. **Reflections**
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 10. **A quote I like**
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-

1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had the pleasure of hosting our friend Kevin for a visit . . . another friend, Suzanne, treated us to a delicious home-cooked meal and then we all went out for a night of Zydeco dancing . . . it was a lot of fun.

The next day, we then took Kevin for lunch to 12 Bones Steakhouse . . . see below for a picture of the three of us inside the restaurant:



This is a place we first heard about when we were new in town and asked a waiter at another restaurant about the ribs at his place . . . he said they were good, but nothing compared to those at 12 Bones . . . we agree!

The place is only open from 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday to Friday,

and you almost always will have to wait to be seated . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.12bones.com/>

B. For July 4th, we went with a whole bunch of neighbors to a picnic in our housing development (see also BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD after Section 1D) . . . the food and entertainment were both great, and the camaraderie was even better.

Afterward, we all came back to our courtyard and sat outside to watch a fireworks display set off by our friend Steve and his son Cody . . . it was a spectacular ending to our first July 4th in the Asheville area.

C. On Sunday, we saw 'TIL BETH DO US PART at the Asheville Community Theatre . . . it is a romantic comedy that featured fine performances by the entire cast of six . . . what we enjoyed best was the Talkback after the show . . . this is a session wherein the performers, along with the three playwrights, all came back on stage to answer questions about the production.

You can still catch 'TIL BETH DO US PART , in that it runs through July 19 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.ashevilletheatre.org>

From there, we went to the Green Sage Coffeehouse & Cafe for dinner . . . I enjoyed my turkey wrap . . . Cynthia was less enthusiastic about her black bean burger, but did enjoy the fresh carrot/apple juice combination that they serve . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.thegreensage.net>

D. We have added still another doctor to our "team" of medical professionals who will be taking care of us in our new home town . . . he is Dr. Michael Weizman, and we have both now seen him for our physicals.

The good news is that he said we're in good shape.

In addition, we were impressed by Dr. Weizman's engaging personality . . . he even had us laughing during our respective visits . . . and when is the last time that happened to you when you went to a doctor?

For more information, call Ravenscroft Family Health Center at 828.252.2511.

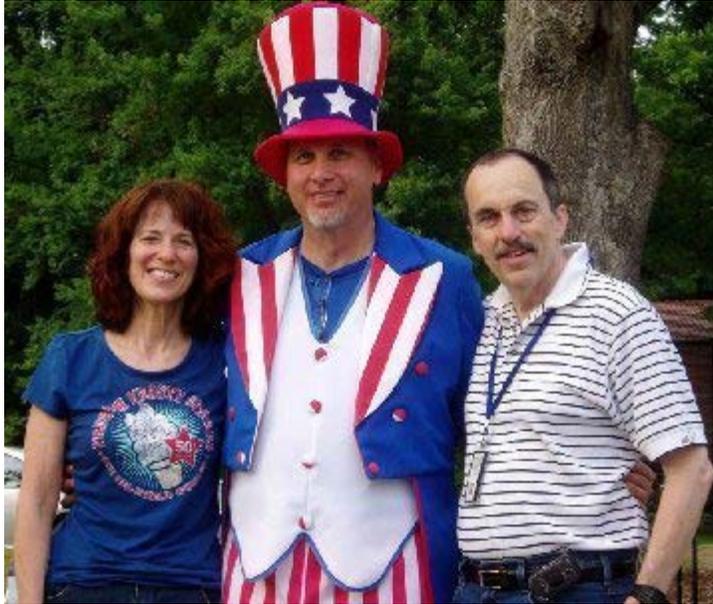
***** BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD *****

This week it goes to Sally Butcher--the person who heads the Social and Recreation Committee for our housing development, Biltmore Lake.

This is purely a volunteer position, but Sally and the rest of her committee spend many hours putting together various programs that benefit the entire community . . . and each one seems to get better and better.

There have been adult social gatherings, new resident socials and

this past Saturday, the aforementioned July 4th extravaganza (see also Section 1B) . . . I was especially impressed by the fact that Sally even got Uncle Sam to appear . . . that's him below, flanked by Cynthia and yours truly:



IF THE GUY IN THE PICTURE LOOKS FAMILIAR:

That's because he is also known as Bob Butcher, Sally's husband . . . he did a great job as Uncle Sam and here's hope that his band--Buster--wins the Last Band Standing Competition . . . the finals are at the Orange Peel in Asheville this coming Wednesday at 8 p.m. . . . y'all should come on out!

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2. FYI

To ensure that your camera battery always works, consider doing what I do; i.e., buy an extra battery . . . then charge the extra battery whenever you are using your camera . . . when you're done using it, remove the battery that was in the camera and put it in the charger . . . at the same time, take the battery that had been recharging and put it back in the camera.

FYI, part 2

* Mary Beth in Pennsylvania:

Kohlhepp Investment Advisors, Ltd. has a new look!

And . . . a new website!

<http://www.KohlheppAdvisors.com>

is better than ever before!

What can you find on the new website?

Do you know everyone in the office? Check out **[Our Team](#)** to learn about

the incredibly fascinating and well-rounded staff at Kohlhepp Investment Advisors, Ltd.

DON'T MISS **Ed's Head** for the guru's latest thoughts and words of wisdom, including his most recent post to Ed's Eye on the Economy.

Use our website as your #1 resource for all things financial!

Our **Client Center** allows you to access your accounts, find out what's going on in the market each day, read up on all the latest financial articles and more.

Check out our **Community Resource Network** for those non-financial needs that creep up. And keep checking back, as our network will continue to grow!

Thinking about buying a house? Sending your child to college? Trying to save money by packing your lunch or skipping that daily trip to Starbucks? Check out our **Financial Calculators** page.

Let us know what you think of our new look! We'd love to hear your feedback!

As always, please feel free to share our new site with your friends and family.

MY TWO CENTS:

As many readers know, I'm a big fan of Ed Kohlepp and his staff . . . I've worked with them now for nearly 10 years and have been very pleased with their service--even in these bad economic times . . . for more information, click the above website or call 215.340.5777 . . . and even if you don't become a client, do check out the aforementioned Financial Calculators page . . . it is great!

* Dee in Pennsylvania (with a place to rent in Newtown, PA):

2 Bed (one large, one small), 2 full baths, second floor of 2 floor building, central air, washer, dryer, off street parking, condo fee included, quiet community, 7 minutes from BCCC, well kept both summer and winter. Please no smokers or pets. One year lease with renewal on month to month after first year with 30 day notice. First month and security deposit due upon signing. \$1395 monthly. Call 215 378 6163.

* Joni in Pennsylvania:

At 5 minutes and 6 seconds after 4 a.m., on the 8th day of July of this year, the time and date will be: 04:05:06 07-08-09.

This will not happen again until the year 3009!

I had a deep feeling that you needed to know this. Aren't you glad you're in my address book?

* Vince in Pennsylvania:

Thought you'd get a kick out of this: New SC State Song:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gAFeLTchV8c>

NOTE:

The music the above was based on, "Carolina in the Morning," is so catchy that I just had to do some additional research on it . . . here's what I found out:

It is unclear from the song itself whether "Carolina" refers to North Carolina or South Carolina or (for a more risqué interpretation) a woman named Carolina. The song has been used in public celebrations in both states from time to time

SOURCE:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carolina_in_the_Morning

* Floyd in Pennsylvania:

Yes, professor, this has been an "ugly" season of the year for deaths. I do like the one piece you have about Michael Jackson: I believe she hit it right on the head. If the ugliness of the world could have been separated from the beauty of his music and personality, people could have experienced what he was about. I grew up with his music (born the year of his 1st solo LP). Ben was one of my favorite pieces, and I can honestly say by attempting to imitate his voice, I found a long lasting love for singing and music in general. It does feel like I've lost a family member, and I'm sure I'm not the only one who feels that way. I really believe that he wasn't meant to last on this earth; just stop by for a little bit to bless us with his gifts . He had shortcomings, but I know he's in a place where those fallacies will be forgiven, and he'll receive the peace and love he could never fully attain down here.

* Scott in Pennsylvania:

Kraft will donate a box of Mac & Cheese per click to Feeding America:

<http://brands.kraftfoods.com/sharealittlecomfort/>

* Lynn in Pennsylvania:

Adult scouters check out our Wood Badge website:

<http://ne-v-134.org>

Wood Badge is the ultimate in leadership training. Two fantastic weekends to bond with new friends, learn more than you can imagine about leadership while having fun! What more could you ask for? Hope to see you at Gilwell!

* Arlene in Missouri:

We do a Dinner for Eight, which is similar to your Dinner for Six. We do it at our church here in Columbia, and we have a spring version and a fall version. It's a fantastic way to get to know new people and those you may have not spent much time talking with before or after church. Glad you are having such a nice retirement!

* Ruth in Pennsylvania:

It was a great fun to be asked by one of the judges to submit 10 poems to the Poet Laureate of Bucks County this Sunday after spontaneously

sharing a '94 poem entitled Connections. Which other nine should I choose?
I'll post them so you can vote.

<http://enlightenedjokes.com>

Read a new one posted every couple days.

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3. Female problems

Mental anxiety,
Mental breakdowns,
Menstrual cramps,
Menopause . . .

Did you ever notice how female problems begin with MEN!

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4. Reviews

A. Enjoyed AWAY WE GO, a sweet and quirky film about an expectant couple who travel the country in search of the perfect place to eventually live . . . along they way, they reconnect with an assortment of friends and relatives who help them discover what is important in life . . . there's some great dialogue, along with two winning performances from John Krasinski and Maya Rudolph . . . the soundtrack--featuring the music of Alexi Murdoch--is outstanding . . . rated R.

B. CONFESSIONS OF A SHOPAHOLIC is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #647 follows:

CONFESSIONS OF A SHOPAHOLIC, a romantic comedy about a shopaholic who accidentally gets a job writing a column for a finance magazine, surprised me. . . . I went into it not expecting much; by the end, I appreciated the fact that it made me laugh . . . and, also, it had me caring for the main character--a very funny Isla Fisher (who first caught my attention in WEDDING CRASHERS) . . . my only disappointment was that Joan Cusack, one of my favorite actresses, was wasted in a role that had too few lines . . . rated PG.

C. Having recently started to study hypnotism, I wanted to find a book that would give me a good overview of the topic . . . THE HOW-TO BOOK OF HYPNOTISM by Tom Silver and Ormond McGill met that criteria and delivered on its promise on the back jacket cover to "create the desire [in the reader] to learn more about this wonderful science and art."

It did a fine job of presenting a brief, but informative history of the subject, and I liked how it helped me better understand the role of the subconscious:

* The subconscious plays the role of supervisor over our body's physical processes. All of the vital organs are controlled by its agency: digestion, assimilation, the circulation of the blood, heartbeat, the action of the lungs, the kidneys. . . .

Hypnosis provides our gardening tools for the successful cultivation of the fertile field of the subconscious to raise a full crop of living as we desire it to be.

Silver and McGill also explain how to hypnotize people, and they provide several ways to instantaneously hypnotize somebody . . . I'm not sure that you could master these techniques by just reading the book; however, with additional instruction, you could well be on your way.

I also liked what reading about all that hypnotism can do for folks who want to be helped:

* As habits are seated in the subconscious, hypnosis provides the perfect therapy. Drug habits, worry, melancholia, phobias and neurosis all yield to hypnotic suggestion. The list of habits that can be corrected goes on and on: kleptomania, lying, bragging, perversion, nervous difficulties, bedwetting, swearing, gambling, bashfulness, stubbornness, etc.. All these and more are readily cured through hypnotherapy. The untold benefits are almost beyond comprehension, as long as the client truly desires to be cured. Desire causes the "will" to act and, if the latter is properly directed, nothing can resist the influence.

In addition, there's useful information on working with people who have weight loss issues, as well as addictions to cigarettes, drugs and alcohol.

I also found the material on self-hypnosis valuable, particularly this tidbit that caught my attention:

* Become a master of anger within yourself. If you feel anger arousing within you, right in the middle STOP AND TAKE THREE DEEP BREATHS so that you become rational and deal with it, not allowing it to undermine your personality. Anger takes away your vitality and weakens your well-being. Conversely, cheerful thoughts are infecting, and their radiation produces corresponding actions in the minds of others. A magnetic personality radiates sunshine and good will, and these thoughts are contagious.

Overall, I'd recommend the book--though I wish there had been perhaps less information on stage hypnosis . . . and I could have done without the last chapter on interlingual hypnosis, a subject that while interesting, is not one that I feel a beginner should attempt.

D. Heard GOOD DOG. STAY., written and read by Anna Quindlen . . . it is a short, touching book that recounts the life and death of her beloved Labrador retriever, Beau, about whom she writes:

* The life of a good dog is like the life of a good person, only shorter and more compressed.

I felt like I got to really know the dog and was moved when I heard this passage:

There came a time when a scrap thrown in his direction usually bounced unseen off his head [given that the dog once possessed a catcher's mit of a mouth]. Yet put a pork roast in the oven, and the guy still breathed as audibly as an obscene caller. The eyes and ears may have gone, but the nose was eternal. And the tail. The tail still wagged, albeit at half-staff. When it stops, I thought more than once, then we'll know.

I liked finding out about what Quindlen learned by watching her dog: to roll with the punches, to take things as they come, to measure herself not in terms of the past or the future but of the present, to raise her nose in the air from time to time and, at least metaphorically, holler, "I smell bacon!"

My only regret is that this is one book that probably would have been even more enjoyable had I read it instead of listened to it, given that I understand there were many beautiful pictures that went along with the text.

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5. TV alert

A. THE GREAT DEBATE has its series premiere on Monday at 10 p.m. on VH1 . . . watch if you want to find out the answer to such pressing questions as this one: Is Rocky tougher than Rambo?

B. 10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU, according to TV GUIDE, is a "cute, clever remake of the 1999 movie featuring two polar-opposite sisters . . . I'll watch if for no other reason than to catch Larry Miller as the over-protective dad . . . Tuesdays at 8 p.m. on ABC FAMILY.

C. THE GAMBLER, THE GIRL AND THE GUNSLINGER is a Wild West love triangle that is also being billed as a comedy . . . Saturday at 9 p.m. on HALLMARK.

D. ENTOURAGE, one of my favorite comedies, returns for its sixth season on Sunday at 10:30 p.m. on HBO . . . this episode has Vince promoting his role in Scorsese's GATSBY adaptation.

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6. Monastery life

There was a monastery in France at the edge of a cliff overlooking a beautiful valley, and because its bells could be heard over such a wide area, it developed a reputation for attracting only the finest bellringers in the country.

There was always a bit of dread when a bellringer passed on or retired, and one year, when they spread the word of their need for a new master, there was a dearth of qualified candidates. They would have been good enough for any other monastery, but not this one. Better to have silent bells than anything less than the best.

As they were despairing at the quality of candidates, a man with no arms paid a visit to apply for the position. The monks were amazed and protested that this was no time for joking. But the man insisted, said he was from a family of famous bellringers, and he would show them what he could do. He drew back, lowered his head, and charged full speed at the bell. The monks was horrified, but could not stop him. And the sound--oh my, you should have been there! It was indeed a sound worthy of that monastery. It rang throughout the valley, and people everywhere stopped in their tracks and nodded to each other that

at last a worthy bellringer had been found.

But alas, it was not to be. For the impact so stunned the poor armless man that he stumbled dizzily and fell over the cliff. The head monk ran down the steps to where a crowd had gathered, and a policeman spoke to him. "Do you know this man?" The monk sighed, "No, but his face rings a bell."

The search continued. One day not long after, another armless man showed up and presented himself as the previous man's brother. He was there to uphold the family honor, and would show them what a good bellringer could do. The monks protested, but too late--he also drew back and charged full speed into the bell. And once again, the most beautiful sound pealed out over the valley, such that even the birds circled around to see what was happening. And once again, he was so stunned that he too fell over the cliff in a daze.

Once again the head monk scrambled down the stairs to meet the crowd and a policeman. Again he was asked if he knew the deceased. "No, but he's a dead ringer for his brother."

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7. Websites

A. If you want to revisit the Fourth of July or just see something beautiful, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/4vprp8>

Make sure you wait until the end when all the state flowers come together in a bouquet. Very cool!

B. For a funny visual update of an old joke, please click:

<http://www.funnieststuff.net/viewmovie.php?id=1250>

The picture quality isn't the best, but do watch it if you are in the mood to laugh yourself silly!

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

If you ever want to catch up on a past issue, just click "Newsletter" to the left, then "Past Issues" . . . you can also find some great quotes by looking at Section 10 in any issue; e.g., as I just did at random and found this one in Issue #568:

The greatest of faults, I should say, is to be conscious of none.--Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), Scottish essayist, satirist and historian

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8. Computer tip

If you're "into" Facebook (or even if you just want to learn more about computers), please click:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iROYzrm5SBM>

You'll learn some etiquette that will help you in virtually any situation--and laugh a lot, too!

DON'T FORGET:

If we're not yet Facebook friends, invite me to become one by clicking:

<http://www.facebook.com/blainegreenfield>

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9. Things to say in job interviews . . . NOT, Part 1 of 3

Hiring managers shared these 43 memorable interview responses, according to CareerBuilder.com:

1. Why did you leave your last job?

"I have a problem with authority."--Carrie Rocha, COO of HousingLink

2. Tell us about a problem you had with a co-worker and how you resolved it.

"The resolution was we were both fired."--Jason Shindler, CEO, Curvine Web Solutions

3. What kind of computer software have you used?

"Computers? Are those the black boxes that sit on the floor next to the desks? My boss has one of those. He uses it. I don't have one. He just gives me my schedule, and I follow it."--Greg Szymanski, director of human resources, Geonerco Management, Inc

4. What are your hobbies and interests?

[He said] "Well, as you can see, I'm a young, virile man and I'm single--if you ladies know what I'm saying. Then he looked at one of the fair-haired board members and said, 'I particularly like blondes.'"--Petri R.J. Darby, president, darbyDarnit Public Relations

5. Why should we hire you?

"I would be a great asset to the events team because I party all the time."--Bill McGowan, founder, Clarity Media Group

6. Do you have any questions?

"Cross dressing isn't a problem is it?"--Barry Maher, Barry Maher & Associates

7. "If you were a fruit, what fruit would you be?"--Megan Garnett, Articulate Leadership Team, Articulate Communications Inc.

8. "What do you want me to do if I cannot walk to work if it's raining? Can you pick me up?"--Christine Pechstein, career coach

9. "I was a Chamber of Commerce Executive once hiring a secretary. [The candidate asked] 'What does a Chamber of Commerce do?' "--Mary Kurek, Mary Kurek, Inc. Visibility Consulting

10. "Can we wrap this up fairly quickly? I have someplace I have to

go."--Bruce Campbell, vice president of marketing, Clare Computer Solutions

11. "What is your company's policy on Monday absences?"--Campbell

12. "If this doesn't work out can I call you to go out sometime?"--Christine Bolzan, founder of Graduate Career Coaching

13. "How big do the bonuses really get once you make associate? I hear it's some serious cash."--Bolzan

14. "[The candidate asked,] 'Can my dad call you to talk about the job and the training program? He is really upset I'm not going to medical school and wants someone to explain the Wall Street path to him.' The dad did call. Then that dad's friends called and I ended up doing a conference call with a group of concerned parents . . . long story." - Bolzan

(to be continued next week)

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10. A quote I like

As one goes through life one learns that if you do not paddle your own canoe, you don't move.--Katharine Hepburn (1907-2003), American actress of film, television and stage who holds the record for most Best Actress Oscar wins with four

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11. Thought for the day

A word to the graduates
by Joe McDermott

My son graduated from high school yesterday. He turns 18 later this week. I don't know how this happened so fast. I'd swear that just last September we were putting him on the bus for kindergarten--a tentative, friendly, inquisitive kid who wanted his teacher to sit next to him while he worked, because that's what mom did at home.

But last week when the bus dropped him off, out stepped this intelligent, articulate, thoughtful young man who grows a beard in less time than it takes his father to shave. What kind of growth ray do they have at that school?!

As we sat there on Sunday and I watched my son sitting among 160 of the closest friends he'll ever know, waiting anxiously for that sheepskin while teachers and administrators offered congratulatory remarks and the top scholars in the class delivered earnest speeches about friendship and hard work and the future, I thought back to all of the graduations I've attended since I picked up my own brontosaurus skin back in the ancient days. What would I tell these kids if I had a chance to speak, I wondered?

"DON'T DO IT! GO BACK! YOU DON'T KNOW HOW GOOD YOU HAVE IT!
IT REALLY IS A MEAN, OLD WORLD OUT HERE AND THERE ARE NO
MORE SUMMERS OFF!"

Seriously, though, we know you can't go backward. You can't stand still. We can't freeze time. So as you come to the end of the common road you've traveled--in some cases for 13 or 14 years, counting pre-school--you need to think about the road ahead--the one you will travel without your companions. And when you do, think about yellow bricks, because the best analogy I can give you for life comes from Dorothy's journey to see THE WIZARD OF OZ.

Along the way, she found companions and qualities that provide all we really need to succeed, to find a happy life, to find your way back home.

Brains. You're smart people. Think about that. That diploma you pick up today symbolizes all the knowledge you've gained in your school career. Think of all the skills you've learned, like algebra. Ok, maybe not algebra. We are sending you out of here today with everything you need to make a worthwhile life, even if you don't go to college or continue your formal education. You know how to read. You know how to write, you can do basic math and you know, somewhat, how government works. You should be able to balance a checkbook, hold a job, pay your bills.

Heart. Regardless of all the book-smarts you'll take with you, the things you really need are those things you learned in kindergarten. Kindness, friendship, sharing and caring. Don't be afraid to care. Caring makes life worth living and the losses you might suffer make the victories so much sweeter. You're losing the bonds you've known most of your life but you will make new, stronger ones that will stay with you much, much longer than these short 13 years.

Bravery. Be confident. Don't be afraid to take an occasional detour on the "Road of Life." Take an unknown exit once in a while to see the "world's biggest ball of string" or "the paper-mache capital of the world." Let your imagination run away with you and enjoy the trip while you're gone. Dare to dream. Dreamers are the people who really change the world.

And as you travel your individual road, think about the traits instilled in you over the past 18 years by your parents, educators, clergy, aunts, uncles, neighbors and all of the other alleged adults in your life. There may come a time when you question one of those detours, when you wonder if it really is the best road to take. Then, think back. That's when you have to let your heart overrule your mind. You'll know if it is right because it will feel right. If it doesn't feel right, if you wouldn't want anyone else to know you did it, chances are it's not the right road for you.

The other thing I strongly encourage you to do is take time to play. Life is not all about hard work. Smell the roses, to use an old cliché. Watch your own kids get on that bus and watch them get off. Enjoy your time with family, friends and others. We don't stop playing because we get old, we get old because we stop playing.

OK, that's it. Get the heck out of here. You're schooling is done, now your education can begin.

Oh, but before you go, I have one more poignant, deep thought to leave you with:

I, personally, have never used algebra.

SOURCE:

Reprinted with the gracious permission of Joe, who puts together a blog that methinks you'll find as entertaining as I do: THE BULLDOG EDITION . . . for the original piece and/or more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/kldkad>

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12. Advance planning department

A. Imagine being able to discover your passions and then living your life according to what matters most to you . . . that's the premise behind THE PASSION TEST, an informative book by Janet Bray Attwood and Chris Attwood that yours truly will be discussing at the July 9 meeting of the Book Discussion group at the Center for Creative Retirement in Asheville.

Time: 11:30 a.m.; feel free to bring a bag lunch

To quote the authors, living such an existence will prove to be:

Exciting, fulfilling, thrilling, on fire, purposeful, turned on, motivated, entertaining, easy, fun, unstoppable. It's a life aligned with destiny.

For more information and/or directions, send me an email . . . address it to: bginbc@aol.com and put the words PASSION TEST in subject line.

B. Janet in New Jersey:

Ancient & Modern Secrets to: Heal Easily, Reverse Aging and Increase Vitality

Morristown Community Health Lecture Series

Programs for Positive Lifelong Change

Free Seminar: Wednesday July 22nd,

6:30-8:30 p.m.

Morristown and Morris Township Library
1 Miller Road & South St, Morristown, NJ
(across from the Community Theater in the downstairs meeting rooms)

Free to All.

Speakers and Hosts:

Janet StraightArrow: DeMystifying Natural Healing
Judy Slade: Creative Visualization for Healing
Ellie Wasserman: Native American Healing
Lorette Pruden: The Organic Local Food Movement
Dorrine Davis: Sound Healing--The Voice/Ear/Brain Connection
David Beck: A Paradigm for Healing Healthcare Naturally

Join us for education and fun! For more information call:
Dr. Beck at 973.683.1110 or email at davidbeckdc@yahoo.com
Janet StraightArrow at 973.647.2500 or via the Internet:

<http://www.oasisforthesoul.com>

HEALING PRACTITIONERS AND PUBLIC WELCOME

C. Ted in North Carolina:

Friday, July 24th

Beginning Jitterbug--Jive Class at 7 p.m.

"Beginner's Only" Dance Party: 8-10 p.m.

Class Taught and party hosted by: Ted and Kimberly Ross

Location: The Asheville Ballroom & Dance Centre (991-B Sweeten Creek Rd., Asheville)

Learn to Jitterbug--Jive and practice your ballroom dancing in a fun, safe and supportive atmosphere at this "Beginner's Only" Class and Dance Party! Refreshments and sodas will be provided and Professional Dance Instructors will be at the party to assist students with their dancing questions. Line dances will also be taught and included in the party.

No partner is necessary for the class or party.

\$10 Class and/or Party (Special \$7 Rate for ages 17 & under)

For more information, contact Ted & Kimberly Ross at 828.333.8333 or email at ted.ross@charter.net

D. Joey in New Jersey:

Our next dates for Louder Than Words story telling will be at Maxwell's in Hoboken, NJ on Tuesdays, July 28th and August 25th, and thereafter the 4th Tuesday of each month.

Some important details:

- * Story tellers can experience a new venue for story telling.
- * Stand-up comedians have the opportunity to exercise a "creative muscle" beyond your current stand-up comedy act.
- * Real people from all walks of life can share their true stories.
- * Actors and writers can experience creating the beginnings of a one-person show, in front of a real audience.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.louderthanwordsstories.com>

Please feel to contact me if you're interested in appearing and/or for any questions you may have: Joey Novick at 908.892.6859 or joeynovick@earthlink.net.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#665

6.29.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I were apart much of the week due to the fact that she went to Kripalu for JourneyDance training (see BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD immediately following Section 1D) . . . and though her trip home was delayed a day because of bad weather, she got back just in time for us to join friends for a fun improv course at 35below in Asheville . . . that's her with Tom Chalmers, our instructor:



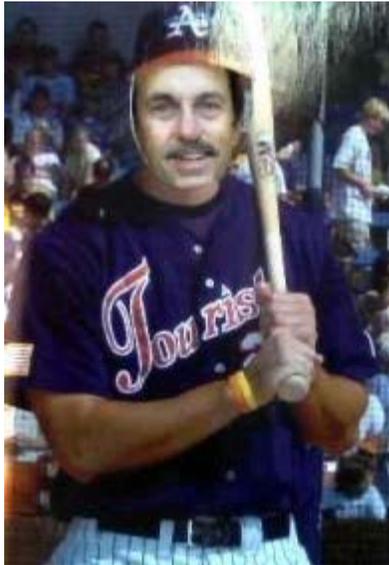
We were all very impressed with the way Tom taught the session . . . he had us laughing throughout, and he also had us feeling surprisingly confident about what we were doing as the afternoon progressed . . . we also learned perhaps the two key words in improv: "yes" and "and," in contrast to words we should avoid: "no" and "but."

B. On my own, I went with other friends to a minor league baseball game featuring the local Asheville Tourist vs. the Greenville Drive . . . it was the first game I've seen in many years, and it was a lot of fun.

I knew I was in for something special when I called up for my tickets and the person who answered was Jay Burnham, the team's radio announcer . . . we had a nice chat about the area, minor league baseball and Bill Veeck (one of my marketing gurus/personal heroes).

Game night was absolutely beautiful . . . our box seats behind home plate were great and for \$10 each, a real bargain given all that you got . . . a great game that the Tourists managed to win with a late rally, beer for just a buck and such goofy events throughout the evening as T-shirts that were shot in the stands, a mascot race, eating wing contest, etc.

In addition, you could even pose for a picture with your head on top of a player's body:



Yet the best part happened while we were leaving the ballpark we left toward the end of the game and while walking toward our cars, a foul ball came over the fence . . . I ran to catch up with it and grabbed it, then gave it to our friends' son Conor . . . it was the first such ball I ever "caught" at a game, bringing back memories of when I was a kid and went to dozens of Mets' games . . . my cousin Blaine (yes, another Blaine!) always managed to grab balls in batting practice and somehow I never got one . . . so this one was something special.

C. During the week, I also began using my hypnotism training . . . three brave friends volunteered to be my first "subjects," and so I worked with them on such areas as weight loss and nail biting . . . I mention this because the offer still remains to:

GET IN TOUCH:

If you'd be interested in having me hypnotize you for smoking cessation, weight loss or anything else you'd like to work on . . . I'm

doing this work in and around Asheville for the time being, but I'm slated to be in the New Jersey/Pennsylvania area in late August or early September . . . should you want to work with me, just drop me email to: bginbc@aol.com and put HYPNOSIS REQUEST in the subject line.

D It was a tough week for celebrities . . . Michael Jackson dropped dead at 50, and the same day, Farrah Fawcett died from cancer at 63 . . . then "Pitchman" Billy Mays died, also at 50, and lastly, comedian Fred Travena passed away at the age of 66.

Personally, I was saddened to hear about all these deaths . . . yet to try to put this into some sort of perspective, keep in mind the following quote: "Pop icons and American heroes are not one in the same," to quote Bob Shieffer of CBS NEWS.

* Even better, see his entire commentary by clicking this link from my Facebook friend Patrick in Pennsylvania:

<http://tinyurl.com/ndrndb>

* And on the same subject, Sue in Pennsylvania wrote:

Not sure if this [tribute to Michael Jackson} is of interest to you . . . I follow the author and have read her books, etc.

Dear Susan,

Today many of us were stunned as Michael Jackson went to his final resting place. I don't know about you but I was more than stunned, I was deeply moved because I have seen him work so hard and so long to be someone he was never designed to be.

You see when we attempt to live our lives for the acceptance and opinions of others rather than true to our nature, we bring undue stress, pressure and possibly even health problems to our body.

As a long time fan of Michael Jackson, I have to tell you I LOVED his TRUE nature . . . even though it's not what we saw very often in the last several years.

I have recorded a special up close and personal video for you to watch . . . my personal tribute to Michael Jackson, with insights that will help you realize how important it is we live true to who we are.

Let's learn from Michael's life how it went from being brilliant to tragic. I know you will be moved as I was and take away some important insights from watching this.

Go watch it now:

<http://tinyurl.com/kr2t3t>

Please, be true to your nature! The world needs you! And YOU deserve the life you were designed for!

God Bless You,
Carol Tuttle

<http://www.caroltuttle.com>

PS. Please share this with someone you love who needs support living more true to themselves.

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

This week, it goes to Toni Bergen, the woman behind the JourneyDance training that Cynthia went to last week (see also Section 1A) . . . to quote Cynthia:

About 2 years ago, I did the JourneyDance teacher training with Toni Bergen. I never expected to teach, but became inspired when I realized the effect it had on me. I became so free in the dance. I taught and then stopped. Recently, I felt I needed more confidence to continue to teach.

So, I went to re-do the training with Toni. Well, as it can be in life, you oftentimes get what you least expected (and it is usually much more than you could have imagined).

I went to sharpen-up my choreographed moves. I came away with something that I will use in my continued teaching AND in my life. I came away with using my intuition and trusting myself. I came away with trusting that I do not have to do anything alone . . . that the group will inspire me. That I can and am an amazing teacher . . . and it is because I trust that even if I don't have it planned--particularly if I don't have it planned (life or dancing)--that something . . . call it spirit, intuition, trust in myself . . . will take over and the forthcoming freedom and joy will be there.

Thank you, Toni, for teaching me that. If I could, I would take your training over and over because it is a lesson to be learned and practiced all the time. You teach that by example and by your amazing teachings. We are all of us amazing people with unique qualities if we only trust ourselves and the process.

Toni brought me to my heart and my soul, and I am deeply grateful.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT JOURNEYDANCE:

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

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2. FYI

If you have a pet, the last sentence in this paragraph contains information that I would have never thought to have asked about; i.e., until I read 1,000 THINGS THEY WON'T TELL YOU (see also Section 4C) by Jonathan Dahl and the editors of SMART MONEY:

Laura Ireland Moore, an animal law attorney in Portland, Ore., says she represented a client who took her dog to the vet after stitches from a routine spaying came undone. The veterinarian repaired the stitches with metal sutures but neglected to put a cone over the dog's head to protect the wound during an overnight stay. The office was unattended through the night, and by morning the animal had chewed through the sutures-as well as 15 feet of its own intestines. The agonized

dog had to be put down. The moral of this unpleasant story: "You should definitely check if anyone will be on the premises overnight," Moore says.

FYI, part 2

* John in Pennsylvania:

Here's the link to the video of Triplets (my band) playing at a party. You're welcome to post:

<http://tinyurl.com/lhpft3>

MY TWO CENTS:

Yes, this is the same John (Strauss) of Bucks County Community College fame--or is it infamy?--who did such a fine job playing at the several recent gigs that I have written about in past issues.

* Hillary in NJ (with a REQUEST FOR HELP):

Good hearing from you. You sound so happy. Next time you are up this way, give us a call. I would love to see you and meet Cynthia.

I formed a team for Race for the Cure, Oct 4,2009 at Great Adventure. Anyone wishing help out, please go to:

<http://tinyurl.com/n42oj6>

For anyone who doesn't know, I AM A SURVIVOR!

* Maya in Pennsylvania:

After the Athos 1 oil spill that dumped 265,000 gallons of heavy crude into the Delaware, a local and well-known band created a song called Maya van Rossum's Blues. I learned about the song well after the fact, but was honored by the mention. Here's the link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQsIR413tPw>

* John in New Jersey (with a South Jersey SALES OPENING):

I wanted to pass an opportunity along in case you know someone who may be interested. I am looking for two salespeople. I need two people to sell RVs for Driftwood RV Center. No RV experience is necessary.

The jobs are located at our dealerships in Cape May Courthouse (Rts 9 and 83) and Egg Harbor Twp on the Black Horse Pike both in New Jersey.

For information, contact Bob Androckitis, Sales Director, at 609.624.1221 or email him at: sales@driftwoodrvcenter.com.

* And John again (this time with a FACE PAINTING OPPORTUNITY):

I have another opportunity for someone who may know someone who does face-painting. I need someone to do face painting on July 11 and 18 at our location in Egg Harbor Township (on the Black Horse Pike near Atlantic City).

This is a paid gig. If you know anybody interested, have him or her

contact me via email at: marketing@driftwoodrvcenter.com.

* Scott in Pennsylvania:

Receive a free sample bottle of Kiss My Face© Aromatherapeutic Anti-Stress Shower/Bath gel . . . it has an infusion of fir needle essential oil to calm the mind and nerves while it gently cleanses the body . . . just click:

<http://tinyurl.com/km84ox>

* Sally in North Carolina:

Many of you already know the good news that Bob's band was in the Top 4 for the Last Band Standing Contest. Your votes helped them win the first round!

Check out the website:

<http://www.wncmagazine.com/lastbandstanding>

and please keep voting as that will determine in part (along with their playing) whether they win the whole thing.

The show is at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, July 8, at the Orange Peel in Asheville. Hope you can make it to cheer Buster on.

* Ed in West Virginia:

Click on the link below to see my television acting debut:

<http://tinyurl.com/la5haf>

Channel 12, WBOy/NBC was doing a report on "Boating Under the Influence" at Tygart Lake.

The DNR Officer ask me if they could pull me over" and do a breathalyzer on me. That's me riding the Green Sea-Doo and blowing into the portable breathalyzer.

It was all staged. (I don't even drink!)

* Jeff in New Jersey:

We're conducting auditions for WHAT THE BELLHOP SAW . . . for more information, please click:

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

And then check "Auditions."

PLEASE NOTE:

Villagers Theater is in Somerset, NJ . . . I've seen many excellent productions there and with Jeff (Dworkin) directing, this promises to be another excellent one.

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3. \$2.99 special

My friend went to breakfast at a restaurant where the "seniors" special' was two eggs, bacon, hash browns and toast for \$2.99. "Sounds good," his wife Julie said. "But I don't want the eggs."

"Then, I'll have to charge you \$3.49 because you're ordering a la carte," the waitress warned her.

"You mean I'd have to pay for not taking the eggs?" Julie asked incredulously.

"YES!!" stated the waitress.

"I'll take the special then," Julie said.

"How do you want your eggs?" the waitress asked.

"Raw and in the shell," Julie replied. She then took the two eggs home and baked a cake.

MORAL OF THE STORY:

Don't mess with seniors! WE'VE (now proudly counting myself as one) been around the block more than once!!

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4. Reviews

A. THE PROPOSAL is a cute romantic comedy, starring Sandra Bullock as a high-powered book editor who faces deportation to her native Canada . . . to get out of the mess, she turns to her unsuspecting assistant, Rob Reynolds, who she's tormented for years . . . it was predictable in spots and the second half dragged, yet overall I'd recommend it if for no other reason that to watch Betty White prove that she hasn't lost a step at 87 . . . make sure you stay for the credits at the end . . . rated PG-13.

B. PAUL BLART: MALL COP is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #645 follows:

Saw PAUL BLART: MALL COP for two reasons: 1) A friend had recommended it; and 2) Cynthia found out that the movie we were going to see (HE'S JUST NOT THAT INTO YOU) was the one she was slated to see with a friend . . . so we settled on this Kevin James comedy at the last minute . . . the premise was cute . . . it's the story about a would-be state trooper who can't pass the physical, so he instead gets a job working in security at a New Jersey mall . . .the first half was funny, too, but it tailed way off in the second half when it stopped being a comedy and instead became a rather ordinary tale about a group of bandits . . . yet I realize that we weren't the ideal audience for the film . . . we were accompanied by a teenager who had a good time . . . I thought James was OK in the lead role; however, it was the work of Jayma Mays (a frequent guest on the TV show UGLY BETTY) that caught my attention . . . she was endearingly charming . . . rated PG.

C. SMART MONEY, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL MAGAZINE

has an addictive column, "Ten Things They Won't Tell You" . . . it contains information that most folks don't know--and perhaps never even think about.

Jonathan Dahl, editor-in-chief of the above magazine, and his fellow editors have now put together many of these tips into one book: 1,001 THINGS THEY WON'T TELL YOU (see also Section 2) . . . to cite the subtitle, it's AN INSIDER'S GUIDE TO SPENDING, SAVING AND LIVING WISELY.

You'll find useful advice from 100 professionals on health care, education, finance, automobiles, house and home, insurance, goods and services, travel, entertainment, pets, food and drink, and a whole lot more.

However, what convinced me that this was a book that I could rely on was the fact that it cited Courtney Yelle--a good friend and one of the most knowledgeable guys I know--as one of the experts:

* Courtney Yelle was in his Bucks County, Pa., yard raking leaves when a gleaming pickup truck pulled into his driveway. Yelle says that a clean-cut workman emerged and told him it looked as if his driveway needed to be repaved--which Yelle admits, was the case. But before he would commit, Yelle, former director of Bucks County Consumer Protection, said he'd need a written estimate along with the worker's phone number and address. The guy said he'd leave it in the mailbox, according to Yelle, then backed out of the driveway and disappeared forever.

Yelle says that the "worker" was a seasoned scam artist who approaches people's homes offering to do jobs at bargain-basement prices, often on the premise that he has leftover materials from a nearby project. In reality, if he does the job at all, he'll do shoddy work with low-grade materials, says Wendy Weinberg, former executive director of the National Association of Consumer Agency Administrators. While it sounds like common sense to be suspicious of solicitors, clearly these curbside con artists can be convincing: Lisa Curtis estimates they bilk homeowners out of \$20 million per year in Colorado alone.

Some stuff in the book I already knew, but I nevertheless appreciated the fact that it was included so I could share with others--such as this tidbit:

* Whether they're candy "honor boxes," wishing wells, or plain old tin cans, those ubiquitous countertop collection boxes you see around so many checkouts are often not what they appear. In most cases, the charities aren't getting all the money people drop into the container; rather, they're renting out their name to for-profit vendors for a flat fee or a small percentage of the intake in exchange for posting the charity's logo. . . .

Most charity watchers agree: Go ahead and toss in your spare change if you want to, but don't expect it to be doing much for the cause. "If you're serious about helping the charity," says Daniel Borochoff, "then get out your checkbook and write them a check."

And, lastly, I appreciated this reminder that I'm amazed so few folks know about:

* Media Mail service--known as "book rate" until 2001--has been around for years, but few people use it because it isn't well publicized down at the local post office. Why not? Because Media Mail is primarily used by business customers, according to a USPS spokesperson. But anyone can--and should--use it to mail books, films, printed music, sound recordings, manuscripts, or computer-readable media including CDs and DVDs. Just be sure that's all that's in the package: To be shipped using Media mail rates, a package cannot contain advertising or a letter to Mom, and the maximum weight is 70 pounds. Indeed, if a postal clerk is suspicious of a box or envelope's contents, he can open it for inspection.

1,001 THINGS is a book I'll refer to often . . . you will, too, so buy a copy for yourself and while you're at it, for others you think could benefit from becoming a more savvy consumer.

D. Ronald Reagan was one of five American Presidents to have kept a consistent diary about his terms in office and the only one to record accounts of his life every day--except for when he was in the hospital recovering from an assassination attempt . . . and even then, he had this to say the day after being shot: "Getting shot hurts."

I had the pleasure of listening to many of his entries in THE REAGAN DIARIES, edited by historian Douglas Brinkley . . . it was a behind-the-scenes look at what took place in the Reagan era, and I found it fascinating.

Regardless of your political affiliation, you'll also enjoy this book as long as you don't expect anything particularly profound . . . many of the entries were concise and to the point, and Reagan does not do much bad mouthing of his enemies . . . it seems he never cursed or at least not in these entries . . . and what he did believe strongly in (taxation is bad, Communism is evil, etc.), he made it well known without getting bogged down into details or reasons why he felt this to be so.

What I also got out of this book was his love for his wife Nancy, as evidenced by such passages as the following:

* When she was away on her frequent "Just Say No" anti-drug crusade, Reagan wrote in his diary about going "upstairs to a lonely old house,"

* and noted their anniversary as "29 years of more happiness than any man could rightly deserve."

* He also stated, "I pray I'll never face a day when she isn't there."

Eric Conger handled the narration . . . his worked added to my enjoyment of THE REAGAN DIARIES.

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5. TV alert

C. CLEAN HOUSE: MESSIEST HOME IN THE COUNTRY ends its seven-episode hunt on Wednesday at 9 p.m. on STYLE NETWORK . . . according to host Niecy Nash, "I am willing to endure

these houses so my fans don't have to."

B. Can Joey Chestnut defend his title at NATHAN'S HOT DOG EATING CONTEST? See for yourself by watching the spectacular on Saturday at 11 a.m. on ESPN . . . in case you were wondering, he ate 66 hot dogs in a record-setting performance . . . and he's a remarkably at 218 pounds, spread over his 6-foot frame.

C. For your fireworks on Saturday, July 4, catch A CAPITOL FOURTH at 8 p.m. on PBS . . . Barry Manilow will appear and Jimmy Smitts will host . . . since PBS times and dates often vary, check local listings . . . then at 10 p.m. on CBS, there's the GOSTON POPS FIREWORKS SPECTACULAR featuring Neil Diamond . . . Craig Ferguson hosts.

D. ANGEL AND THE BADMAN has Lou Diamond Phillips in this remake of the John Wayne classic, featuring Wayne's grandson Brendan in a supporting role . . . Sunday at 9 p.m. on HALLMARK

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6. Attack

At the height of a political corruption trial, the prosecuting attorney attacked a witness. "Isn't it true," he bellowed, "that you accepted twenty thousand dollars to compromise this case?"

The witness stared out the window, as though he hadn't heard the question.

"Isn't it true that you accepted twenty thousand dollars to compromise this case?" the lawyer repeated.

The witness still did not respond.

Finally, the judge leaned over and said, "Sir, please answer the question."

"Oh," the startled witness said, "I thought he was talking to you."

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7. Websites

A. THANKS to Scott in Pennsylvania for sharing this informative website on his Facebook page:

<http://www.dialahuman.com>

Dial A Human and get rid of those annoying phone prompts. Talk to a REAL person!

I wanted to check this out, so I called Continental and did press O and O . . . it didn't work at once, but when I kept punching those numbers in, I eventually did get to a live operator.

B. THANKS to Barbara in Pennsylvania for providing this link to a rendition of "Stand By Me" that you simply must view at the same time you listen to it:

<http://tinyurl.com/b4w6vl>

When it loads, you may have to click on the Play arrow on the left--and then wait a few seconds at most . . . you'll love it!

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

In case you wonder what I do with your name if you become a subscriber to the newsletter, please check out my Privacy Statement . . . it can be accessed by clicking "Newsletter" to the left, then "Privacy Statement."

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8. Computer tip

THANKS to Danny in North Carolina, my computer guru, for helping me find this FREE CD burner:

<http://cdburnerxp.se/>

It is a simple-to-use application to burn CDs and DVDs, including Blu-Ray and HD-DVDs. It also includes the feature to burn and create ISOs, as well as a multilanguage interface. Everyone, even companies, can use it for free. It does not include adware or similar malicious components.

In addition, it allows you to remove all contents from a rewritable medium.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Should you need computer help and you're anywhere in West North Carolina and/or even East Tennessee, Danny is the man . . . he really knows his stuff, and he has been most helpful to me . . . his email address is: dnbrice@gmail.com, and his number is 828.683.4912.

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9. Background music

A pianist was hired to play background music for a movie. When it was completed, he asked when and where he could see the picture. The producer sheepishly confessed that it was actually a porno film, and it was due out in a month.

A month later, the musician went to a porno theatre to see it. With his collar up and dark glasses on, he took a seat in the back row, next to a couple who also seemed to be in disguise. The movie was even raunchier than he had feared, featuring group sex, S/M and even a dog.

After a while, the embarrassed pianist turned to the couple and said, "I'm only here to listen to the music."

"Yeah?" replied the man. "We're only here to see our dog."

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10. A quote I like

There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up.--John Andrew Holmes

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

I really enjoyed the above quote . . . yet when I tried to find more information about the person who said it, I couldn't seem to come up with anything . . . does any reader know who Holmes was/is?

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11. Thought for the day

My brief life as a woman

The headline is no joke . . . it is the title of a blog entry that is a MUST read for men, though methinks that women will like it too:

<http://tinyurl.com/mr4f44>

I'm sorry that I can't just present the whole piece, but copyright restrictions prevent me from doing so . . . I inquired about getting permission to run in BLAINESWORLD, but when THE NEW YORK TIMES asked for \$330, I decided to take a pass.

That said, please do take to read the article that begins as follows (I do have permission to include this material):

As my wife and I sat on the couch one night this past winter, reading and half-watching the inevitable HGTV, I started sweating hard and my face got so fevered and flushed that I felt as if I were peering into an oven.

The blog goes on to describe the symptoms experienced by the author as a result of his undergoing cancer treatments.

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12. Advance planning department

A. Janet in New Jersey:

Soul Shamanism: Life Changing Class
New Tools that will Empower You Learn to connect to soul, spirit and self in profound ways.

Saturday and Sunday, June 27 and 28

\$275 by 6/22 \$325 after

18 Bank St., Suite 300, Morristown, NJ; 973.647.2500

Shaman and Wisdom keeper Janet StraightArrow brings you into

deep connection with yourself and life. An initiated Shaman from many traditions, her mission is to help people simply, clearly and truly open up to the magnificence of creation and themselves offering gifts that will make this time of awakening and change easier for all. See more details by clicking:

<http://www.OasisForTheSoul.com>

B. Imagine being able to discover your passions and then living your life according to what matters most to you . . . that's the premise behind THE PASSION TEST, an informative book by Janet Bray Attwood and Chris Attwood that yours truly will be discussing at the July 9 meeting of the Book Discussion group at the Center for Creative Retirement in Asheville.

Time: 11:30 a.m.; feel free to bring a bag lunch

To quote the authors, living such an existence will prove to be:

Exciting, fulfilling, thrilling, on fire, purposeful, turned on, motivated, entertaining, easy, fun, unstoppable. It's a life aligned with destiny.

For more information and/or directions, send me an email . . . address it to: bginbc@aol.com and put the words PASSION TEST in subject line.

C. Vilasi in New Jersey:

Calling all Singles: An unusual evening . . . full of possibilities.

If you are single and looking or know friends who are single and looking, please extend this invitation to a date under the stars . . . where your destiny may meet your desire.

At The Hope Hill Farm, Asbury, NJ (near Clinton, NJ)

On July 11 from 7-11 p.m.

Cost: \$35 includes an exquisite ambience, excitement, phenomenal food, exotic beverages, jazzy music, new friendships and one question on romance from our clairvoyant. Private sessions will be available. Appointments recommended. \$5 OFF when you bring another single of the opposite sex!

RSVP appreciated . . . this is a non-alcoholic event! Contact: Experience.Nirvana@yahoo.com or 908.996.7536; ask for directions if you need them.

D. Rich in Pennsylvania:

Riley Cote of the Philadelphia Flyers will be holding his 2nd Annual Cote Carnival to benefit MS! The First Annual Carnival raised \$16,914. This year's will be held on 8.23.09.

Time: 12-3 p.m.

Location: Swanky Bubbles, 482 Evesham Road, Cherry Hill, NJ

Admission: \$50.00: 12 and Under: \$20.00

Admission covers food, drinks and entertainment. There will be player

and alumni appearances with the opportunity to receive autographs and participate in silent auctions and raffles. A small donation will be required for autographs.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.cotecarnival.net/>

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PS. Here's hope that everybody has a Happy July 4th . . . and to get you in the mood, here's something different; i.e., songs from 1776--the movie musical that I urge you see (or revisit) sometime in the near future:

<http://tinyurl.com/lw44oy>

In the upper right hand of the screen, you have the option to play all 8 songs that can be accessed here . . . make sure you listen to my favorite from the show, "Momma Look Sharp" . . . an added tip: at the bottom of the screen, take advantage of the option to view the videos in high quality.

Also, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan . . . and that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#664

6.22.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I completed the remaining steps to become official Southerners . . . we got both our cars inspected, then registered . . . so next time you see them, you'll notice the North Carolina plates!

B. There's always much to do at Biltmore Lake, the community where we live . . . every few months, there's something called "Dinner for Six" . . . you rotate going to different folks' homes, and you also rotate what part of the meal you bring . . . on Friday, we hosted one such event and provided the main course . . . our neighbors provided the appetizer and dessert.

I asked one of them, Chris, to provide the recipe she used for the Peach Upside Down Cake that knocked our socks off . . . she graciously responded as follows:

We enjoyed meeting you too. Thanks again for a lovely time and lots of laughs too!

I have attached the recipe, but I have some caveats. Since I am more a cook than a chemist, I have never followed the recipe religiously (which explains my use of peaches--about 5 of them, peeled--rather than pineapple in last night's version). I almost never use the coconut either, although if you like coconut, it's probably good with the pineapple version, but maybe not with peaches. I don't think I've ever made the pineapple version with canned pineapple, as I far prefer the fresh variety, and it doesn't have to be cut into spears either, which I have never done. I like it cut into rings, with the cherries inside the hole of the ring. I skip the almonds too, but if you like that idea, go ahead and use them.

If the only brown sugar you happen to have is the dark brown variety, go ahead and use it; it's just fine. If you prefer using butter rather than margarine in the first step, go ahead - I did last night

and I think it has a superior flavor. I have always used a cast iron skillet to make this cake so I have no idea how it would work in another kind of pan, but you do need to use something at least 10" in diameter and at least 2" deep. I know the recipe says a 9-inch skillet, but mine is 10" and it overflowed a little anyway with the peach juices bubbling up yesterday.

If you try it, let me know how it comes out! I've been making this cake occasionally for over 40 years--in the same cast-iron skillet --and I've never had a dud . . . not yet, anyway! You do need to be careful when it's time to turn it over . . . do follow the steps regarding the 3-minute cool-down on a rack, and make sure that the edges are well separated from the pan before you attempt the upside-down part. When it's time to do the "flip", put an overturned plate over the cake, hold it with one hand, and, using the skillet handle, overturn it onto the plate. You might have to tap the bottom of the skillet a few times before you pick it straight up, but it should work. Good luck!

Pineapple Upside Down Cake

3 Tablespoons margarine
1 cup coconut
½ cup light brown sugar
1/3 cup heavy cream
¼ teaspoon ginger
1 can (No. 2) pineapple spears, drained
9 maraschino cherries
10 blanched, peeled almonds
3 eggs, well beaten
1 ½ cups sugar
¾ cup milk
1 ½ teaspoons butter
1 ½ cups sifted flour
1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
Oven temperature: 350 degrees
Baking time: 30 minutes (about)
Servings: 8

Melt the margarine in the bottom of a skillet (9 inch). Sprinkle the coconut around the edge of the pan forming a circle. In the center of the pan pour the combined brown sugar, cream and ginger. Arrange the pineapple spears, cherries, and almonds in a pattern over the mixture. Set aside. Beat the eggs until thick and lemon-colored. Gradually beat in the sugar. Heat the milk and butter to boiling. Add the sifted dry ingredients alternately with the hot milk mixture. Pour over the prepared mixture in the skillet. Bake in a moderate oven until a cake tester inserted in the center comes away clean. Remove to a rack; let stand three minutes. Loosen edge of cake with a spatula; turn upside-down on serving plate. Serve in wedges.

On Saturday, we attended a "New Member" gathering . . . this was still another way to make friends . . . at this event, I was also asked to become involved in the Social Committee--something I just might do.

C. I've started to attend meetings of the Book Special Interest Group, held at the Center for Creative Retirement . . . each month,

under the capable direction of Jack Ingersoll, two different books are both reviewed and discussed by members . . . Barbara Weatherall did a fine job telling us about SERENA, a novel by Ron Rash, about a woman everyone loves to hate . . . and Carol Ingham made THE WORST HARD TIMES by Timothy Egan come alive as she described how tough life was in the Great Plains during the Dust Bowl . . . I've even volunteered to present at an upcoming meeting . . . stay tuned for details.

D. SPECIAL THANKS to Susan in New York and John in New Jersey for helping me find out how to change my Facebook user name . . . consequently, if you'd like to become a friend to me there, all you have to do is click:

[facebook.com/blainegreenfield](https://www.facebook.com/blainegreenfield)

If you want to change your own Facebook name, please click:

<http://www.facebook.com/username>

And don't forget to invite me to become my "friend" if you'd like to reach me there.

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

This week, it goes to Nancy Sneider from Friends 4 Feral in Asheville; 828.301.3377 . . . since Cynthia has been working with her, I'll let her tell the story:

Nancy has been an amazing contact in support of helping stray/feral cats and kittens.

Our community had a mamma, poppa and three feral kittens roaming in the immediate neighborhood. Nancy volunteers her time (while holding a full-time job) to help trap, neuter and release feral animals. This helps the population from increasing.

She has answered every call promptly, giving much needed information in the process. She gave us the traps we needed, guided us in the use of them and even kept the kittens we trapped over the weekend as we trapped them too late on a Friday.

Nancy then works with the Human Alliance (828.252.2079), the group that actually does the spaying and neutering.

She donates her free time to help so many animals. She deserves to be acknowledged. Thanks again for your many contributions!

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2. FYI

Your vision board

First and foremost, never underestimate the power of the mind to create the vision you hold. Second, creating a Vision Board is one of the most fun things you can do to begin creating the life of your dreams.

You can get some poster board or do as Chris does and paste your pictures on a large mirror. The advantage of the latter approach is that it's easy to add and change pictures over time. Janet pastes her pictures in a notebook so she can sit and look at them from time to time and take them with her.

Whichever approach you take, get a big pile of magazines on topics related to your passions and start going through them. Or you can search the Internet to find the pictures you want.

Cut out pictures of the things you want to be, do, or have and paste them on your Vision Board. Put the board somewhere where you'll see it daily. You have created a simple set of pictures to remind you of what you choose to create in your life. Remember that mantra we taught you?

What you put your attention on grows stronger in your life.

A Vision Board is one of the easy ways to keep your attention on the things you really want to grow stronger in your life.

SOURCE:

THE PASSION TEST (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11) by Janet Bray Attwood and Chris Attwood

FYI, part 2

* Sally in North Carolina (with a REQUEST FOR HELP):

My husband's band's name is Buster. Bob plays bass. Check out their website at:

www.bustertunes.com

Since their guitarist is such a wiz, they play a lot of what they call guitar-legend rock like Jimi Hendrix, Stevie Ray Vaughn and Eric Clapton. In fact the band is named for Jimi, as Buster was his childhood nickname. The website for the contest they're in is:

www.wncmagazine.com/lastbandstanding

You can vote every day until June 24. Check it out and see what you think.

* Jean in Pennsylvania:

Here's my friend Stan's post [that I thought your readers would find of interest]:

The STAR WARS' fan film that I co-produced was rejected by the Atom.com fan film challenge. You can view it for yourself at:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9b_m4YBfN6w

and help us go viral by passing it along.

* Tom in Pennsylvania:

Here's a little bit of info I picked up, but first a related brief story. Last week, I bought an Apple computer. Read a bit online and got the Mac Mini. Went

to BCCC Bookstore and purchased Office 2008 for Mac for \$20 + tax. The lowest price I've seen is \$119 on eBay.

I love using it, and it is really VERY user friendly. Anyway, now the info I picked up. Microsoft is coming out with a new operating system to replace Vista. It's just a Beta version now and goes by the name of Windows 7. They had so many problems with Vista that they had to ditch it. In fact when I looked at some PC computers they were offering the option (free) to revert to Windows XP, the previous system to Vista.

I had to laugh because it shows just how accurate the MAC-PC ad really is.

GREAT MINDS THINKING ALIKE:

They usually do, too, when it comes to Tom . . . he's one of my friends whose opinion I always value and is often on target with his insights . . . with respect to the above email:

1. Before you purchase any software, do check with your local college bookstore (if you are a student, staffer or have any other connection with the school) . . . you can often get software deals that will save you megabucks . . . we're fortunate to have an excellent manager, Willie Coleman, at the bookstore at Bucks . . . if you have any Bucks affiliation, contact him at: colemanw@bucks.edu or via phone, 215.504.8529.

2. I checked and found out that Windows 7 is to be released on October 22 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.microsoft.com/oem/english/software/win7.msp>

If you can't wait, you can install and try a beta version now by clicking:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/download.aspx>

* John in New Jersey:

There is an ad rep I deal with from the AC weekly. Like you, he is picking up and moving to Asheville. I sent him a copy of BLAINESWORLD to help him acclimate

You are now officially working for Asheville Welcome Wagon!

WHY NOT?

I've had worse gigs in my life . . . this one, though, is one methinks I'll enjoy . . . in fact, I'll enjoy it more if "y'all" (readers and friends) visit and then come to stay permanently.

* Cecile in Pennsylvania (in response to a question I asked her about a Facebook post):

Chubby's is in Plumstead, PA, where we live. It's an ice-cream shop located inside of a converted dairy barn. The ice cream is really good--from what I hear. I actually never eat anything besides the fat/free sugar free stuff, which is still pretty good. Come and visit it next time you are in town!

* Roger in Pennsylvania:

I notice you're using more graphics these days. Loved the Noah's ark one.

* Todd in New Jersey (commenting about a place for massages in Asheville that charges between \$29-37 for massages, depending on package):

Makes me want to move South. A good massage here is more than \$60 an hour. Found a place here in Hamilton that goes for \$45; my wife negotiated \$40 because she referred another client to him.

KEEP IN MIND:

Everything in life is negotiable . . . then read Herb Cohen's classic book on negotiations, **YOU CAN NEGOTIATE ANYTHING**.

* Bridget in Pennsylvania (with a REQUEST FOR HELP):

Once again, I am taking part in the 60-mile Breast Cancer 3-Day walk in October, and once again I am asking for your help. This year I must raise \$2300 in order to take part.

This year the walk will be more personal for me as my sister-in-law lost her battle against this disease and died in February at the young age of 52. So many of us have been touched by this cancer and without a cure, an estimated 5 million Americans will be diagnosed with breast cancer--and more than 1 million could die over the next 25 years.

This year, I will walk in memory of Sandy and all the other brave women and men who deserved a lifetime. I will walk so my daughters will not have to walk and I will walk because I can.

Over the last two years, I have had an incredible experience participating in this event. I have raised over \$5,000 and met so many wonderful friends along the way. We have trained, laughed, cried, stretched, drank more water than I care to think about, rubbed Bengay on muscles you didn't know you had, taken more Motrin than the doctor advised, but it was all for a good cause.

So please help me in my fundraising efforts and make a donation to support me. Just follow the link below to visit my personal fundraising webpage. If you do not want to donate online, you can download and print a donation form from that page and mail in your donation.

I really appreciate your support.

Best, Breda or sometimes Bridget

PS. I plan on reaching my fundraising goal by September 1st, so please don't wait. Donate today!

Click here to visit my personal page:

<http://tinyurl.com/lv3efz>

For more information about the Breast Cancer 3-Day, Susan G. Komen for the Cure or the National Philanthropic Trust Breast Cancer Fund, visit:

<http://www.the3day.org/>

or call 800.996.3DAY.

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3. Ask and ye shall find out

Little Harry's new baby brother was screaming up a storm. He asked his mom, "Where'd we get him?"

His mother replied, "He came from heaven, Harry."

Harry says, "WOW! I can see why they threw him out!"

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4. Reviews

A. IMAGINE THAT is a family comedy that kids will like--and their parents, too . . . it is the tale of a divorced father who loves his daughter, but has little time for her . . . yet when her imaginary world proves helpful to him in the business world, he starts taking her more seriously . . . Yara Shahidi is adorable in her first role, and Eddie Murphy finally comes up with an effort that helps display his comedic talents . . . I also liked the work of Thomas Haden Church as Murphy's rival . . . rated PG.

But don't believe me ; take a kid or grandchild and see for yourself . . . in watching it, I was joined not only by Cynthia, but also our next door neighbor and her adorable son Connor . . . when asked for his opinion of the movie, he gave it a thumbs up.

B. Now out on DVD is WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS, a romantic comedy about a couple who meet and don't fall in love when in Las Vegas . . . however, they have a wild night that winds up with them being married . . . and \$3 million richer as a result of hitting a slot jackpot . . . none of it is overly believable; however, that said, it had me laughing throughout most of the film . . . I liked the chemistry between Cameron Diaz and Ashton Kutcher, and Rob Corddry steals most every scene he's in . . . rated PG-13.

C. Imagine being able to discover your passions and then living your life according to what matters most to you . . . that's the premise behind THE PASSION TEST (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11), an informative book by Janet Bray Attwood and Chris Attwood.

The authors present a simple test that enables you to determine your top five passions . . . with that information and the Attwood step-by-step action, you learn how to align your life accordingly.

As to what it means to live a passionate life:

* Exciting, fulfilling, thrilling, on fire, purposeful, turned on, motivated, entertaining, easy, fun, unstoppable. It's a life aligned with destiny.

If that sounds too good to be true, the book shows you exactly how it can be done through many stories . . . this one, in particular, caught my attention:

* A young girl who collected autographs of famous people was at the airport waiting to board her plane when she saw a crowd of people standing around a small man in a white robe.

She knew this man had to be someone well known because of the large crowd around him. She went up to one of the people standing nearby and asked who the man was. She was told, "That's Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, a great Saint from the Himalayas."

The girl excited ran up to Maharishi and immediately asked for his autograph. Maharishi took her pen and paper, looked her straight in the eyes, and said, "I will give you something much more important than my autograph." And on the piece of paper he wrote one word:

Enjoy.

What was the message Mararishi was conveying? The whole purpose of life is to enjoy. When you are not enjoying you are out of the flow of life. You are missing your purpose.

I also liked the book's second part, in which several famous people were interviewed with respect to how they created the life they wanted . . . among those featured were Nani Ma, Debbie Ford, Richard Paul Evans, Stephen M. R. Covey, Marci Shimoff and Dr. John Hagelin . . . I particular liked Jay Abraham's comment about how he changed things around:

* Today one of my top passions is having balance in my life. I used to be a workaholic and monstrously committed. I'd work eighteen hours a day, seven days a week, and have meetings at two in the morning. Now, though, if my wife calls and says, "Let's go to lunch," unless I have a very, very important meeting, I'll stop and do that, because in the scope of forever, that's more important. I want balance--economic, intellectual, spiritual, physical, sexual--all kinds of balanced stimulation at a lever that's very healthy.

Perhaps best of all, there a great listing of resources at the very end . . . some 18 pages of people and programs that the authors know who can provide further support to live a passionate life.

THE PASSION TEST's subtitle says it is THE EFFORTLESS PATH TO DISCOVERING YOUR LIFE PURPOSE . . . I wouldn't exactly call it effortless, but any time spent going through the process will be well worth your time.

D. Heard A LESSON BEFORE DYING by Ernest J. Gaines, a poignant novel about life in a small Cajun community in the late 1940s that got me thinking about how tough things were for certain members of this country--even in this century.

A young black man named Jefferson is at the wrong place at the wrong time. By accident, he accompanies two men who attempt to rob a liquor store. Firing breaks out, and though he is an innocent bystander to what happens, he is the only one left standing at the end. From the beginning, he knows what the outcome of the trial will be. As he states, "I was not there, yet I was there. No, I did not go to the trial. I did not hear the verdict because I knew all the time what it would be."

His godmother realizes that there is no escape from death. So she enlists Grant (the local school teacher) to help her condemned relative get ready for death . . . so he can approach it with his head held high.

Grant's story then takes over . . . his teaching in impossible conditions, his struggle to get away from the South that he despises and his growing friendship/admiration for Jefferson.

I won't give away the ending, lest to say that it was one I'm still thinking about--even though I finished the book a good way ago . . . A LESSON BEFORE DYING will remind you of TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD, which certainly isn't a bad thing . . . if you read the latter when you were younger, you might now want to revisit it . . . but only after you first read the former.

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5. TV alert

A. AMERICA'S GOT TALENT has its season premiere on Tuesday at 9 p.m. on NBC, followed by a second show on Wednesday at the same time . . . Piers Morgan, Sharon Osbourne and David Hasselhoff return as judges . . . I'll miss Jerry Springer as host, though will be curious as to how comic Nick Cannon does as his replacement.

B. THE MUSIC INSTINCT: SCIENCE AND SONG airs on Wednesday at 9 p.m. on PBS . . . check local listings because PBS times and dates often vary . . . this documentary has neuroscientist Daniel Levitin and musician Bobby McFerrin lead an exploration that reaches back into deep time to answer the question: Is musicality unique to humans and, if so, what evolutionary advantage did it confer? . . . according to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, "There isn't a boring moment here, and not only because a river of music runs through it all, illuminating little lessons on the physics, biology and chemistry of sound. There's so much going on, so many mysteries probed, that each person who watches probably will remember the program differently."

C. THE PHILANTHROPIST premieres on Wednesday at 10 p.m. on NBC . . . a rich bad boy ditches his party-boy lifestyle to risk his neck--and billions--for others . . . sounds A bit like an update of THE MILLIONAIRE (that great drama anthology series that aired on CBS from 1955-60).

D. HUNG debuts on HBO on Sunday at 10 p.m. on HBO . . . the title says it all; it's a comedy about a high-school gym teacher moonlighting as a male escort.

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6. Important lesson

After eating an entire bull, a mountain lion felt so good he started roaring. He kept it up until a hunger came along and shot him.

The moral:

When you're full of bull, keep your mouth shut.

SOURCE:

Above is attributed to Will Rogers (1879-1935)--a Cherokee-American cowboy, comedian, humorist, social commentator, vaudeville performer and actor

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7. Websites

A. Barack Obama is the new superhero for the United States. Watch him use his powers to soar around and save the United States from all of their troubles. He has come to save the day. He will fix the economy, stop unemployment, change healthcare, fight Iraq, only to name a few. Watch Obama in action as he comes to fix the day at:

http://sendables.jibjab.com/originals/hes_barack_obama

FYI:

The preceding wasn't written by me; rather, it came from the very funny and creative folks at JibJab who have come up with another winner here.

B. "Kids say the darndest things," according to Art Linkletter . . . see for yourself by clicking:

<http://tinyurl.com/afnden>

And if you don't recognize the name (Art Linkletter), that dates you--or maybe it's me?

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

At the very top of the home page, you'll see information that describes what the website is all about.

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8. Computer tip

Do you ever get that dreaded message, MAILER-DAEMON . . . Returned mail: see transcript for details? It means your mail did not go through and when it happens, I personally get annoyed.

It has been happening far too lately when sending stuff to folks on verizon.net, though I've also gotten some of this from earthlink.net . . . and far too often from comcast.net as well.

When it happens, here's what I recommend that you do on your end:

1. Check typing of the address. Often, I'm the one who made the mistake when it came to the address. (Sometimes, it happens when my address book automatically fills-in an address--using a past one that had been incorrect.)

2. Resend the original email. Sometimes, it is a temporary thing.

3. If it keeps happening, I contact my email server; e.g., AOL (via the Help option) to let the problem be known. In addition, I forward at least some of the return mail to AOL by sending an email to: postmaster@aol.com.

4. I also forward the same email to the postmaster at the other server; e.g., postmaster@verizon.net, postmaster@earthlink.net or postmaster@comcast.net.

5. In the case of Verizon, there's also another email address I write: whitelist@verizon.net.

6. If I can reach the intended recipient of my email, I will call that person and ask that he or she contact his or her server to let it be known that there is a problem.

7. I do my best not to spam others. I rarely send out an email to more than 15 folks at a time, and when I do send such mailings, I always use the bcc option; i.e., so nobody else can see the names of those getting my original email.

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9. Budget cuts

Times are bad everywhere. In fact, budget cuts to the military have reportedly forced training teams to start doing mock combat using no explosives, guns or basically any equipment whatsoever.

Thus the following training scenario: The Sergeant in charge tells his recruits that they are under imaginary fire and asks what to do. All of the recruits bar one scatter to get down behind "stuff" in order to get into positions to return fire.

The Sergeant notices this one recruit standing out in the open, quite relaxed and unfazed. Yelling, the Sergeant asks "What the devil do you think you're doing? You're under fire!" So the recruit takes one step to the left and remains still.

Now the Sergeant's really annoyed. He yells again, "WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING? You're under imaginary fire, take cover!"

The recruit turns to him and replies, "I'm taking cover behind this imaginary tree, Sergeant!"

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10. A quote I like

The key to happiness is to discover it in every moment, not to wait for it to arrive with the achievement of some future goal.--Janet Bray Attwood and Chris Attwood in THE PASSION TEST (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11)

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11. Thought for the day

When I REALLY like a book, I'll cite it four separate times in this newsletter . . . thus you can tell my reaction to THE PASSION BOOK (see also Sections 1, 4C and 11) by Janet Bray Atwood and Chris Atwood, which contained this interview with author Marci Shimoff:

"When people are deeply happy they bring a sense of purpose with them wherever they go, whatever circumstances they're in. So if they're changing the oil in the car, they bring a sense of joyful purpose even to that.

"The statistics on people retiring are quite profound. When people retire they very often die. And why do they die? They die because they've lost their sense of purpose in life. Our purpose helps bring us our joy.

"I love to tell this story--the happiest person I've known in my life was my father. My father loved what he did. He was dentist, and he loved being a dentist. He retired at age seventy-two, reluctantly, and he knew the statistics about what happens to people when they retire.

"So he said, 'Well, I better find myself something else to do, some other purpose, something else I love.' He analyzed what he loved about dentistry and realized it wasn't about putting fillings in people's mouths. He loved working in intricate ways with his hands, in ways that he felt were artistic.

"So at age seventy-two he took up needlepoint, and he became a master needlepointer. He loved doing needlepoint! I remember when he was about eighty-five I went home one day to visit and he had just begun the biggest and most intricate needlepoint I have ever seen. Here's an eight-five-year-old man beginning this huge project.

"I said to him, 'Dad, how long is this going to take you to finish?' And he said, 'Honey, I figure at the pace I'm going at, it's going to take me about four years.'" An eighty-five-year-old man beginning a four-year project--but he had a sense of purpose. And did he complete that project? You bet he did!

"He completed it, and I think it was that feeling of being present in the moment, bringing his love and his purpose, his passion, to what he was doing that enabled him to make exquisite needlepoint. He actually has won needlepoint awards throughout all of California.

"Feeling a sense of purpose in whatever we're doing, at all times, not matter what age, is so critical to our happiness. And being happy allows us to bring joy to whatever it is we're doing."

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12. Advance planning department

A. Natalie in Pennsylvania:

Want to share a great program--check out the Bristol Riverside Theatre if you want to see fabulous musical programs. Just saw "It Was a Very Good Year." It was outstanding with music from the 50s and 60s. Next up is a tribute to Woodstock after 40 years. We have been subscribers now for 9 years and only disliked one show in all that time. Would love to share

this with your readers.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.brtstage.org/>

MY TWO CENTS:

I agree. This group does great work. One of my regrets not being in the area is that I can't go to see plays here, but plan to try to do so when I return to visit.

B. Janet in New Jersey:

Soul Shamanism-Life Changing Class: New Tools that will Empower You to Learn to connect to soul, spirit and self in profound ways.

Saturday and Sunday June 27 & 28, \$275 by 6/22 \$325 after

18 Bank St., Suite 300, Morristown, NJ, 973-647-2500

Presented by Janet StraightArrow, Shaman and Wisdom keeper who brings you into deep connection with yourself and life. An initiated Shaman from many traditions her mission is to help people simply, clearly and truly open up to the magnificence of creation and themselves offering gifts that will make this time of awakening and change easier for all.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.OasisForTheSoul.com>

Or call 973.647.2500.

C. Scott in Pennsylvania:

New Goodnoe's Ice Cream to open July 4!

For more information, please contact:

<http://tinyurl.com/myszna>

D. Maya in Pennsylvania:

Please join me to "Help Clean Up the Delaware River" on Saturday, July 11 at 9:00 a.m.

Event: Help Clean Up the Delaware River

Where: 3 sites in and around Philadelphia

For more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/nq47wa>

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I are on our way to officially becoming Southerners . . . we both passed the exam for our North Carolina driving license, which involved taking a 25 question multiple-choice exam, a vision test and a test on road signs . . . one good thing is that we won't have to go through this again for five more years . . . at that point in time, only our vision and knowledge of signs will get tested--probably a good idea when you come to think of it . . . in contrast, I remember the last license my mother received in Florida when she was in her 80s . . . nothing got tested; in fact, I don't think my mother's vision was ever tested once she got her first license from that state.

B. The week also marked the celebration of that famous holiday, Flag Day . . . in addition, that same day (June 14) was and is my birthday . . . I'm now 60; can you believe it?

The past decade has gone so fast . . . I've moved three times; met and fell in love with and then married Cynthia; saw my daughter Risa get married; retired from my 33-year teaching career at Bucks County Community College; and began my wonderful life as a Rewirement Expert-in-Training in Asheville.

C. One of the things I'll be doing in the future is providing services as a certified hypnotist . . . toward that end, I completed Part One of training in that field (see also the BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD after Section 1D) . . . I look forward to being able to help others quit smoking, lose weight, etc.

SPECIAL OFFER:

In order to attain certification, I need to practice my skills . . . if you'd be interested in having me hypnotize you, let me know as soon as possible . . . an email is probably your best bet; send it to bginbc@aol.com and put HYPNOSIS REQUEST in the

subject line . . . my present plans are to conduct such sessions in Western North Carolina this summer, then possibly come up for a week in late August to the New Jersey/Pennsylvania area . . . in addition, there's the possibility that I might try to conduct sessions via Skype (over the Internet).

D. During the week, I also continued to explore more of what Asheville has to offer:

* One day, I went with a friend to lunch at the Sunny Point Cafe; 828.252.0055 . . . the place has a very eclectic menu and is always mobbed . . . we enjoyed our chicken sandwiches, though next time I return, my plan is to have one of their many delicious-looking breakfast specials.

* On that same day, I found a place where I'll probably be going for massages: Cosmic Groove Massage . . . the hours are great, and there are usually at least two massage therapists available . . . in addition, the prices are very reasonable: \$29 for the first one, \$37 for the next four and then back to \$29 for the sixth massage . . . this is the cycle for all 1-hour massages, and there are even better package deals available . . . for more information, please click:

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

* Lastly, Cynthia and I "discovered" another ice cream place close to our home: Tastee Freez; 828.232.4234 . . . though Kilwin's will always remain our favorite, we liked this one because of its proximity to where we live . . . and, also because they are open later than any other such establishment in the area . . . there's always a wide range of soft and hard ice cream flavors available, along with sundaes, milk shakes, ice cream sodas and even hot dogs.

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

This week, it goes to Sarah Gewanter--the woman who provided the training for my aforementioned hypnosis course.

She's a magnificent teacher, very giving of both her time and expertise . . . all those in attendance especially appreciated her feedback, as well as her encouragement.

We also appreciated her graciousness in hosting the training at her home in the mountains . . . that's Sarah in the foreground with (l-r) future hypnotists Susan, Tina and yours truly:



For more information about Sarah, who's also a counselor and licensed social worker, please click:

<http://www.hypnowisdom.com>

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2. FYI

THANKS to Vince in Pennsylvania for sending me the link to the following report on tires that you must see; e.g., to alert you to the necessity of finding out how old they are before you buy them:

<http://tinyurl.com/57j6of>

It is a big longish, but well worth your time . . . in fact, I checked the information out with Peter in Pennsylvania (a longtime friend who had been a successful auto dealer) for his take . . . he commented:

Ford has been telling us for probably three years that tires over six years old must be replaced! This story is not new news, but nonetheless very well done and very comprehensive.

FYI, part 2

* Warren in North Carolina:

I have 3 adorable kittens for adoption . . . 2 spotted tigers who are male; 1 female calico . . . all are with me in the Asheville area . . . I'll spay or neuter before they become yours . . . please do give me a call at 828.273.1101 to help find them a home.

See below for a picture of two of them with Cynthia:



* Sue in Pennsylvania:

Did you know that the average adult uses 9 personal care products daily, exposing them to 126 chemicals a day? Have you ever read the ingredients of your shampoo, face cleanser or cosmetics? Chances are you cannot even pronounce most of them. The skin absorbs a significant amount of anything you put on it. Some of the ingredients are so toxic and have been linked to serious illnesses.

I kindly urge you to find personal care products and cosmetics that are non-toxic and safe to use. The following website offers products that do NOT use any synthetic chemicals. It provides the world's first certified organic personal care products (skin, hair and body) and cosmetics. And you will be able to recognize and pronounce all of the plant-based healthy ingredients.

For more information, please click:

<http://savannahsorganics.mionegroup.com/>

And here's a hair tip for you:

Add 1/2 teaspoon baking soda to any shampoo you use about once a week. Just rub them together in your palms, then apply. You will be pleasantly surprised how healthy and manageable it makes your hair look and feel!

* Suzanne in North Carolina, providing a recipe for the delicious carrot cake (that she made for my recent birthday party):

Carrot Cake

INGREDIENTS:

4 eggs (6)
1 1/4 cups vegetable oil (1 3/4+ cups)
1 cup white sugar (1 1/2 cups)
1 cup brown sugar (1 1/2 cups)
2 teaspoons vanilla extract (1 Tablespoon)
2 cups all-purpose flour (3 cups)

2 teaspoons baking soda (1 tablespoon)
2 teaspoons baking powder (1 tablespoon)
1/2 teaspoon salt (3/4 teaspoon)
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon (1 tablespoon)
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg (3/4 teaspoon)
1/4 teaspoon ginger (1/3 teaspoon)
3 cups grated carrots (4.5 cups)
1 cup chopped pecans (can leave out) (1.5)
1/2 cup butter, softened
8 ounces cream cheese, softened
4 cups confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup chopped pecans (can leave out)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease and flour 2- 9 inch round pan.
2. In a large bowl, beat together eggs, oil, white sugar and 2 teaspoons vanilla. Mix in flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt and spices. Stir in carrots. Fold in pecans. Pour into prepared pans.
3. Bake in the preheated oven for 40 to 50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack and cool completely. I put in refrigerator for several hours or overnight.
4. To Make Frosting: In a medium bowl, combine butter, cream cheese, confectioners' sugar and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Beat until the mixture is smooth and creamy. Stir in chopped pecans. Frost the cooled cake.

NOTE:

I wanted three layers, so I made adjustments in parenthesis. I used the same amount of icing, just didn't do the sides, just tops and filling.

George in Pennsylvania:

Success story this week . . . my recent blog about cigars was seen by the number one cigar company in the world:

<http://tinyurl.com/p4899p>

Their executive emailed me personally . . . said he loved it and offered me a role in writing for his website:

<http://www.puff.com>

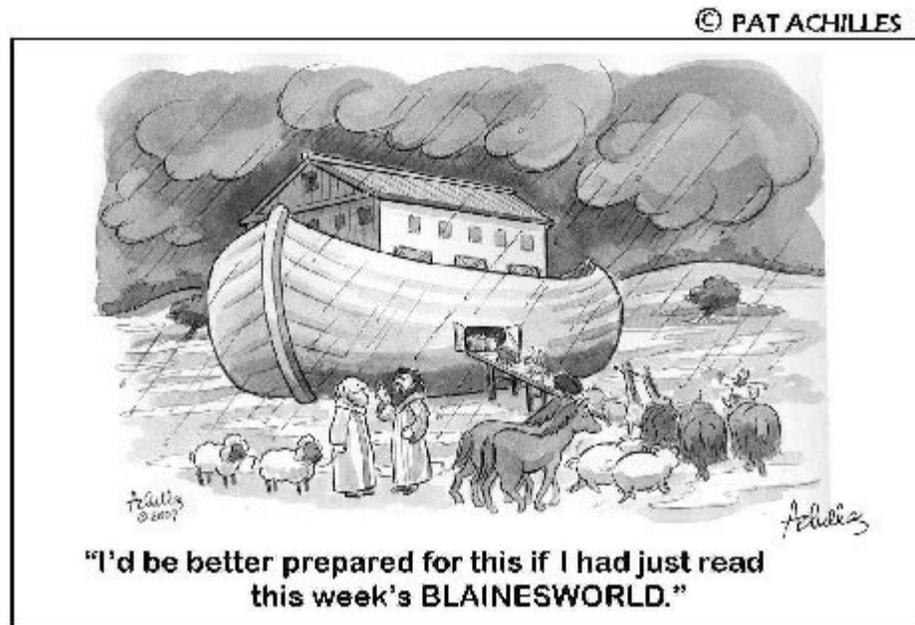
also, the catalog and CIGAR NEWS. Lesson? Start or keep blogging. You never know who is reading it. If you write, speak or do anything well . . . send those links out. If you don't tell them, who will?

Part of the compensation will be high-end cigars that I will also review. Gee . . . what a disappointment!

Four generations of emails with the guy lead to a discussion about doing a Cigar Show that they may be interested in sponsoring.

Both of my dream skills get met. Speaking/Hosting AND Writing.

* Pat in Pennsylvania with another comic specifically written for this missive:



Pat is Pat Achilles, a very talented artist who also does greeting cards, artwork for children's books and so much more . . . for more information, call her at 215.348.4837 or email her at: patachilles@aol.com . . . you can also get a FREE cartoon every Monday by clicking:

<http://www.achillesportfolio.com/freecartoonsignup.htm>

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3. Did you know?

The first testicular guard "Cup" was used in hockey in 1874, and the first helmet was used in 1974.

It took 100 years for men to realize that the brain is also important.

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4. Reviews

A. If you're in the mood for a funny, stupid movie that has absolutely no redeeming social value, then HANGOVER is just for you . . . it is about four guys who go to Las Vegas for a bachelor party that turns out to be unlike any you've ever seen and/or heard about . . . not all of the parts click, but there's enough here to make it worth seeing--especially the performance by Zach Galifiankis . . . he's one crazy guy . . . rated R.

B. Now out on DVD is NEW IN TOWN, a film that most critics panned . . . in fact, I listened to the reviews and passed on seeing this in the theaters . . . what a mistake . . . it is a charming romantic comedy, starring Renee Zellweger and Harry Connick, Jr., about a woman who moves from Miami to a small town in Minnesota to run a factory there . . . I laughed through most of it, yet was

also touched by various parts . . . only the ending bogged down a bit, but overall, you'll like it . . . and because of its PG rating, you can watch it with the entire family (though I think kids under 8 might not like it as much as anybody older).

C. David Ogilvy's OGILVY ON ADVERTISING is one of my favorite books on the subject . . . in fact, for several years, I used it as the text for the advertising course that I taught.

So when I saw there was a biography written about him, THE KING OF MADISON AVENUE by Kenneth Roman, I jumped at the opportunity to read more about the man many consider as one of the fathers of modern advertising.

He was quite a character who not only built Ogilvy & Mather into a global enterprise, but who also worked undercover as a British agent in Washington and spent time as a farmer in the Amish country . . . this entertaining tale of his life gave me a real feel for the man who had some strong opinions about the profession--including this one:

* If you spend your advertising budget entertaining the consumer, you are a bloody fool. Housewives don't buy a new detergent because the manufacturer told a joke on television last night. They buy it because it promised a benefit. If I could persuade the lunatics to give up their pursuit of awards, I would die happy.

I also liked reading about Ogilvy's life outside of work . . . in his latter years, he moved to France where he invited hundreds of people to come see him:

* Dozens took him up on it. People would invite themselves for tea and be coaxed to stay the night. One young couple asked if they could come for a night and stayed for six. He put some houseguests to work improving his dry moat--a dirty job--confiding that guests seldom overstayed their welcome if put to work.

Ordinarily, I don't pay too much attention to a book's documentation. . . yet that said, Roman is to be commended on his thorough job of research . . . there are some 17 pages of Source Notes; however, what most caught my attention was the Afterword devoted to "(More) Unpublished David Ogilvy" . . . my favorite was this Memo he wrote his Board of Directors:

* During the Kaiser's war, whenever one of Churchill's colleagues in the Cabinet got mad at him, he would write to them in this vein:

"We are on the stage of history. Let us keep our anger for the common foe."

With a little modification, we should sometimes say this to each other.

Even if you're not a fan of biographies or advertising, give this one a chance . . . you'll find it fascinating.

D. I've enjoyed all of Joseph Finder's corporate thrillers (POWER PLAY, KILLER INSTINCT, COMPANY MAN, etc.) . . . yet somehow, one of his earlier novels--THE ZERO HOUR--had escaped my radar screen; i.e., until I saw an audio copy at my local library.

This one was quite exciting . . . my only regret is that you might have to dig to find it, in that I believe it may be out-of-print . . . that's too bad, given the nature of the cat-and-mouse story.

It is about a terrorist who escapes from a South African prison . . . he plans an impending terrorist attack on Manhattan that an FBI agent is trying to foil . . . there are naturally lots of complications, but they are all germane to the book's plot--and help build up to an exciting conclusion.

What's amazing is that the book was written in 1996, long before the events of 9/11 . . . do see if you can find a copy, particularly like me: a big Joseph Finder fan.

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5. TV alert

A. CHESS, the musical, is on GREAT PERFORMANCES on Wednesday at 8 p.m. on PBS . . . this production is a concert version of the show, featuring Josh Groban, WICKED's Idina Menzel and RENT's Adam Pascal . . . check local listings because times and dates often vary on PBS stations.

B. George Lopez, voted as one of TV GUIDE's "50 Greatest TV Dads of All Time," shows why on MR. TROOP MOM . . . he plays a father who gets to bond with his daughter at a wilderness camp weekend . . . Friday at 8 p.m. on NICKELODEON.

C. CHOPPING BLOCK has the amateur restaurateurs trying to woo single diners with their sexy dishes . . . Friday at 8 p.m. on NBC.

D. THE SINGING BEE has switched both channels and themes . . . it is on Saturdays at 10 p.m. on CMT, and contestants will now sing country songs.

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6. Tick warning!

I hate it when people forward bogus warnings, and I have even done it myself a couple times unintentionally . . . but this one is real , and it's important. So please send this warning to everyone on your e-mail list.

This is the time of year to think of ticks once again.

If someone comes to your front door saying they are checking for ticks due to the warm weather and asks you to take your clothes off and dance around with your arms up, DO NOT DO IT! THIS IS A SCAM!!

They only want to see you naked. I wish I'd gotten this yesterday. I feel so stupid!!!

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7. Websites

A. If you don't want to pay for software, then check out this website that makes much good stuff available for FREE:

<http://tinyurl.com/msj62t>

You can find both antivirus and antispymware software, firewalls, business applications, desktop search software and many others.

B. If you love Broadway musicals (and even if you don't), please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/dc7a5c>

You'll see a great parody of WEST SIDE STORY, entitled WORST SLIDE STORY . . . make sure you have put on your sound . . . the concept, animation and voices are by Walt Handelsman--one very clever guy.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

In case you wonder how many other subscribers there are, look to the bottom left of the homepage . . . methinks you'll be amazed!

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8. Computer tip

If you post something on Facebook, don't just tell your friends that you did something; e.g., went to the movies . . . give them additional information about what movie you saw, whether you liked it, etc.

Do the same for books you read, restaurants you eat at and just about everything else you do . . . that way, others can get valuable suggestions from you.

ALSO, A FAVOR:

If you're on Facebook and we're not already friends, do invite me to be one . . . you'll find me by searching "Blaine Greenfield" . . . I'm the only one listed.

AND MR. CURIOUS HERE:

Do you know how to post a link to Facebook directly to my page? Or if that's not possible, is there a link I can direct friends to; e.g., if they want to become my friend?

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9. Surprise

Jack wakes up with a huge hangover after attending his company's party.

Jack is not normally a big drinker, but the drinks didn't taste like

alcohol at all. He didn't even remember how he got home from the party.

As bad as he was feeling, he wondered if he did something wrong.

Jack had to force himself to open his eyes, and the first thing he sees is a couple of aspirins next to a glass of water on the side table. And, next to them, a single red rose!! Jack sits up and sees his clothing in front of him, all clean and pressed.

He looks around the room and sees that it is in perfect order, spotlessly clean. So is the rest of the house.

He takes the aspirins, cringes when he sees a huge black eye staring back at him in the bathroom mirror. Then he notices a note hanging on the corner of the mirror written in red with little hearts on it and a kiss mark from his wife in lipstick: "Honey, breakfast is on the stove, I left early to get groceries to make you your favorite dinner tonight. I love you, darling! Love, Jillian."

He stumbles to the kitchen and sure enough, there is a hot breakfast, steaming hot coffee and the morning newspaper. His 16-year-old son is also at the table, eating. Jack asks, "Son. What happened last night?"

"Well, you came home after 3 a.m., drunk and out of your mind. You fell over the coffee table and broke it, and then you puked in the hallway and got that black eye when you ran into the door."

Confused, he asked his son, "So, why is everything in such perfect order and so clean? I have a rose, and breakfast is on the table waiting for me?"

His son replies, "Oh THAT . . . Mom dragged you to the bedroom, and when she tried to take your pants off, you screamed, "Leave me alone b**ch, I'm married!"

Broken Coffee Table, \$239.99; Hot Breakfast, \$4.20; Two Aspirins, \$.38. Saying the right thing at the right time: PRICELESS.

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10. A quote I like

Life is not guaranteed. There are a lot of things that happen in life where an opportunity presents itself one time, and then it leaves like a feather in the wind, and you never see it again.--Derek Fisher, considered the resident philosopher of the Los Angeles Lakers, when asked about the possibility of his team staying together for still another title (after its victory over Orlando in the 2009 finals)

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11. Thought for the day

Will Rogers' advice on growing older

First, eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

Second, the older we get, the fewer things seem worth waiting in line for.

Third, some people try to turn back their odometers. Not me, I want people to know "why" I look this way. I've traveled a long way and some of the roads weren't paved.

Fourth, when you are dissatisfied and would like to go back to youth, think of Algebra.

Fifth, you know you are getting old when every thing either dries up or leaks.

Sixth, I don't know how I got over the hill without getting to the top.

Seventh, one of the many things no one tells you about aging is that it is such a nice change from being young.

Eighth, one must wait until evening to see how splendid the day has been.

Ninth, being young is beautiful, but being old is comfortable.

Tenth, long ago when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was called witchcraft. Today it's called golf.

And finally, If you don't learn to laugh at trouble, you won't have anything to laugh at when you are old.

FOR THOSE NOT FAMILIAR WITH WILL ROGERS (1879-1935):

He was a Cherokee-American cowboy, comedian, humorist, social commentator, vaudeville performer and actor. . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.willrogers.com/willrogers/biography/will/will.html>

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12. Advance planning department

A. I truly do appreciate readers who provide information of benefit and/or interest to others . . . consequently, I'd like to extend my appreciation:

* To Ed in Pennsylvania for telling me about how to get a FREE entree at TGI Friday's through June 22 . . . just click:

<http://tinyurl.com/qray93>

* To Jean in Pennsylvania for sharing this one:

Come into any Chick-fil-A restaurant dressed as a chicken and receive a FREE meal on Friday, July 10 (Cow Appreciation Day) . . . if you don't have your own cow costume, the company even provides you with a starter kit . . . find out more by clicking:

<http://cowappreciationday.com/>

* And to Scott in Pennsylvania for inviting you to enjoy a FREE slider at White Castle through July 12 by clicking:

<http://www.whitecastle.com/88/>

REQUEST/WARNING:

Please continue to share such information with me, so that I can then share it with others . . . the warning: I'll do my best to verify such others (often checking them out at the company's websites), but I'd still suggest you contact your local store before running out to take advantage of the above offers . . . not all locations honor coupons and sometimes, the offers are withdrawn because the influx of customers can't be handled.

B. Jeanne in Pennsylvania with an invite to:

Wouldn't a little vacation feel great? Can you imagine yourself having time to dream about new possibilities for your business . . . your life . . . you? Haven't you waited long enough?

New Hope Life Works proudly sponsors the "ARISE and SHINE Conference . . . Renew, Revive, Restore" weekend on June 20-21, 2009 at the beautiful Deer Park Campus in New Hope, PA. The focus of this weekend is an entrepreneurial approach to living, wellness, success and vitality . . . take a class , learn new skills, meet new people, eat healthy, get a massage, meditate, walk, swim, sit around a campfire and just breathe.

Stay the weekend for \$65-125 per person; Two all-day passes are only \$25.

Saturday, 9 a.m.-10 p.m. and Sunday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.

For more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/nqka6l>

Or call 215.862.6697.

C. Maureen in Pennsylvania:

Schuylkill River Outlaws are at The Kimmel Center in Philadelphia this Saturday night, June 20, from 6:45-7:45 p.m.

Tickets are \$10. For more information about the group, please click:

<http://www.schuylkillriveroutlaws.com>

MY TWO CENTS:

I'm sorry that I won't be in the area to catch this performance, if only because I would have liked to have seen Ethan and Ryan (the boys of Maureen and Rich) in concert.

D. Cyndy in Pennsylvania:

The June Consciousness Shifting Drum and Sacred Sound Healing Circle, which was previously scheduled in West Chester on June 12 HAS BEEN RESCHEDULED to June 26 IN LANDENBERG. In other words, there will be no circle in West Chester this month, but all are welcome to join the Landenberg Circle on June 26. Grandmother Pathweaver will join us, and we circle, drum, play, heal, laugh, and always sit in the lap of Spirit,

from 6:30-9:30 p.m.

AN ADULT AND CHILD DRUM MAKING DAY

Saturday, June 27, from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Please join us for the first of what will become an annual day of fun. Spend a special day with your child (or one you borrow) and assist him or her in creating a Native American frame drum. A drum is a powerful healing tool, which can be used for joyful play, honoring Spirit, clearing or generating energy. During this workshop, we will sing, dance and using a special inward journey, we will discover the story of your new drum.

An investment of \$80-\$175 (depending on the size drum you choose) includes the day of teaching and all materials to make a Native American style frame drum with a maple frame and elk skin. You will also make a beautiful beater. \$75.00 registration fee is due by June 15, 2009.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.RhythmOfTheEarth.com>

Or call 610.274.3109.

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PS. Just like Mother's Day wasn't that much on my radar screen this past May, Father's Day hasn't been either . . . I'm sad that my father is no longer alive, so I won't be able to spend the day with him . . . but if yours is still around, I do hope you get to either see him and/or at least think about him on Sunday when you play this song by Keith Urban:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmMfuYkPixQ>

In addition, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#662

6.8.2009

In this issue:

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I have new friends; i.e., a feral cat and her three little kittens . . . taking the great advice submitted by many readers, Cynthia and our amazing neighbor Julia managed to both trap them and then get them fixed.

B. With our friend Suzanne, we discovered still another great restaurant: Stony Knob Cafe in Weaverville . . . the place looks like a diner from the outside, but inside the decor is very eclectic . . . so is the food . . . I very much enjoyed my Thai tilapia, prepared Jamaican style . . . and Cynthia said her shrimp saganaki was great . . . Katie, our server, was excellent . . . we got a kick out of her response to our question about how the food was . . .she replied, "If I didn't work here, I'd eat here all the time."

For more information, please click:

<http://www.stoneyknobcafe.com>

From there, we went to a production of FUNNY GIRL at the Southern Appalachian Repertory Theater in Mars Hill . . . it was OK, though we all agreed there were two problems with the show: 1. The lead actress (Elizabeth Aiello) had a great voice, but she was way too old for the part of Fanny Brice--especially given the fact that the actor who played Nick Arnstein appeared to be at least 15-20 years younger; and 2. Aiello's wigs were probably the worst we have ever seen . . . I kid you NOT.

FUNNY GIRL runs through June 14 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.sartplays.org>

C. Over the weekend, we went to downtown Asheville for dinner (see BLAINESWORLD BEST AWARD) and then to the outdoor Drumming Circle that is held every Friday night . . . it's a lot

of fun . . . from there, of course, we just had to go around the corner to Kilwin's (828.252.2639) for some delicious ice cream . . . Cynthia even got put to work, making fudge:



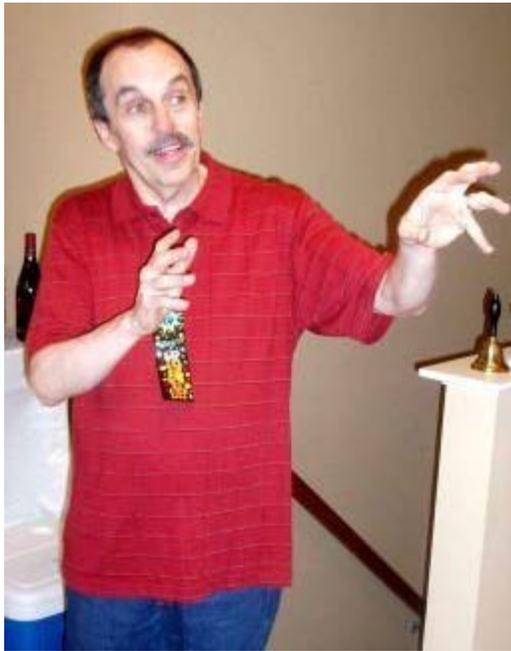
On Saturday, we had a blast at our association's "Suntacular" Celebration with hundreds of our neighbors . . . in the afternoon, there was a barbecue lunch and bluegrass music concert . . . in the evening, there was a marshmallow roast and jazz concert.

D. Sunday marked the third time we celebrated my upcoming 60th birthday . . . we had a whole bunch of neighbors and new friends for some great homemade food from Pomodoros (hey, I didn't say whose home it was from!) . . . for more information on that restaurant that is rapidly becoming another of our favorites, please click:

<http://www.pomodoroscafe.com>

Erin Thomas, catering director, was a big help in taking care of all the arrangements . . . she can be reached at 828.273.8220.

What follows is a picture of yours truly, expressing my thanks to all who joined us:



I'm wearing an "aged to perfection" ribbon that Cynthia had given me.

Scrumptious deserts then followed . . . we're grateful to two aforementioned individuals, Suzanne and Julia, for making most of them . . . our guests obviously were in agreement . . . that's Stuart and Tammy checking them out and/or practicing for their upcoming wedding:



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

This week, it goes to Sutra--the server at one of our favorite restaurants in the area: Sushi Thai in Asheville; 225.8885.

Sutra always has a warm greeting for us whenever we arrive . . . she also has a great smile and knows

just what we want--and how we want it prepared.

Our only regret is that she will soon be leaving the area to return to her family in Bali . . . we will miss her, but shall continue going to the restaurant for my favorite dish: coconut chicken . . . Cynthia likes that and, also, the ginger pepper steak that she recently ordered.

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2. FYI

See Asheville for yourself!

As you know, we're loving Asheville . . . for one thing, the weather is delightful . . . you get all four seasons, and the winters are milder than they were in New Jersey . . . the summers are also milder.

Folks are friendly, taxes are lower and the cost of living is about 20% lower than where we used to live in Central New Jersey (source: WHERE TO RETIRE, July/August 2009, p. 134).

To find out more yourself, consider viewing and/or all of the following websites:

1. A short but informative profile that was run on CBS in May, 2009:

<http://tinyurl.com/ks376s>

I believe it opens to the story tab; for video, just click the tab to the left.

2. For a more comprehensive overview, go to:

<http://www.exploreasheville.com>

You'll get information on places to eat, things going on in the area, and some great pictures and videos.

3. To get an overall feel and perhaps the best pictures of Asheville, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/lagqjw>

4. To truly see how beautiful the mountains are (and for some nice music), please click: _

<http://tinyurl.com/nox3gq>

5. I could do without the narration in the beginning, but the fall pictures are magnificent here:

<http://tinyurl.com/rchebb>

6. And for pictures of the Biltmore Estate (a place I'm sure you will want to visit):

<http://tinyurl.com/lwy7fg>

TWO ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS:

Should you become seriously interested in joining us in Asheville, our realtor and friend is the absolute best . . . you won't go wrong by working with her . . . her name is Suzanne Smith . . . she can be reached by phone, 828.551.4609 or via email: suzannesmith54@gmail.com.

Then, to get your mortgage, make sure you contact Michael Phelan at 828.654.6402 or via email: michael_phelan@beverly-hanks.com . . . he's a guy who really knows his stuff, and you'll be impressed by both his friendliness and creativity.

FYI, part 2

* SPECIAL THANKS to Joann Corn for sharing her remarks from our Union's recent end-of-year party:

When we met, I was green behind the ears, and I learned so much from you during our time together.

You must have thought I needed a lot of help because you were always lending me books; e.g., on spirituality, on self-help, etc. I still have some to return (which I still have and will read; I'm just deciding on which one to start first).

I learned YOMBER from you. And something even from your father; i.e., if one person tells you that you have a problem, don't worry about it; if two people tell you that you have a problem, think about it; and if three or more tell you that you have a problem, deal with it.

I learned some self-promotion: If you don't toot your own horn, someone else will use it as a spittoon

And we all know you come from a marketing background and that not only were you your own best cheerleader, you were everyone's best cheerleader.

Finally, from you I learned that there were left-handed and right-handed pencils, and I thought you might like some with your new title: rewirement expert-in-training. [She then proceeded to give me a bunch.]

* Ruth in Pennsylvania (responding to a question I raised about the good work that she does in the community):

Twilight [the group I asked about] honors seniors and makes dreams come true --over 1,000 nationwide to date since this Doylestown, PA non-profit started a couple years ago.

You can volunteer, donate funds or buy one of the wishes granted--an adorable cat and mouse children's book my company, Thriving Artist, Press published:

<http://thrivingartistpress.com/TWF/>

* Pat in Pennsylvania:

I'm still getting sign-ups for my cartoons; I think it's because of your

newsletter because I'm not recognizing the email addresses.

IN CASE YOU MISSED THIS FROM LAST WEEK:

You can get a FREE cartoon every Monday by clicking:

<http://www.achillesportfolio.com/freecartoonsignup.htm>

My thinking is that this will put a smile on your face . . . at the very least, that would then make folks wonder what you're up to!

* Carole in North Carolina:

I would like to introduce you to Xocai, The Healthy Chocolate. MXI Corp and their manufacturer of raw, unprocessed cocoa invented a patented "Cold Press Process" in the creation of dark Belgian Chocolate, which keeps ALL the antioxidants, flavonoids and nutrients intact. This guilt-free chocolate contains no preservatives, bad fats, waxes, fillers, nor bad sugars!

MXI also combines the world's #2 highest rated antioxidant; the Acai Berry superfood from the Amazon Rain Forest. The resulting product has a higher antioxidant level of any plant or fruit known to man, with amazing health benefits. Don't let the great taste fool you. Clinical studies show that the unprocessed (un-heated) cocoa bean is full of flavanoids and other nutrients that can have many health benefits! Now, you can finally "have your chocolate and eat it too!"

Contact me at 828.681.0969 for information on how to order and learn about Healthy Chocolate.

MY TWO CENTS:

As I write this, I'm having a square of the dark chocolate . . . it is soooooo good . . . and if it's healthy for me, too, so much the better!

* Brian in Pennsylvania:

My sister's unit at the Sea Watch Condo is available at reduced weekly rates on the following dates: 6-27 thru 7-4 for \$1500; 7-4 thru 7-11 for \$1500; 8-15 through 8-22 for \$1500; and 8-22 thru 8-29 for \$1,300.

Prices listed are all inclusive . . . no additional fees . . . includes free parking. Unit has just been remodeled inside to include a third bedroom and various other upgrades. 3 bedrooms, sleeps up to 8.

To see what amenities the condo has to offer, visit:

<http://www.century21newhorizon.com/>

To see the unit #1812 (prior to the remodeling), visit:

<http://www.century21newhorizon.com/rental/house.html?ID=331>

NOTE: The above prices are available only by contacting the owners directly. If you contact Century 21, you'll pay more.

For additional information or to make reservations call Mary Beth or Bill Baltz at 267.394.2501 . . . or email baltz4@verizon.net.

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3. Bedside wish

An old man was on his death bed, and wanted to be buried with his money. He called his priest, his doctor and his lawyer to his bedside. "Here's \$30,000 cash to be held by each of you. I trust you to put this in my coffin when I die so I can take all my money with me."

At the funeral, each man put an envelope in the coffin. Riding away in a limousine, the priest suddenly broke into tears and confessed, "I only put \$20,000 into the envelope because I needed \$10,000 to repair the roof of the church."

"Well, since we're confiding in each other," said the doctor, "I only put \$10,000 in the envelope because we needed a new X-ray machine for the pediatrics ward at the hospital which cost \$20,000."

The lawyer was aghast. "I'm ashamed of both of you," he exclaimed. "I want it known that when I put my envelope in that coffin, I enclosed a check for the full \$30,000."

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4. Reviews

A. PARIS 36 is an interesting but not great musical about a troupe of French performers who attempt to reopen their beloved hall that had recently closed . . . a lot happens in the two hours, and that was my problem with the film . . . I would have also enjoyed seeing more full versions of the songs, as opposed to the various snippets . . . yet I did find myself drawn into the political subplot . . . and I really liked the work of Nora Arnezeder as the attractive young singer . . . rated PG-13.

B. GRAN TORINO is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #644 follows:

I'm a bit surprised that Clint Eastwood did not receive any Oscar nominations for GRAN TORINO, a film he both directed and stars in . . .it's the story of a Korean War vet's reluctant friendship with a Hmong teenage boy and his immigrant family . . . Eastwood is funny at times; at other times, he'll remind you of his famous Dirty Harry character . . . the ending is as good as it gets . . . stick around for the credits, and you'll even get to hear Eastwood sing . . . rated R.

C. I love living in Asheville . . . however that said, I must admit to the fact that I miss having any great Jewish delicatessens in the location.

So when a friend gave me a copy of HOW TO FEED FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE by Milton Parker and Allyn Freeman, I was in seventh heaven because it's the story of New York's famous Carnegie Deli . . . reading it was almost but not quite as good as devouring a corned beef sandwich.

I got a kick out of reading how this particular Deli managed to grow from a nondescript hole in the wall to the establishment of choice

for presidents, celebrities, at least one sultan and millions of other hungry diners from around the world . . . it has done so by following a set of sound business practices without spending any money on advertising or promotions . . . instead, word-of-mouth has always been the key to its success:

* The decision to add two extra inches to the pastrami, corned beef and tongue sandwiches represented Parker's smart way of thinking that when people from Pasadena, or from Jacksonville, or from wherever, returned home after a visit to the Carnegie Deli, they would recount the eating of the humongous sandwich. The diners would retell of their ordering and fun dining adventure. Yesterday's Carnegie Deli diners would advertise the restaurant to tomorrow's New York City visitors--at no expense to the Carnegie Deli.

I particularly got a kick out of reading about the visits of such comics as Henny Youngman:

* Youngman asked the couple, "Would you like to see a photograph of my pride and joy?" When the Siegels nodded yes, Youngman handed them a picture of Pride furniture polish and Joy dishwashing liquid. Another time, Youngman said to Jane, "You're a pretty lady. I'm going to give you a diam-ond pin." He handed her a dime on a pin!

And I enjoyed the accounts of actual customers, one of whom was the writer Michael Kramer:

* Kramer was sent to Israel to do a story and the group decided to send him a Carnegie Deli salami to keep his spirits up. When Kramer went to the post office in Tel Aviv to pick up this treat, he discovered an empty brown wrapper and no salami. An Israeli postal worker said, "Even in Israel, we recognized the name of New York's famous Carnegie Deli. We knew from the shape what was inside, so we ate it. Delicious."

I also liked the inclusion of several original recipes from the Deli's kitchen, including chopped liver, Brooklyn egg cream, brisket of beef and matzoh ball soup . . . methinks, though, I'll pass on trying them out myself and instead visit the Carnegie Deli the next time I'm in New York.

My only regret is that I won't be able to get the free slice of cheesecake that the authors offered with all purchasers of the book (there's a coupon in the back), in that my friend had the unmitigated gall to rip that out before giving me HOW TO FEED FRIENDS!

D. Tyler Perry amazes me . . . he writes, directs, produces and often stars in his own movies . . . he put together a successful TV show . . . and in his spare time, he somehow managed to write a bestseller: DON'T MAKE A BLACK WOMAN TAKE OFF HER EARRINGS.

It features the character he has invented, Medea, giving advice on a variety of topics . . . I recently got to hear the CD version of this book, and I'm glad I did because Perry also did the narration--and so I got to hear him "doing" Medea, which was an added plus.

I'll admit that I did not get all the humor . . . according to Meda, that's no problem:

* If you don't understand something I'm saying here and you're not black, you will have to ask somebody who is.

Fortunately, that was only a very small percentage of the material that is presented . . . and I'm glad that I was able to grasp perhaps the book's most valuable tip:

* To keep visitors from overstaying their welcome, give them an uncomfortable bed. And make sure you give them some nice candles. (Just carve out the inside first and put a dead fish there instead.)

In addition, I laughed when I heard such other tidbits as:

* The grass is always greener on the other side, but the water bill is higher.

* Have to go through a rough neighborhood? Look crazy (e.g., . wear a wig), but don't go to sleep.

You'll have a fun time with DON'T MAKE A BLACK WOMAN TAKE OFF HER EARRINGS, particularly if you're not looking for anything too profound.

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5. TV alert

A. KATHY GRIFFIN: MY LIFE ON THE D-LIST returns for Season Five on BRAVO on Mondays at 10 p.m. . . . over the next few episodes, you'll see her seek tips from some of her A-List celebrity friends on how they obtained their status . . . included will be a visit to Palm Springs to visit Suzanne Somers' compound, where Griffin prays that Barry Manilow shows up.

I get a kick out of this show . . . to get a feel for it, please click these clips from the fourth season:

<http://tinyurl.com/mymkje>

B. DON'T BE DENIED, according to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, "may not be the meatiest documentary ever made about the rock/folk musician Neil Young, " [but] "it is tasty just the same" . . . Wednesday at 9 p.m.. on PBS . . . check local listings because PBS times and dates often vary.

C. TOSH.0 is a weekly, topical series that takes on everything the Internet has to offer through comedian Daniel Tosh's sarcastic and biting point-of-view . . . Thursdays at 10 p.m. on COMEDY CENTRAL.

D. Fridays at 8:30 a.m. catch the TODAY SHOW on NBC for its summer-concert series, featuring Peas on June 12, Jonas Brothers on June 19 and The Fray on June 26 . . . the series runs through August 21.

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6. Geography question (WARNING: Brunette joke alert!)

A married couple was asleep when the phone rang at 2 in the morning. The wife (a brunette) picked up the phone, listened a moment and said, "How should I know, that's 200 miles from here!" and hung up.

The husband said, "Who was that?"

The wife said, "I don't know, some woman wanting to know "if the coast was clear."

IS IT JUST ME?

I don't know about you, but I personally feel that there are just too many of such brunette jokes around . . . I mean, why don't "they" pick on some other group; e.g., redheads? Or even blondes?

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7. Websites

A. You can watch current TV shows, feature films and documentaries on the Internet . . . for no charge, too . . . for example, you'll find MEDIUM, BASIC INSTINCT, SUPER SIZE ME, etc. by clicking:

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

Make sure you click the option (to right of screen) that enables you to see the films on your full computer screen.

B. Beyonce's "Single Ladies (Put a Ring On it)" can be viewed by clicking:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8mVEGfH4s5g>

For a very funny spin on the above, check out her appearance on SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBC7pilGoPc>

And for perhaps the funniest version, check out the Joe Jonas version:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QcPeQwxTqDo>

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

If you're new to this missive or just want to revisit some pictures of yours truly, my family and friends, etc., click "Blaine's Best" to the left and then "Pictures" . . . when you do, make sure you have your speakers on so you can hear what's arguably the greatest rock song of all time.

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8. Computer tip

Beware getting Tagged. Or even responding to anything from friends

you know, inviting you to be Tagged.

I've been getting a lot of such stuff lately, often from people I know (and respect) . . . yet what seems to be happening is that they sign-up for the Tagged service, which seems to be like Facebook.

They then try to send pictures and/or messages . . . however, what often happens is that the pictures don't go through . . . instead, Tagged seems to capture all address book names--even some that are quite outdated--and sends out the aforementioned invitation.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.snopes.com/computer/internet/Tagged.asp>

By the way, there are other companies out there that follow similar practices . . . in fact, I just got an invite from one of them today--something called FanIQ . . . to quote Sergeant Phil Esterhaus from HILL STREET BLUES, "Let's be careful out there."

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9. The economy is so bad . . .

CEO's are now playing miniature golf.

Even people who have nothing to do with the Obama administration aren't paying their taxes.

HotWheels and Matchbox stocks are trading higher than GM.

Obama met with small businesses to discuss the Stimulus Package: GE, Pfizer and Citigroup.

McDonald's is selling the 1/4 ounce.

Parents in Beverly Hills fired their nannies and learned their children's names.

A truckload of Americans got caught sneaking into Mexico .

The most highly-paid job is now jury duty.

People in Africa are donating money to Americans.

Motel Six won't leave the light on.

The Mafia is laying off judges.

And finally . . .

Congress says they are looking into this Bernard Madoff scandal. Hey, great idea . . . the guy who made \$50 billion disappear is being investigated by the people who made \$750 billion disappear.

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10. A quote I like

The glory of friendship is not the outstretched hand, nor the kindly smile, nor the joy of companionship; it is the spiritual inspiration that comes to one when he discovers that someone else believes in him and is willing to trust him with his friendship.--Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), American essayist, philosopher and poet

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11. Thought for the day

45 life lessons and 5 to grow on, part 2 of 2
by Regina Brett, CLEVELAND PLAINS DEALER columnist

(concluded from last week)

31. However good or bad a situation is, it will change.

32. Your job won't take care of you when you are sick. Your friends will. Stay in touch.

33. Believe in miracles.

34. God loves you because of who God is, not because of anything you did or didn't do.

35. Whatever doesn't kill you really does make you stronger.

36. Growing old beats the alternative - dying young.

37. Your children get only one childhood. Make it memorable.

38. Read the Psalms. They cover every human emotion.

39. Get outside every day. Miracles are waiting everywhere.

40. If we all threw our problems in a pile and saw everyone else's, we'd grab ours back.

41. Don't audit life. Show up and make the most of it now.

42. Get rid of anything that isn't useful, beautiful or joyful.

43. All that truly matters in the end is that you loved.

44. Envy is a waste of time. You already have all you need.

45. The best is yet to come.

46. No matter how you feel, get up, dress up and show up.

47. Take a deep breath. It calms the mind.

48. If you don't ask, you don't get.

49. Yield.

50. Life isn't tied with a bow, but it's still a gift.

AN UPDATE:

Readers of the column added their comments; in particular, I liked the last one:

* Jshiff:

We all have a story to tell based on our life experiences. Tell it. It might help someone.

Take time to encourage a kid.

Take time to listen to a kid.

Give a kid some work to do.

Teach a kid to work.

Don't yell at your children. It hurts.

Listen to your heart and trust what it is saying.

Remember: what the enemy meant for evil, God can use for good. Share your story.

Use your God-given gifts and talents and serve people.

A gentle answer turns away wrath. Proverbs 15: 1.

* Filosufer:

Never hire an electrician whose nickname is Sparky.

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12. Advance planning department

A. Vilasi in New Jersey:

I want to invite you to a special date this Friday, June 12:
Foods of love and how they heal

- * conversations under the trees, to the scent of the flowers
- * with the dusting of the rose and lavender skies with confetti of stars
- * tasting the Foods of Love and the experience of how they make you feel

While the smile is still on your face, come back on Saturday evening:
Inspired living . . . reset your heart

- * Before you leave, you will effortlessly reset your heart for that different kind of love
- * If you have love . . . what new heights!
- * if you are looking for love . . . what an extraordinary beginning.

My friend Avi has opened his beautiful farm to us called The Hope Hill Farm (in Asbury, NJ) to host this series.

6:30-8:30 p.m. both dates.

Cost: \$50 per evening.

To reserve your seat, please call 908.358.3908.

B. Somerset Valley Players are proud to announce a wonderful show, THE ODD COUPLE (female version), is currently on the SVP stage. The show opened to rave reviews; see below:

<http://tinyurl.com/kqpefu>

Even closer to our heart is our fundraiser on Sunday, June 14th. We were approached by Alex's Lemonade Stand to help them find a cure for cancer. The Lemonade Stand was started by a little girl named Alex who bravely battled neuroblastoma. Unfortunately, Alex lost her fight a few years ago. Because of wonderful doctors, advances in research and constant prayers and love, other children have been able to survive this horrible disease.

To honor that brave little girl, and the many more like her, we will be donating 100% of the proceeds to Sunday's performance to Alex's Lemonade Stand.

Please consider coming to see this very funny show, supporting our wonderful cast and contributing to a very worthy cause.

To order tickets to the show, please visit our website:

<http://www.svptheatre.org>

C. Rick in Pennsylvania:

My Mom says she enjoys coming out to the Comedy Cabaret to laugh, but she is not crazy about the 4-letter words, so we have 2 special shows coming that have zero profanity. We also have an X-rated show scheduled if your Mom likes to use the f -word a lot . . . it's your choice!

HBO COMEDY STAR BOB NELSON in Bucks County & South Jersey.

Star Search Champ & Ventriloquist Taylor Mason in Bucks and South Jersey.

Or X-rated comic from The Howard Stern Show, Jim Florentine, in Northeast Philly and South Jersey.

Also, COMEDY COMPETITION WEEKEND in BUCKS COUNTY
JUNE 19th & 20th.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.comedycabaret.com/news.html>

D. Cathy in Pennsylvania:

CFPA's Mainline, PA Chapter also hosting Cindy Sheehan, peace activist, for a Workshop on War, Peace, and Your Money from 11:30 AM-2:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 20 at Penn Wynne Presbyterian Church, 130 Haverford Road, Wynnewood, PA. For details, please click:

<http://www.peacecoalition.org/action/chapters/CindySheehan.aspx>

She will also be appearing from 2:00-4:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 21 at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Princeton, 50 Cherry Hill Road (just up the hill from the light at the intersection with Route 206). For details,

please click:

<http://www.peacecoalition.org/action/cfpa/CindySheehanJune21.aspx>

Please help us spread the word; the goal is to reinvigorate the peace movement.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#661

6.1.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I were surprised to return to Asheville and find balloons on our porch . . . our neighbors had gotten together to purchase them for me, as well as a card, in honor of my retirement.

We're just not used to that type thing, though we do find ourselves enjoying it . . . in addition, we get a kick out of the fact that we get together with our neighbors--make that, our new found friends--on a fairly regular basis . . . just last night we all went out for pizza at a new locale for us: Brix in the Biltmore Park Town Square; 828.654.0046 . . . the pizza was good, as was the other food we all got: wraps, salads, etc. . . . it was a lot of fun, and then we capped things off with a trip to the movies (see Section 7A).

We also got to two shows this past week:

* LIKE MOTHER, Shannon Polly's one-woman musical . . . it is a touching, funny recounting of her real-life wedding, as planned by her overachieving Midwestern mom.

* I WROTE THIS PLAY TO MAKE YOU LOVE ME, written by Anne Thibault (who also stars) . . . it is a risqué play about motherlessness and promiscuity that came together in the second act.

Both are running in repertory through July 19 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.ncstage.org>

And we saw EMERGING SEED: DANCING THE JOURNEY'S AGE, a dance performance at the BeBe Theater that Cynthia definitely enjoyed more than I did.

Lastly, we went to the Early Girl Eatery for great burgers . . . this is a very informal place that has an eclectic menu . . . we'll be back . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.earlygirleatery.com>

B. Back by popular demand, a cartoon:



SPECIAL THANKS, again, to Pat Achilles for providing the above . . . she does comics, greeting cards artwork for children's books and so much more . . . for more information, call her at 215.348.4837 or email her at: patachilles@aol.com . . . you can also get a FREE cartoon every Monday by clicking:

<http://www.achillesportfolio.com/freecartoonsignup.htm>

C. CONGRATUATIONS to George Bruno on his recent primary election for constable of Perkasie (Bucks County, Pennsylvania) . . . I'm hopeful that he goes on to win the general election in November and am confident that he would do an excellent job.

When I asked George about the secret of his victory, he replied:

I was definitely on to something here. Even though I am a Republican (probably more a Conservative than a Republican), I did well with Democrats because 1. Constable is a NON-partisan office in practice. 2. Republicans do not hold the torch for conservatism. I am friends with many Democrat Conservatives. 3 .I dig ALL people regardless of politics and it shows. 4. Facebook was the backbone of my campaign.

For more information:

* On what is a Pennsylvania Constable (seriously . . . NOT to be confused with any other type), please click:

<http://www.pastateconstable.org/history.html>

My conservative blog, please click:

<http://happyhour.blogtownhall.com/>

D. MR. CURIOUS HERE:

We seem to be having a problem with feral cats in our neighborhood . . . these are not stray cats . . . according to the Humane Society, there is a difference:

* A stray cat is a pet cat who is lost or abandoned. Feral cats are the offspring of lost or abandoned pet cats or other feral cats who are not spayed or neutered.

* Stray cats are accustomed to contact with people and are tame, but feral cats are not accustomed to contact with people and are typically too fearful and wild to be handled.

* Whereas stray cats may be reunited with their families or adopted into new homes, feral cats do not easily adapt or may never adapt to living as pets in close contact with people.

SOURCE:

<http://tinyurl.com/cdnqne>

MY QUESTION:

We're seeking guidance on how to deal with this problem . . . any suggestions would be much appreciated.

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

This week, it goes to Moussa Soumare--ice cream scooper extraordinaire at our favorite place for ice cream in Asheville: Kilwin's on 26 Battery Park; 828.252.2639.

Whenever you go there, he greets you with a big smile . . . he then gives you a high-five, but perhaps best of all is what happens when you ask him to describe a flavor . . . if it is Asheville Mud (one of my favorites), he'll tell you that it has vanilla ice cream, caramel and then he gets very expressive and opens his arms wide as he exclaims "with an E-X-P-L-O-S-I-O-N of chocolate chips!"

You can easily recognize him by the moose hat that he always wears . . . or by the fact that so many other folks actually seek him out to get them their ice cream.

As our friend Suzanne told us the other night when she joined us, he makes the whole visit "a memorable experience."

By the way, all the other employees there are fantastic . . . so, too, are the owners: Tom and Marcy Gallagher . . . gluttons for punishment, they just opened their second store in nearby Black Mountain on 116 West State Street; 828.669.6119.

Both stores feature more than 100 varieties of Kilwin's chocolates and other confections made in the store. The shop also sells 28 flavors of ice cream, hand-paddled fudge, homemade caramel apples and unique flavors of popcorn.

for me. But keep in mind that we started working together BEFORE email existed.

Blaine and I have worked together so long that I have fought with Blaine more than with my husband--and that was when we were on the same side of the negotiating table.

Thinking out loud here, we probably disagreed more on the same side and agreed more on opposite sides than anyone else. The great thing was that we always managed to resolve our differences, based on a mutual respect that permeated our working relationship.

Blaine and I have worked together so long that we "wawked" and "tawked" for miles and hours. On one of the first of many ventures to Tyler Park, we were so engrossed in conversation that we got lost. "MM, do you know where we are?" "No, BG, I thought you knew." Eventually, we found our way back, but Blaine was a little bit late for his class, and my boss had been wondering where I'd wandered off to.

Nobody asked me, but I, for one, will be missing BG.

For all the late night & early morning emails, for all the phone calls, for all the bugging, for all the caring, for all the dedication, for all the commitment to making things right for the faculty and for all you have given us.

Thank you, we wish you the best and backatcha, BG!

* Danny in Leicester, NC (who just so happens to be my computer guru in the Asheville area . . . he's a guy who REALLY knows his stuff):

I am an IT professional of 15 years that specializes in the small and medium business industry. I have performed consultations for business to align them with best practices for IT management, network security, and disaster recovery. As well as small business, I have worked with medical practices to help comply with HIPAA security standards as well as day to day operations. As well as consultations, I have hands on experience performing services such as repairs, installation, virus removals, and maintenance. For more information, please contact me at info@morethancomputerservice.com or cal: 828.683.4912.

* Virginia in New Jersey (who also is in Hendersvonville, NC in the summer . . . she was the classy entertainment at a recent party we hosted):

Virginia Baner has been playing the harp for over 35 years.

Virginia performs a variety of music that ranges from Classical to Broadway to Pop, all in her own unique style. She performs at weddings, corporate functions, cocktail hours, holiday parties, birthday parties, anniversaries, fashion shows, art galleries and fine restaurants.

She has studied with such noted harp-masters as Kathleen Bride, harp professor at the Eastman School of Music, and Deborah Henson-Conant, Grammy-nominated harpist

Phone: 609.371.3862

Email: vbaner@hotmail.com

Website:

<http://www.njharp.com>

* Bill in Pennsylvania:

Thanks for including me in this issue (#660}. I have always admired how at the end of BLAINESWORLD, you close with the mention about our troops in Iraq. Do you think that you could also mention our troops in Afghanistan as well?

MY TWO CENTS:

Excellent point . . . and one I already implemented this week. Thanks, Bill!

* Tom in New Jersey (commenting on the mistake in issue numbering):

Aloha, BG!

I thought this was your very clever way of not having an issue 666 in the near future . . . so two 659s will not be litigated by the forces of light and darkness.

Thanks, as always, for your fascinating musings, observations and commentary.

Check out my newest adventures that have me continuing to go back and forth to Hawaii:

<http://www.nonkilling.org>

Enjoy Asheville; you been to the crafts places up in the mountains?

Peace be with you.

* Figen in Pennsylvania:

More about meat (mentioned in last week's issue):

<http://www.goveg.com/undercoverinvestigations.asp>

* Ken in New Jersey (please feel free to forward this to anybody who might be interested):

Elevate your career and your income by joining our Team at Elevations Salon. Elevations is located at Route 413 & Route 232 in Wrightstown, PA.

We offer:

Highest Commissions in the Business
Paid Vacation, Flexible Schedule, Medical Insurance
Continuing Education Opportunities
Advertising and Marketing Support
Management Opportunities

We are looking for:

An ability and desire to manage your clients
A team attitude and leadership abilities!

Bonuses if you have a book exceeding \$1,000/week.

Manager salary includes profit sharing of salon.

To find out more, please:

Call Ken Holt at 609.903.8389

Send a resume via email to krhcpa@yahoo.com

Or send a resume via fax to the attention of Ken to 609.784.7843

We will call you for a phone interview within 2 days!

Stop in or call the Salon if you do not have a resume.

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3. Mother to daughter advice:

Cook a man a fish and you feed him for a day.

But teach a man to fish and you get rid of him for the whole weekend.

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4. Reviews

A. UP is the a gem of a film for just about anybody . . . adults will like it, but so will their kids and grandkids . . . it is the animated story of a 78-year-old balloon salesman (Ed Asner in fine form) who gets to fill his lifelong dream of a great adventure when he ties thousands of balloons to his house and flies away to South America . . . but only en route does he discover there's a stowaway, an annoying 8-year-old scout who can only get a merit badge if he helps a senior citizen.

There's a five-minute portion toward the beginning of UP that traces the salesman's life with his wife . . . it is as touching as anything I've seen in the movies for quite some time . . . whatever you do, when you see it, make sure you see the 3-D version . . . you'll have to pay more, but it will be worth it . . . rated PG.

B. REVOLUTIONARY ROAD is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #648 follows:

Kate Winslet won an Oscar for her work in THE READER, but if anything, I actually think she was better in REVOLUTIONARY ROAD . . . it marks her first screen appearance with Leonardo DiCaprio since TITANIC, but don't go expecting a similar romantic tale . . . rather, this is a somber tale about what seems to be the "perfect" couple in the America of the 1950s . . . the reality is quite different . . . the dialogue was excellent, as was the cinematography . . . DiCaprio was also outstanding . . . and Michael Shannon (who received an Oscar nomination for his work) made his few scenes come alive . . . rated R.

C. I don't know if Jerry Weissman is America's top speaking coach (as proclaimed on the cover of his book, THE POWER PRESENTER), but I can tell you that the guy knows his stuff . . . his tips make a great deal of sense, and apparently they work--as evidenced by the fact that he has worked with dozens of big-name business leaders, including founding Yahoo! CEO Tim Koogle, Intuit founder Scott Cook and Netflix founder and CEO Reed Hastings.

What I liked best about THE POWER PRESENTER was its analysis of actual speeches by such notables as Martin Luther King, Jr., John F. Kenney and Ronald Reagan . . . but not only do you get to read what Weissman has to say, he then proceeds to the show actual clips (via a website that only purchasers of the book can get).

Even if you're an accomplished public speaker, there's much in this book that you'll enjoy hearing Weissman's take on . . . for example, in speaking to a group, he advises:

* Whenever you step up to the front of a room to present or speak, regardless of the size of the audience-4, 40, 400, or 4,000-pick one person. It doesn't matter who: the person who greeted you at the door, someone you know, someone you don't know, a friendly face or an unfriendly face. Pick only one person.

And then to establish eye contact:

* Every time you pick a person with whom to have a conversation, look at that person at least until you feel him or her look back at you. Feel the connection. Feel a click. Look that person straight in the eye. Establish sincerity.

I also liked the special chapter, "What Every Speaker Can Learn from Barack Obama" . . . this one point really struck home:

* Obama now tries to make a more personal connection with voters. In the past, he has been accused of making his campaign more about himself than about those who come to his rallies. Now the word "you" is mentioned as much as the word "I." "You're not heard. They're not listening to what you need," he told a crowd assembled at a rodeo site in Fort Madison on a recent evening. "You deserve a president who is thinking about you."

That said, even if you're not aspiring to become President of the United States, there's much you'll benefit from by reading THE POWER PRESENTER . . . it would also make an ideal gift for anybody needing to improve his or her presentation skills.

D. Quick question: Is the name Cap Ripken, Jr. familiar to you?

If so, you'll definitely want to read his latest, GET IN THE GAME: 8 ELEMENTS OF PERSEVERANCE THAT MAKE THE DIFFERENCE . . . and even if the name is not familiar with you, this is a book that you'll want to read and share with youngsters.

Ripken is the Hall of Fame baseball player who broke Lou Gehrig's record for most consecutive games played . . . throughout the book, Ripken gives credit to Gehrig for inspiring him:

* Lou Gehrig and I are tied together with a consecutive-games streak. The most important trait I have in common, I believe, was a hard-work ethic. Lou once copied down three maxims that had to do with hard work. He tried to live by them:

1. Strive and succeed.
2. Early to bed, early to rise.

3. Labor conquers everything.

Ripken also seemed to live by these, along with the following belief:

* In order to be successful and persevere in anything, it all starts with the right values. You do the hard work. You do it with excellence. You are honest, sincere, and you give it your all.

For instance, Ripken did that every day in practice. He always fielded ground balls longer than anybody else, even after he had many years of success in the major leagues.

I was touched by the fact that Ripken also gave much credit for his success to his father: Carl Ripken, Sr. . . . even when it came to shoveling snow, as a child, he was never allowed to just get by . . . the snow had to be shoveled in just the right way; i.e., so the entire sidewalk was done (and not just a narrow path for walking).

The author contends that:

* I just played because I loved the game.

Wouldn't that be great if we all could find something that we loved in a similar fashion . . . and then applied Ripken's principles (many of them applicable to any situation)?

I actually got to hear the CD version of GET IN THE GAME, which made it even more enjoyable for me--given the fact that Ripken was the narrator . . . his sincerity came through with every word.

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5. TV alert

A. I'll be curious about Conan O'Brien's first night as host of the TONIGHT SHOW . . . one thing I know, though, is that it will be good to have Andy Richter back on the air (he'll be O'Brien's announcer) . . . Monday at 11:35 p.m. on NBC.

B. Every guy needs a space to call his own . . . a sanctuary where boys can be boys, where life essentials include a wet bar, a poker table and a place to watch the game with the fellas. And maybe even an indoor putting green! . . . find out how to make this possible on MAN CAVES, which airs on Tuesdays at 9 p.m. on DYI.

C. SMILE PINKI is an Oscar-winning documentary short about two impoverished Indian children born with cleft lips whose lives are changed forever when they undergo corrective surgery made possible by smile train:

<http://www.smiletrain.org>

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL calls it "documentary making at its best--a candid yet compassionate telling of two children's journey from disfigurement to healing, from rejection to acceptance . . . Wednesday at 7 p.m. on HBO.

D. Methinks I'd rather have Hugh Jackman as host, but I'll still watch

Neil Patrick Harris attempt the job on THE 63RD ANNUAL TONY AWARDS . . . Sunday at 8 p.m. on NBC.

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6. Never too late

My friend felt her body had gotten totally out of shape. So she got her doctor's permission to join a fitness club and start exercising.

On the very first day, she decided to take an aerobics class for seniors. She bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down, and perspired for an hour. But, by the time she got her leotards on, the class was over.

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7. Websites

A. The Bureau of Public Debt, part of the U.S. Treasury Dept., says more than \$16.6 billion worth of unredeemed U.S. savings bonds have matured and are no longer earning interest. The bureau has established a website for people to search for a missing bond by the original owner's Social Security number. To access it, please click:

<http://www.treasuryhunt.gov>

Even if the original holder of a bond has died, their heirs can still redeem it. To do so, click:

<http://www.treasurydirect.gov>

Most importantly, record the following information: 39R. That's my jacket size if you find out that you due something. (Hint-hint.)

B. The competition heats up on BRITAIN'S GOT TALENT . . . here's the semi-final performance of Shaheen Jafargholi:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhBM7lvTDro>

Judge Piers Morgan, praised the 12-year-old as being "pound for pound, the best singing performance we have heard in the semi-finals so far," a comment which reportedly did not please Susan Boyle (see BLAINESWORLD #660).

Then there was this performance by Greg Pritchard that has to be seen to be believed:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P-ZjOEK4-dI>

And here's the final performance by Diversity, the act that eventually won the competition:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Tr_Vi0zHEM&feature=related

SAD NOTE:

After coming in second place on "Britain's Got Talent," Susan Boyle was reportedly rushed to a private hospital on Sunday after suffering from an "emotional breakdown."

The Sun newspaper is reporting that Boyle checked into The Priory, a private clinic in London, following her Saturday night loss. According to the report, "BGT" aides contacted the police to inform them that Boyle was behaving strangely in her hotel.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

Past BLAINESWORLD issues can be accessed by going to "Newsletter" on the left, then "Past Issues" . . . you'll also see a great Search Engine at the top; e.g., if you want to find a past joke that you knew had to do with "gloves" . . . I quickly found it in #478:

"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."

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8. Computer tip

Online, you can actually learn a foreign language for free by clicking:

<http://tinyurl.com/lqmfww>

You'll find 7 different websites that will help you and here's an extra one for you that may well be the best of all:

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

Oolgay ucklay!

(That's Good luck to you in Pig Latin, my favorite language.)

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9. Jay Leno's last show as host of THE TONIGHT SHOW

I found myself laughing at his monologue when he noted that Presidents Clinton and George W. Bush were taking part in a joint debate in Canada and remarked wistfully, "I wish I had one more day."

He also quipped he was offered a chance to buy his dressing-room for \$40 and then gave NBC a dig over its slumping prime-time ratings: "I'm betting NBC will be around in three months. That's not a given."

And he noted, "I'm going to a secluded location where no one can find me: NBC's prime time."

Naturally, he harked back to one of his favorite topics when he mentioned that he had cleaned out his desk on Friday and found "O. J.'s knife--it was in there the whole time."

If you'd like to see the whole final show, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/nznlgf>

LEST YOU FORGET:

Here's just a very small sampling of some of Leno's other great jokes over the years:

* A Canadian psychologist is selling a video that teaches you how to test your dog's IQ. Here's how it works: if you spend \$12.99 for the video, your dog is smarter than you.

* The New York Times reporting on a radical new treatment for intensive care patients: Get them up and out of bed as soon as possible. Is that new? Haven't HMOs been doing that for years?

* And in New Jersey, the state Senate is working on a bill to legalize medical marijuana. They say it's the one thing that could actually ease the pain of having to live in New Jersey, so that's good.

* U.S. Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson tried to calm growing fears, vowing that the U.S. financial markets will remain stable. And he said, "You can take that to the bank, assuming you can find one that's still open."

* Well, let's see, Lehman Brothers went bankrupt. Merrill Lynch was sold to Bank of America. See, that's when you know the subprime mortgage market is bad, even brokerage houses are losing their houses. That's why they're called brokers. After they take your money, you're broker. You see?"

* The reason there are two senators for each state is so that one can be the designated driver.

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10. A quote I like

I still find every day too short for all the thoughts I want to think, all the walks I want to take, all the books I want to read and all the friends I want to see. The longer I live the more my mind dwells upon the beauty and the wonder of the world.--John Burroughs (1837-1921), American naturalist and essayist important in the evolution of the U.S. conservation movement

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11. Thought for the day

45 life lessons and 5 to grow on, part 1 of 2
by Regina Brett, CLEVELAND PLAINS DEALER columnist

To celebrate growing older, I once wrote the 45 lessons life taught me.

It is the most-requested column I've ever written. My odometer rolls over to 50 this week, so here's an update:

1. Life isn't fair, but it's still good.
2. When in doubt, just take the next small step.
3. Life is too short to waste time hating anyone.
4. Don't take yourself so seriously. No one else does.
5. Pay off your credit cards every month.
6. You don't have to win every argument. Agree to disagree.
7. Cry with someone. It's more healing than crying alone.
8. It's OK to get angry with God. He can take it.
9. Save for retirement starting with your first paycheck.
10. When it comes to chocolate, resistance is futile.
11. Make peace with your past so it won't screw up the present.
12. It's OK to let your children see you cry.
13. Don't compare your life to others'. You have no idea what their journey is all about.
14. If a relationship has to be a secret, you shouldn't be in it.
15. Everything can change in the blink of an eye. But don't worry; God never blinks.
16. Life is too short for long pity parties. Get busy living or get busy dying.
17. You can get through anything if you stay put in today.
18. A writer writes. If you want to be a writer, write.
19. It's never too late to have a happy childhood. But the second one is up to you and no one else.
20. When it comes to going after what you love in life, don't take no for an answer.
21. Burn the candles, use the nice sheets, wear the fancy lingerie. Don't save it for a special occasion. Today is special.
22. Overprepare, then go with the flow.
23. Be eccentric now. Don't wait for old age to wear purple.

24. The most important sex organ is the brain.
 25. No one is in charge of your happiness except you.
 26. Frame every so-called disaster with these words: "In five years, will this matter?"
 27. Always choose life.
 28. Forgive everyone everything.
 29. What other people think of you is none of your business.
 30. Time heals almost everything. Give time time.
- (to be concluded next week)

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12. Advance planning department

A. FREE Ice Cream Day at Friendly's on Saturday, June 6 from 12-5 p.m. . . . for more information and/or a nearby location, please click:

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

B. MSNBC's "Morning Joe" Host and former Congressman Joe Scarborough, will be discussing his book, *The Last Best Hope: Restoring Conservatism and America's Promise*, in an interview format with his "Morning Joe" co-host Mika Brzezinski on Tuesday, June 9 at 7:30 p.m. at the Princeton Barnes & Noble, MarketFair Mall, 3535 US Route 1 South, in Princeton, NJ. The "Conversation with Joe Scarborough" will be followed by a signing of Scarborough's book on its release date.

For more information on this event, or for a schedule of upcoming events, call: 609.716.1570 or email: crm2646@bn.com. All events are free and open to the public.

C. Natalie in Pennsylvania with information on an event that YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS:

A musical tour of Elvis Presley's world with Art Kistler, a top Elvis impersonator . . . featured appearances by Sister Sledge of "We Are Family" fame and others. A fun-filled family event. Tickets are \$20 adults, \$10 seniors; \$7 children (5 and over). Early-bird rate through June 1: Just \$10!

Date: Saturday, June 13, 2009

Time: 3-5 p.m.

Location: Auditorium of Neshaminy Middle School

Street: 1200 Newtown-Langhorne Road, Langhorne, PA

For ticket information, call 215.579.1836 or send email to: natkaye@starlinx.com

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and Afghanistan and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#660 (with an apology; see Section 1C)

5.25.2009

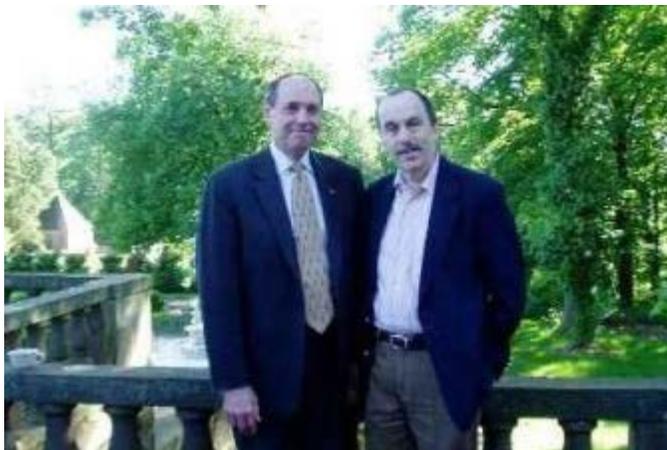
In this issue:

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1. Reflections

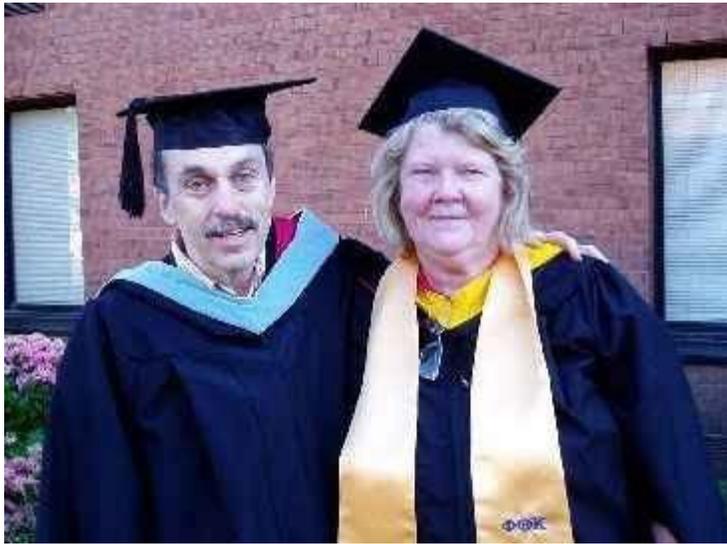
A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I spent most of the past week in Pennsylvania when we flew up together for the parties mentioned last week . . . and for the Bucks County Community College graduation this week . . . it was so great being able to celebrate these events together.

* First up was a reception, hosted by the Board of Trustees . . . that's me on the right, next to Peter Domnick--my longtime friend and Board vice-chair:



In case you are wondering about the background, what's behind us are the magnificent gardens behind Tyler Hall.

* Then there was graduation . . . and yes, I actually do have a cap and gown, as can be seen by the picture below (with Kathy Webb, another longtime friend):



At the actual ceremony, I was awarded professor emeritus status . . . the title might sound impressive; in reality, it just means that I can use the College library and park on campus for the rest of my life.

* Lastly, the high spot of our day was the Union's end-of-year party held at the Brick Hotel in Newtown, PA . . . we got to say good-bye to many of our friends . . . and, also, we were entertained by both David Brahinsky and John Strauss . . . MANY THANKS to them both for their renditions of, respectively, songs by Phil Ochs and the Turtles' classic, "Happy Together."

In addition, we heard several of my closest colleagues talk about my years of involvement at Bucks . . . those speaking included Maureen McCreddie, Tobi Bruhn, Joann Corn, Bill Yorke and John Strauss . . . they also presented me with a lovely painting that had been done by Joan Weiss prior to her untimely death last year.

I was somewhat embarrassed by all the kind words, but touched too . . . and having Cynthia with me made the event just perfect:



B. I was also glad to be able to visit my friend Bill Lewis . . . he is making remarkable progress from his accident last August and to update you on just how far he has come, I thought you'd like to read this email I received from his wife Diane:

Many of you have been emailing me asking how Bill is doing. Don't worry, there is no truth to the rumor that I am treating him like Kathy Bates from the movie MISERY.

Well let's see, where do I begin? It has been almost 10 months since Bill's accident back on August 10th, 2008. Bill has tackled many obstacles since being home last November. Sometimes it feels like a never-ending long and winding road. However, we have learned to handle most of the bumps along the way.

Besides our primary doctor and the medical doctor he sees at Magee for a follow-up once month, he has a series of specialists that include a cardiologist, urologist, podiatrist, spinal cord specialist, orthopedic specialist, infectious disease specialist, wound care specialist, and an ears, nose and throat specialist. I think Bill has every specialist covered with the exception of a psychologist, and we are saving that one for me!

Even though it has been "baby steps" for Bill, everything is moving in the right direction. Bill has started driving lessons at Moss and is eager to start driving again. When he is done all his courses, we will be getting our van modified for him to meet his needs so he can drive by himself and will not need his chaperone (ME) anymore. I will let everyone know when he is driving so we can all stay off the sidewalk!

Bill went back to work in January but has been working at home on the laptop: bill@steen.com, and he goes in the office once a week for his sales meeting. He goes to see his clients, takes photos and does his light rides as much as he can. He also goes to all the Chamber business events. As you all know, he is a very social person and this is all very good medicine for him. So you can see, he

has come a long way. They say it takes two years for paraplegics to adjust to their "new life" . . . however, I think Bill is ahead of the game as he has a lot of determination!

One thing I am sure that we can all agree on is that Bill has made tremendous progress given his condition 10 months ago. I don't think he realizes how far he has come as he does not remember a good month while being first admitted to Jefferson.

I want to thank everyone for your continued prayers, support, and concern for our family.

Please feel free to call Bill anytime to say hi: 215.953.5288.

C. THE APOLOGY:

Due to a mistake on my part, apparently two completely different issues numbered #658 were sent out . . . the correct one was dated 5.11.2009 . . . the incorrect one (called a SPECIAL EDITION) was also dated 5.11.2009 . . . that should have been dated 5.18.2009 and numbered #659 . . . I only mention this to you so you don't go looking for any missing issues . . . we are back on track with #660 that you are reading now.

And to hopefully make amends, please feel free to take advantage of the SPECIAL OFFER that follows in the next section.

D. SPECIAL OFFER:

I'm a fan of the Ruby Tuesday chain . . . for some reason, the food there seems different than similar chain-type operations . . . there's always a great salad bar, and I really enjoy the tilapia.

See below for a coupon that enables you to one FREE entree through June 2:

<http://tinyurl.com/o3dzhp>

With all such offers that you see on the Internet, I recommend that you first check to make sure that your local Ruby Tuesday will honor this particular coupon.

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

This week, it goes to Ed Kohlhepp --owner and president of Kohlhepp Investment Advisors in Doylestown, PA:

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

Ed is a longtime friend who just happens to be my investing guru . . . he is not only highly qualified to give advice (see above for more information about his background), but he does it with a smile and with great patience for my many questions . . . also, perhaps most importantly, what he has recommended has often worked out well for me.

As one example: He got me into annuities several years ago . . . consequently, even with the problems in the market,

I am still going to be able to receive a guaranteed income in the future--thus enabling me to move into the rewirement phase of my life.

In addition, I like how Ed returns both calls and emails promptly.

Cynthia and I got to see him on our aforementioned visit "up North" . . . our only disappointment was that his son (Ed, Jr.) wasn't able to join us for the meeting . . . the latter Kohlhepp is a vice president with the firm, and he too has been a big help to us.

And I'd be remiss in failing to mention the work of Joann Huffnagle and Mary Beth Kohlhepp, other staffers at the firm . . . they also contribute to making this a firm that I recommend strongly.

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2. FYI

Paying a price for loving red meat
by Jane E. Brody

There was a time when red meat was a luxury for ordinary Americans, or was at least something special: cooking a roast for Sunday dinner, ordering a steak at a restaurant. Not anymore. Meat consumption has more than doubled in the United States in the last 50 years.

Now a new study of more than 500,000 Americans has provided the best evidence yet that our affinity for red meat has exacted a hefty price on our health and limited our longevity.

The study found that, other things being equal, the men and women who consumed the most red and processed meat were likely to die sooner, especially from one of our two leading killers, heart disease and cancer than people who consumed much smaller amounts of these foods. . . .

The increase in mortality risk tied to the higher levels of meat consumption was described as "modest," ranging from about 20 percent to nearly 40 percent. But the number of excess deaths that could be attributed to high meat consumption is quite large given the size of the American population.

Extrapolated to all Americans in the age group studied, the new findings suggest that over the course of a decade, the deaths of one million men and perhaps half a million women could be prevented just by eating less red and processed meats, according to estimates prepared by Dr. Barry Popkin, who wrote an editorial accompanying the report.

To prevent premature deaths related to red and processed meats, Dr. Popkin suggested in an interview that people should eat a hamburger only once or twice a week instead of every day, a small steak once a week instead of every other day, and a hot dog every month and a half instead of once a week.

In place of red meat, nonvegetarians might consider poultry and fish. In the study, the largest consumers of "white" meat from poultry and fish had a slight survival advantage. Likewise, those who ate the most fruits

and vegetables also tended to live longer.

Anyone who worries about global well-being has yet another reason to consume less red meat. Dr. Popkin, an epidemiologist at the University of North Carolina, said that a reduced dependence on livestock for food could help to save the planet from the ravaging effects of environmental pollution, global warming and the depletion of potable water. . . .

Choosing protein from sources other than meat has also been linked to lower rates of cancer. When meat is cooked, especially grilled or broiled at high temperatures, carcinogens can form on the surface of the meat. And processed meats like sausages, salami and bologna usually contain nitrosamines, although there are products now available that are free of these carcinogens.

SOURCE:

4.28.2009 "Personal Health" column in THE NEW YORK TIMES . . . for the whole article, please click:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/28/health/28brod.html?em>

FYI, part 2

* Sandy in Pennsylvania:

I have known Blaine as a colleague at BCCC since 1976. At the post-graduation faculty union gathering on Thursday, I finally had the honor and extreme pleasure of actually meeting Blaine's beautiful bride Cynthia.

Well, if you ever wonder why he continues to call her that after several years of marriage, it is because she is STUNNING! The photos you see on the newsletter are very good of Blaine because he is highly photogenic. On the other hand, photos do not capture the beauty and radiance of MBB Cynthia. We were all riveted by her.

What a great couple--they bring tears to my eyes. These two people deserve all the happiness and joy in the world, as that is what they bring to you when you have the privilege of being in their company.

Much love and admiration.

MY TWO CENTS:

Awwwww!

* Bob in Florida:

You know Blaine, in the 1950's and early 60's, Life Mag and Look Mag would do special issues centered mostly around photos. (Science, Truman, Elections, natural disasters, a new Pope, Rocket launches, JFK, Beatles, Viet Nam) These issues always outsold every other issue because people (without color TV and Internet) cherished the finely printed, full-color pages.

That is how I look at this issue of BLAINESWORLD. It was like the "Victory Tour" of visits to the college, old friends, old friendly restaurants, new friends, the parrot, the cartoon. It was just a nice fresh Spring issue that I could breeze through and enjoy more of the fragrance of your life and how it is changing.

So, thanks for the snaps . . . they are always fun. You might save a pic or two for further down in the next edition. For your readers not to know where the photos will be . . . well, it will make them stay to the end. (I always stay for the last credit in a film because I don't know what kind of reward the Director has saved for the intrepid souls who stick it out.)

Thanks for a great issue.

* Tricia in Texas:

Thanks for the prayer for our men and woman in Iraq. My son will soon be there. He is a Specialist with Psych Ops. I had hoped we would pull out before he goes, but it isn't looking good for that. I also pray peace for Israel and continued freedom for her people. Also, add to your list our President and wisdom as the choices made now effect us now and our future families. Thanks so much for BLAINESWORLD. I always enjoy it.

* Barbara in Pennsylvania:

Terrific newsletter, as always! The pics were great!!

By the way, we have a "gold capped Conure." Very friendly and very talkative. Our Conure's name is "Macho." Funny story of how we acquired him . . . Michael, our son in Las Vegas, always had Conures and when we were there about 7 years ago, I became friendly with Macho. For whatever reason, they couldn't have him anymore and he asked us if we would like to adopt him . . . I said "yes," and we now have had him for 7 yrs. He says "night night" at 8 p.m. every night, and we put the cover on his cage and he goes to sleep. He says "kiss" and makes a kissing sound. And I could go on and on. He is very affectionate.

* Roger in Pennsylvania:

This issue is wonderful because of the numerous images, photographs and the cartoon is a hoot. It is amazing the added interest pictures make in a publication. Because I'm a graphic artist, I pick up on things like this. Your publications would be enhanced by including more pictures. Please consider this as a NEW and IMPROVED UPGRADE of BLAINESWORLD.

Your newsletter is filled with humor and wit already, but a few cartoons and visual humor. I liked the girl on the phone in this one; it would be a great feature in the future.

Keep up the GREAT work. And enjoy your new life in North Carolina.

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3. Shepherding basics

Two shepherds were leaning on their crooks at the end of a long hard day of shepherding. The first shepherd asked the second, "So, how's it going?"

The second one sighed and shook his head, "Not good. I can't pay my bills, my health isn't good, my kids don't respect me, and my wife is leaving me."

The first one replied, "That's too bad, but don't lose any sheep over it."

4. Reviews

A. Getting old is movingly portrayed in IS ANYBODY THERE? . . . it's a film about an aging magician who strikes up an unlikely friendship with the boy whose parents own the old-age home where he resides . . . Michael Caine is excellent in the title role, and I also liked the work of Bill Milner as the youngster . . . the ending is particularly touching . . . I did find that the English accents were a bit difficult to follow in the beginning, but eventually got used to them . . . rated PG-13.

B. Out on CD is THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON, a tale about a guy who ages backward . . . the premise--based on an F. Scott Fitzgerald story--was an interesting one . . . yet surprisingly, the execution left me cold . . . I just couldn't get into the story as some others apparently did . . . that said, Brad Pitt was fine in the leading role . . . and I always like Cate Blanchett in anything she's in; she doesn't disappoint here, either . . . rated PG-13.

C. Enjoyed THE GOLD STANDARD: BUILDING A WORLD-CLASS TEAM by Mike Krzyzewski with Jamie K. Spatola, which was an account of how the 2008 Olympic basketball team brought glory back to this country.

Krzyzewski, Duke's successful coach, had never handled professionals before . . . it was interesting to learn how he made the transition and, in doing so, managed to get superstar athletes like Kobe Bryant and LeBron James to submerge their egos for the overall good of the team.

I especially liked his description of the role played by Jason Kidd (long one of my favorite players) . . . for example:

* Before I could even complete my request, Jason said, "Yeah Coach, we should all have our hands over our hearts. I'll take care of it." It was simple. It was easy. I just turned it over to Jason Kidd. I don't know what he said or did, and it really doesn't matter, but before our next game I witnessed a beautiful thing: all twelve guys listening to "The Star-Spangled Banner" with their hands over their hearts.

Krzyzewski also got me thinking about how his techniques could be applied to non-sports situations such as when there's a need to establish a foundation for trusting relationships:

* Take the time to conduct personal interviews, face-to-face when possible. Lay everything on the line. Be forthright about what is expected, and don't be afraid to let your people know a little about who are and why you believe in the team cause. These initial meetings are the first indication of how your team members will communicate with one another.

I only wish that these had been indicated more clearly . . . to find such nuggets, you often had to dig for them . . . yet when found, they often got me thinking about how much they made sense for any team and/or organization . . . to cite another one:

* In concluding the meeting, I invoked an analogy I commonly use: the

fist. Five guys playing as one, like a fist instead of five outstretched fingers, are stronger than any of us could ever be individually.

My other complaint about the THE GOLD STANDARD was that it was not chronological . . . there was much skipping around with dates and this did nothing to add to my reading enjoyment.

Yet, overall, I'd recommend the book . . . and if you're a basketball fan, then methinks you'll really like it.

D. Bill Maher is one of my favorite comedians . . . I try to catch his HBO television show, REAL TIME, whenever possible.

One popular segment of the show became the basis of his latest book: NEW RULES; POLITE MUSINGS FROM A TIMID OBSERVER--also read by the author on the CD version that I heard.

It had me laughing out loud, but at the same time, I was thinking about how much of what Maher had to say made sense . . . such as what he had to say about the war:

* The people who were most in favor of the war in Iraq must go there and fight it.

Though much of NEW RULES dealt with politics, it also took on many industries:

* I don't need my cellphone to take pictures or access the Internet. I just need it to make a phone call. From everywhere! Not just the places it likes!"

And publishing:

* Enough with the "for dummies" series. The last straw was this week when I saw NASCAR for dummies. Let me save you the \$12.99. It's rednecks drinking beer and watching other rednecks turn left.

This book is probably not for everybody . . . and its subtitle is somewhat misleading; i.e., Maher is anything but a timid observer . . . yet I carp . . . read NEW RULES if you want some thought-provoking laughs.

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5. TV alert

A. I was surprised that Kris Allen beat out Adam Lambert on AMERICAN IDOL . . . but I was entertained by the competition and plan to again watch them both as they perform on Thursday on TODAY . . . 8:30 a.m. on NBC.

B. Tom Bergeron hosts the final rounds of the NATIONAL SPELLING BEE on Thursday at 8 p.m. on ABC . . . this is a great show to watch with any children and/or grandchildren.

C. Conan O'Brien will be Jay Leno's last guest on his final night as host of THE TONIGHT SHOW . . . Talking about his final show, Leno told reporters, "I have something really unusual and different planned, something really out of left field that we're going to end on. It's something

really personal . . . and I think it'll make people smile" . . . Friday at 11:35 p.m. on NBC.

D. INTO THE STORM is a Winston Churchill docudrama about his resolve to defeat Hitler's Germany . . . Brendan Gleeson and Janet McTeer (so fine in two movies that you should seek out, SONGCATHER and TUMBLEWEED) star . . . Sunday at 9 p.m. on HBO.

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6. Curiosity

A 6-year-old boy comes in from playing and asks his mom, "Mom, what is it called when someone sleeps on top of someone else?"

Mom is embarrassed by the question but decides that honesty is her best bet, so she answers, "That's called sex."

The little boy smiles and says "Thanks!"

He goes back out to play. About a half an hour later he comes in and says, "Mom, it isn't called sex, it's bunkbeds. And Jimmy's mom wants to talk to you."

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7. Websites

A. THE STORY OF STUFF is a 20-minute video about the effects of human consumption that has become a sleeper hit in classrooms across the nation . . . to see it for yourself, please click:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLBE5QAYXp8>

The video is a cheerful but brutal assessment of how much Americans waste. It has been embraced by teachers eager to supplement textbooks that lag behind scientific findings on climate change and pollution.

Yet there are detractors to the message; in fact, in January, a school board in Missoula County, Mont., decided that screening the video treaded on academic freedom after a parent complained that its message was anticapitalist.

B. If you're following the career of Susan Boyle on BRITAIN'S GOT TALENT, you can see her second appearance by clicking:

<http://mashable.com/2009/05/24/susan-boyle-memory/>

I'll be curious if the upcoming American version of this show can match such a performance.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

If you'd like to see a listing of books I have read and generally enjoyed,

go to "Blaine's Best" on the left, then letter "O" and click the link at the end of the second paragraph . . . to help me move up in the rankings (I'm currently #366 in the Top 500 of all amazon.com reviewers):

1. Go to amazon.com and at the search box at the top, type the name of a book I recently reviewed; e.g., CHILDRENS' PICTURE BOOKS: HOW TO SELF-PUBLISH YOUR WAY TO SUCCESS! by Shari Donahue.
2. You will be taken to a screen where you will see more information about the book, along with my review (toward the top).
3. Read my review.
4. If you find it is helpful to you, please click "Yes."
5. Thanks in advance!

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8. Computer tip

Did you send me that link?
by Jon Richardson*

So how do you know when you get a message if it really came from your Facebook friend or if it's some sort of viral email going around?

Oh, and while we're on the topic, please! Please! Christopher Butterfield is not a hacker. Ok? He's just some poor Facebook schmuck like you and me whose name has been used in a new round of social engineering viral emails.

Ok, now that's off my chest.

I look at messages I receive and ask myself, does this have the feel of my friend? Or does it feel like some sort of automated response.

The last viral email I got had the subject line: "Hey, look at this!" and it looked like a Facebook login page. I think there was some text inside that implied a doorway to view the old Facebook interface. They always try to craft a message that will push us to click or accept before our brain has a chance to question.

Of course, I wanted to see, and I trusted the person who it came from (part of the ploy). As soon as I logged in to what appeared to be the Facebook login, all of my Facebook friends got an email from me that had the same subject as the one I'd just received. Then my brain said. "You? You clicked on that link? You moron! You know better!"

So now when I receive an email from one of my friends, I slow down and ask myself, "Does this sound like my friend's voice?" Then I hover my mouse over the link and see where I'll be going if I click on it: it may look like a YouTube video link, but the url is somewhere in .cn (China).

Just as a side note, yesterday I posted a note on one of the game forums I play about ads that spawn or in this case entirely redirect my browser page to a non-Facebook, non-application website and this one insisted my computer was infected with malware and I just had to click here to scan

my computer and clean it.

Not on your life.

I say . . . be savvy . . . be wary . . . take your time. . . there's no rush.
Leave poor Mr. Butterfield alone; he's probably a good guy.

* Reprinted with gracious permission from the author . . . for other
"Technology Notes," please check Jon's Facebook Fan page:

<http://bit.ly/RTFan>

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9. UCLA study

Here's a study worth sharing with friends both male and female:

A study conducted by UCLA's Department of Psychiatry has revealed that the kind of face a woman finds attractive on a man can differ depending on where she is in her menstrual cycle.

For example: If she is ovulating, she is attracted to men with rugged and masculine features. However, if she is menstruating, or menopausal, she tends to be more attracted to a man with duct tape over his mouth and a spear lodged in his chest while he's on fire.

No further studies are expected.

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10. A quote I like

There's no right path except for where your feet are today.--Janet Straightarrow, author of BE THE MEDICINE (an upcoming book) . . . for more information, please click:

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

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11. Thought for the day

Attitude is everything

There once was a woman who woke up one morning, looked in the mirror and noticed she had only three hairs on her head. "Well," she said, "I think I'll braid my hair today." So she did and she had a wonderful day.

The next day when woke up, looked in the mirror and saw that she had only two hairs on her head. "Hmm," she said, "I think I'll part my hair down the middle today." So she did, and she had a grand day.

The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that she had only one hair on her head. "Well," she said, "Today I'm going to wear my hair in a pony tail." So she did, and she had a fun, fun day.

The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that there wasn't a single hair on her head. "YEAH!" she exclaimed. "I don't have to fix my hair today!"

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. George in Pennsylvania:

ATTENTION MEN:

Saturday May 30th, 8 a.m.

First United Methodist Church in PERKASIE, PA @ 5th & Market . . . our kick-off men's ministry breakfast starts with a great breakfast then a talk by my friend, PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES Chaplain Rich Sparling, on what a MLB Chaplain does. IT'S FREE. I am coordinating this event. (Ladies, send your boyfriends and hubbies.) All my Facebook dudes will be there! Ends promptly at 9:30 a.m.

B. Tyler Tasting Party

21st annual event presented by the First National Bank and Trust Company of Newtown

Join us on June 5, 2009, for one of Bucks County's premier social events. Enjoy food, wine and spirits from Bucks County's finest establishments and network with other business and community leaders at the 21st annual Tyler Tasting Party. Proceeds benefit the students in the College's Historic Preservation Program and the restoration of historic Tyler Hall.

Featuring:
Musical Entertainment
Valet Parking
Silent & Live AuctionEvent Info

Bucks County Community College
275 Swamp Road
Newtown, PA 18940
June 5, 2009
7-11 p.m.

Tickets: \$125 pp

For more information, please call 215.968.8244.

C. Natalie in Pennsylvania with information on an event that YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS:

A musical tour of Elvis Presley's world with Art Kistler, a top Elvis impersonator . . . featured appearances by Sister Sledge of "We Are Family" fame and others. A fun-filled family event. Tickets are \$20 adults, \$10 seniors; \$7 children (5 and over). Early-bird rate through June 1: Just \$10!

Date: Saturday, June 13, 2009

Time: 3-5 p.m.

Location: Auditorium of Neshaminy Middle School

Street: 1200 Newtown-Langhorne Road, Langhorne, PA

For ticket information, call 215.579.1836 or send email to:
natkaye@starlinx.com

PS. Please join me this Memorial Day by commemorating U.S. men and women who died while in military service . . . one way to do so is by flying a flag; I understand that Home Depot is selling them for just 78 cents . . . or if you don't want to spring for such big bucks, then here's one that won't cost you anything:



Memorial Day

In addition, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#659

5.18.2009

In this issue:

1-13. Reflections (ONLY)

1. Reflections

Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had quite some week . . . hence, this SPECIAL EDITION . . . it will not follow the format of past issues, in large part because of the fact that there are so many pictures to share.

2. In addition, there's a comic for the first time ever:

© PAT ACHILLES



SPECIAL THANKS to Pat Achilles, illustrator extraordinaire, for providing the above . . . she does comics, greeting cards artwork for children's books and so much more . . . for more information, call her at 215.348.4837 or email her at: patachilles@aol.com . . . you can also see Pat's new cartoon every

Monday by clicking:

<http://www.achillesportfolio.com>

3. While still in Asheville, we got together with seven of our neighbors for dinner at Pomodoros Greek and Italian Cafe . . . the food, as always, was excellent . . . for more information, please click:

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

4. We then surprised our friend/neighbor Jerry at his home with a birthday cake . . . see below for a picture of most of the happy group (that's yours truly--third from the left):



5. Cynthia will remember the evening because she found a new friend . . . that's her with Yoshi, the Rosa's Sun Conure parrot:

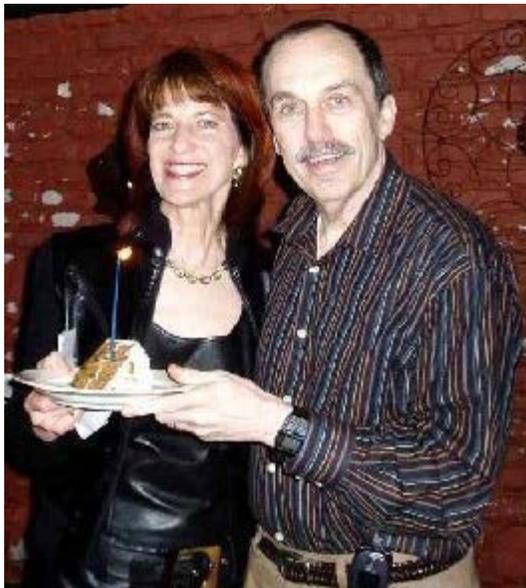


6. Next up was a trip to Pennsylvania . . . it was the first time this semester that Cynthia joined me and my last trip up.

7. On Saturday, we hosted my 60th birthday party at Tuscany at the Towpath House in New Hope; 215.693.1599 . . . it was a superb event, largely because of the hospitality provided by longtime friend Paul Licitra (who also is the restaurant's owner) . . . there was plenty of great food and drink, camaraderie and entertainment provided by the very talented John Strauss:



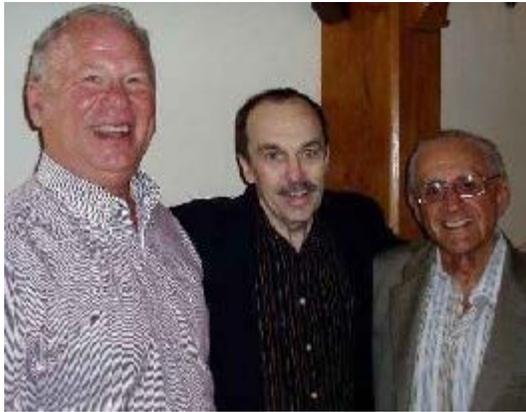
8. Naturally, there was a cake:



9. I would be remiss to mention that the real purpose of the event was for me to thank many of my friends and Union officers at Bucks County Community College . . . it has been my pleasure to have worked with them for the past 33 years, and they will be missed!

10. On Sunday, we hosted a another birthday party for many of our friends and relatives . . . that took place at the Cranbury Inn, located in Cranbury, NJ . . . it was heart-warming to be with many folks that we had not seen for the past several months . . . see below for a picture of me, flanked by two

of my professors from my Rider University days: Barry Axe on the left and Al Sternberg on the right:



11. PLEASE NOTE:

A. Barry is not that tall, nor is Al that small . . . it just came out that way because of the angle from which the picture was taken . . . I even look a bit different than normal; i.e., you might guess I was 5' 7" or so, but in reality, I come across as a tall 5' 7" . . . in fact, most folks think I'm at least 5' 7" and 1/4!

Being at the Cranbury Inn was like revisiting old times, in that I also had my 50th birthday party there . . .the brunch was as excellent as ever . . . for more information, please click:

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

C. And full disclosure department: My actual birthday isn't until June 14 . . . however, since this was the last time I'll be in the area, we also chose to celebrate the big day with my grand nephew Julian:



12. Cynthia and I also managed to dine at perhaps our favorite New Jersey restaurant: Tomiko Kitchen & Sushi Bar in Hillsborough . . . I don't think we have ever had a bad meal there, and this time was no exception . . . my chicken teriyaki was delicious, and Cynthia raved about the salmon teriyaki . . . though Cynthia did not get any this time around, she says the sushi there is not to be missed . . . and if you go (and we hope that you do), make sure you send our warmest personal regards to Mr. and Mrs. Kwan--the gracious

hosts . . . for more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/ppaqa>

13. Lastly, I got to take Cynthia to one of my favorite Pennsylvania restaurants: Jake's Eatery in Richboro . . . it is run by Steve Jacobs, a former student, and the food is always good there . . . they serve great pancakes and the stuffed French toast is supposed to be out of the world (though I haven't had it--yet) . . . I was good and had a tasty chicken wrap sandwich . . . Cynthia's make-your-own omelette was just the way she wanted it . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.jakeseatery.com>

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

This week, it goes to Michael and Carol Ursino--my hosts at where I stayed this past spring semester when visiting Bucks County.

They graciously let me stay in their walk-out basement, and they couldn't have been more gracious in making me feel welcome . . . it was a pleasure being able to have my own entrance, as well as access the Internet via a wireless connection.

My only regret is that they have rented this place out--as of June--which means that when next up for a visit, I'll have to find somewhere else to stay!

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#658

5.11.2009

In this issue:

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I enjoyed a production of DEATHTRAP that we saw at the Hendersonville Little Theatre in North Carolina . . . it's a comedy thriller, and though the acting by the entire cast was excellent, special recognition goes to Linda Brooks for stealing almost every scene she was in as psychic Helga Ten Dorp . . . we also liked the work of Z. Joseph Guice (so fine in another production we recently saw there, THE KITCHEN WIVES) . . . Bruce Schlueter as Sidney Bruhl almost made us forget how Michael Caine handled the role in the movie of the same name . . . kudos, also, to Annette Hobbs for her role in directing the play . . . and to Leslie Christoffel, set designer, for a set that was as impressive as we've seen in any community theater we've ever attended.

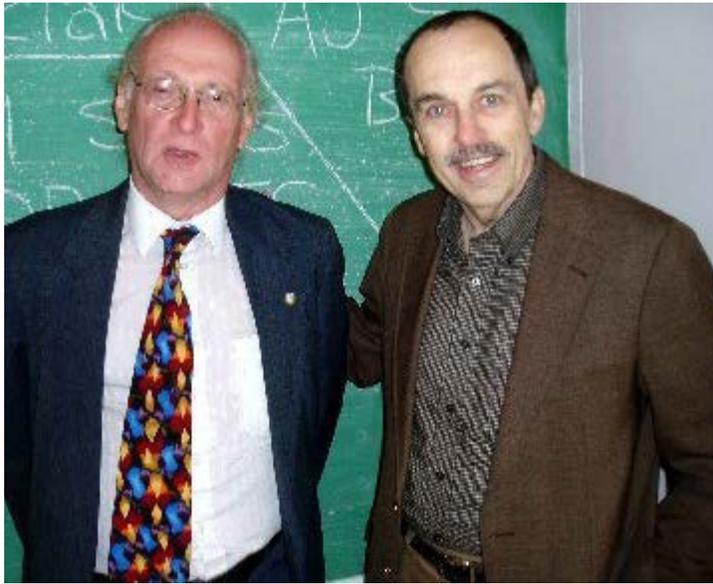
At the end of shows here, the actors do something else that is not done at too many other places; i.e., they come out to thank you for coming . . . it's a nice touch.

DEATHTRAP runs through May 24, so do try to catch it if you can . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.hendersonvillelittletheatre.org>

B. I attended and participated (for the first time) in a campus-wide retirement celebration at Bucks County Community College . . . it was a bit surreal being one of those honored, but there I was . . . in particular, I did appreciate the beautiful framed picture of Tyler Hall that I was given.

Here's a picture of yours truly on the right, next to Gary Brandt--another retiree who was a former student and has been a longtime friend and reader of BLAINESWORLD:



Other retirees, many of them are also readers of this missive, included Walter Alvey, Jo Ellen Winters, Merritt Whitman, Ken Crowther, Virginia Manning, Linda Primavera, Carol Watson, Greg McClendon, Charleen McDole, Phyllis Kubacke, Linda MacGregor, Rhea Edgil, Dolores Heff, Betty Hughes and Chris Leonard . . . it has been my pleasure to have worked with all of them!

C. WELCOME ABOARD (as new readers of BLAINESWORLD)

to many of the participants who just completed the smoke-cessation programs I ran at both the College and the BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES . . . I'm still compiling final statistics, but it appears that we have had 10 folks quit completely and 20 others who have greatly reduced their smoking--and are well on their way to becoming non-smokers.

SPECIAL THANKS to the following individuals for their help in making the above run as smoothly as it did:

- * Patty DiLenno for handling the hypnotherapy portion;
- * Sue Hinkle for conducting the book discussion sessions;
- * Natalie Kaye for allowing the Women's Center to be one of the sponsors;
- * Matt Cipriano and Justene Cieslak for helping get the word out;
- * Monica Hester and Bridget Hughes for making reminder calls; and
- * Carol Shapcott and Matt Conturso for assisting with all the logistical arrangements.

D. CONDOLENCES to the family of John E. Long Jr.

John died peacefully in his sleep of natural causes on Monday, May 4 . . . I had the pleasure of serving with John for several years on the Bucks County Community College Foundation Board . . . he then moved on to become a member of the College's Board of Trustees.

He was a kind, gentle man, very much interested in helping others . . . he always had a warm greeting for me and anybody

else who came in contact with him, and he will be missed.

John was a true community activist . . . he gave both his time and support to numerous organizations in Bucks County . . . if you would like to remember this remarkable man, memorial contributions in his name may be made to Pearl S. Bucks International, 520 Dublin Road, Perkasie, PA 18944.

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

This week, it goes to Joye Harrison--a cashier in the Harris Teeter supermarket in Asheville, North Carolina.

She always greets customers with a great smile and is most friendly . . . but what's really great about her (and all employees at this location) is that if you have a question about where something is located and if she is not busy with other customers, she'll walk you over to the aisle and help you find it.

Wouldn't that be great if all stores did that?

Cynthia and I also like the wide aisles in the Asheville store, as well as its cleanliness . . . and we are becoming fans of the Harris Teeter store brand, which we have often found to be as good if not better than many national brands.

We also like the fact that they often have folks offering sampling of items on sale . . . recently, that's how we became fans of the store's excellent chicken salad.

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2. FYI

FREE TV GIVEAWAY for you, a member of your family or even a non-profit group you might assist . . . all you need to do is be able to pick it up from where I'm staying when in Pennsylvania this coming week (Wrightstown in Bucks County) on or around May 21.

It is a Magnavox MS2730u that she has served me well, and I've had it for about seven years . . . it is NOT a flat-screen model; its dimensions are as follows:

Width = 26"
Height = 23"
Depth = 19"
Screen = 27" (Diagonal)

I will give it to the first person who contacts me and can pick it up . . . if interested, respond by email to: bginbc@aol.com and put FREE TV GIVEAWAY in subject line.

FYI, part 2

* Cynthia in North Carolina (see also Section 1A) said she has found a fantastic massage therapist in the Asheville area: Grace Scarbrough; 828.551.1644. . . she has told me that Grace is kind,

caring and inspirational

Cynthia also received this list of thought-provoking questions from Grace:

1. As a result of you being here, who is being served?
2. Who feels more capable, more confident, because of your presence in their lives?
3. What difference are you making?
4. Where are you casting your light?
5. What joy is being created out of your service?
6. What deep desire do you have for your life?

SOURCE:

THE ART OF ORIGINAL THINKING by Jan Phillips

* Betty in Pennsylvania:

I loved the SOUND OF MUSIC website (people dancing at the train station). Waiting for a train can be anxious and boring; why not dance with the music and put a smile and some exercise in our life?

MY HOPE:

Thanks, also, to Kathy in Florida and Barbara in Pennsylvania for commenting on the above . . . I hope that everybody does at least skim the websites I mention in Section 7 each week (7B this week is particularly touching) . . . in the unlikely event that you missed the SOUND OF MUSIC website, here it is again:

<http://video.yahoo.com/watch/4816051?fr=yvmf>

* George in Pennsylvania graciously gave me permission to run the following definition that I saw on his Facebook page:

Personal trainer: Someone who makes you inflict pain on yourself, then you thank him and ask "When can we do that again?"

* Jean in Pennsylvania also wrote about an entry on her Facebook page:

Fodder for your newsletter?

MY TWO CENTS:

I agree . . . she had posted a very interesting piece about a blog warning she had received:

AMC theaters are running FAKE IMAX's and charging \$5 extra for a slightly bigger screen. Boycott IMAX, AMC, and Regal. Don't let them fool you.

Has anybody else noticed this? After I read the above piece, I realized that I had the same feeling about some film I had seen at AMC . . . the extra bucks were a complete waste . . . to read the entire post,

please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/p42e6d>

* John in Pennsylvania:

The Bucks County Conference and Visitors Bureau Tuesday announced its "My Bucks Is . . ." video contest, an initiative to lure budding filmmakers and amateur videographers to create a one-minute video featuring Bucks County and post it to YouTube.

The videos must include the phrase "My Bucks Is . . ." and they must share a place or pastime that Bucks County "is" to them.

Submissions will be judged primarily on originality and creativity. Prizes will be awarded for the best submissions and include dinner at Bristol's King George II Inn, an overnight stay at the Golden Plough Inn in Buckingham and a glider ride at the Van Sant Airport in Tinicum.

The submissions deadline is Sept. 14. The Bucks County Courier Times and The Intelligencer are co-sponsoring the contest.

To enter, all you have to do is post it on YouTube and complete this short form:

http://visitbuckscounty.com/video_contest_form.asp

* Sandy in Pennsylvania:

It works, Blaine! There are a few irritating players in our MahJongg group that drive us nuts. Now that we have The Perfect Club [mentioned in last week's newsletter], it is easier to handle and has halted complaining. THANKS FOR A GREAT TOOL!

* Janet in New York:

As many people do, I enjoy reading your newsletter. I do not always read it the day it arrives, but I do read it. The last week of April, I was dealing with the imminent passage of Bentley Taupe Paws, my adorable tiger stripe cat. Although he had observed his 17th birthday in January, in the interim, his health had deteriorated dramatically. He was euthanized on Thursday morning, April 30th.

I was heartbroken. Taking him to the vet was a most difficult task, but returning alone was worse. It was that morning, amid my tears, when I was reading issue #654 in which you pay tribute to your Shanti and include the poetry about rescuing and caring for pets. I think God was looking out for me, as I found reading the cat portions of this issue very comforting.

* Lee in Pennsylvania:

I wanted to tell your readers about a 7-year-old's birthday party that I recently attended with my daughter. The party was held at Cradles to Crayons in Horsham, PA.

Cradles to Crayons is an organization that collects gently used clothing, toys, books and other stuff that children have outgrown and in turn they provide these items to these children in need. At the party, we sorted and inspected these items for proper distribution. In addition, instead

of gifts for the birthday girl, we brought donations. Not only did we have a great time but the children learned a valuable lesson. My daughter and I are going to go back and volunteer as anyone can do. If anyone is interested in donating items or time, please click:

<http://www.cradlestocrayons.org/2/index.php>

* Freddie in New Jersey:

My mom, the Holocaust survivor, had a front page news story in the Sunday TAMPA TRIBUNE.

Please feel free to include the following link in your newsletter; it is quite a read:

<http://tinyurl.com/r6cb6z>

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3. Impossibility

A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales. The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal, its throat was very small.

The little girl stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale. Irritated, the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was physically impossible.

The little girl said, "When I get to heaven, I will ask Jonah."

The teacher asked, "What if Jonah went to hell?"

The little girl replied, "Then you ask him."

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4. Reviews

A. SHALL WE KISS? is French romantic comedy that I found utterly charming . . . it is about a chance encounter that ends with the request for a "kiss without consequences" . . . or actually, that is just the beginning because it is then that the woman proceeds to tell a story--via flashbacks--why this wouldn't be possible . . . the ending will surprise you . . . NR, though methinks it would not be of much interest to anybody younger than 16.

B. FROST/NIXON is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #646 follows:

I saw FROST/NIXON, in part, because I wanted to have seen all the top picture nominations before Sunday's Academy Awards show . . . I left with the feeling that the film was well-deserving of much of the critical praise it has received.

Frank Langella, who won a Tony for his portrayal of Nixon on stage, was magnificent as the disgraced president

who tries to save his legacy via series of interviews with British journalist Frost (portrayed by Michael Sheen in an equally impressive performance) . . . director Ron Howard also deserves kudos for making sure the film never dragged . . . I also liked the fact that it was surprisingly funny in spots.

Rated R, though I'm not really quite sure why . . . it would certainly be appropriate for any mature teenager.

C. Imagine being able to do less, but at the same time, getting more done . . . that's the premise behind *THE POWER OF LESS*, a short but powerful book by Leo Babaura.

Its subtitle tells you that this is possible when you learn *THE FINE ART OF LIMITING YOURSELF . . . IN BUSINESS AND IN LIFE*.

As the author points out:

* The simplicity I seek in my life is simplicity in what I do. . . . it [simplicity] boils down to two steps:

1. Identify the essential.
2. Eliminate the rest.

Babaura then proceeds to show how he actually did this by concentrating on one goal and at a time--and not trying to accomplish everything at once . . . this simple technique enabled him to train for and run two marathons, complete two triathlons, start a successful blog, completely eliminate his debt, lose 44 pounds, write and sell two successful ebooks, write the first draft of a novel, and many other things--all within the span of the past several years . . . in addition, he raised and made time for his six wonderful kids.

To do anything even remotely similar, you must first be able to beat the procrastination hurdle . . . here's how:

* Anytime you find yourself procrastinating on an important task, see if you can break it into something smaller. Then just get started. Don't procrastinate, but just get started. Once you've gotten started, you will gain momentum, and will have broken through the initial resistance barrier, and you'll be much more likely to continue to the next small task and the next one until the large task is completed.

Of perhaps the greatest value was the advice on handling email, one of my biggest problems:

* How many times you check email per day is a function of the kind of work you do. If you can get away with checking email just once per day, that would be ideal--you'd have very few e-mail interruptions, and your email habits would be most efficient. However, for many people, twice a day is probably more realistic. Others, who need to be able to get email more often because their job orders are sent through email (customer service, for example), might want to limit their email checking to once per hour (perhaps ten minutes at the top of the hour). Still others might be able to get away with checking e-mail less than once a day--every other day, twice a week or even once a week. If you

can count yourself among these people, take advantage of this and limit yourself to the bare minimum.

I'd write more about this fine book . . . however, if less is truly more, it is now time for me to devote my attention to some other task that will help move me closer to one of my weekly or yearly goals.

D. I didn't realize how much I missed the late Tim Russert, who had been moderator of MEET THE PRESS, until I heard him narrate an excellent book he had written: WISDOM OF OUR FATHERS.

This was a follow-up to his earlier bestseller, BIG RUSS & ME, in which he described his father . . . shortly after it was published, Russert began receiving an avalanche of letters from daughters and sons who wanted to tell him out their own fathers . . . most of the stories were about ordinary men who were remembered for such things as their advice, tenderness, strength, discipline and love.

I was moved by virtually every tale, though in particular, what he had to say about his own role of father moved me most . . . he called it:

* the best job I've ever had and [as part of it, he advised his son] to study hard, laugh often and keep your honor.

Russert also told of the time that he discovered that his son had gotten a tattoo . . . he was not a happy camper, until he discovered that it read:

* TJR [and was under his son Luke's arm] so he could have his father and grandfather, who had the same initials, on his side . . . Russert vowed never to again complain about the tattoo.

Among the other statements that moved me were the following:

* The most precious things a father can provide are time, attention and love.

* Every moment that you spend with your child could be the one that really matters.

* If you are a father, let your kids know in plain English that you love them.

* 99% of parenting consists of just being there.

With Father's Day approaching, WISDOM OF OUR FATHERS will make the perfect gift for your father or grandfather if you're lucky enough to have him around . . . or if not, you'll find it a great way to remember somebody that is no longer around--but you still think about often . . . I know it had that effect on me.

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5. TV alert

A. DON'T TELL THE BRIDES has grooms being given \$20,000 to pull off their weddings without help from their brides . . . as TV GUIDE notes, the brides, "we presume, will plan the divorces if their guys screw up" . . . Friday at 8 p.m. on BBC AMERICA.

B. TAKEN IN BROAD DAYLIGHT stars James Van Der Beek as kidnapper of a 17-year-old girl, proving there is light after DAWSON'S CREEK . . . Saturday at 9 p.m. on LIFETIME.

C. SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE features Will Ferrell in only his second hosting gig of his former show . . . Saturday at 11:29 p.m. on NBC.

D. SNL: JUST SHORTS, hosted by Andy Samberg, is a salute to SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE'S silliest digital shorts. . . . Sunday at 9 on NBC.

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6. Flowers

Bill figured out a way to remember his wife's birthday and their wedding anniversary. He opened an account with a florist and told him to send flowers to his wife on those dates, along with a note signed "Your loving husband."

His wife was thrilled by the attention and all was great until one anniversary, Bill came home, saw the bouquet, kissed his wife and said, "Nice flowers. Where'd you get them?"

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7. Websites

A. Discover your dream job. Look before you leap by test-driving it on a VocationVacation . . .for more information, please click:

<http://vocationvacations.com/>

Imagine being an actor, baseball announcer, ice cream shop owner, restaurant critic or even wine sommelier . . . these are just a few of the many possibilities!

B. Music can make a difference in the lives of people . . . to see for yourself, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/cj8dlw>

You just have to love the exuberance of these two folks!

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

Have you ever wondered what I do with your name; e.g., if you subscribe to BLAINESWORLD? Please see for yourself by clicking Newsletter to the left, then Privacy Statement.

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8. Computer tip

Imagine being able to prepare for any of the following exams on your computer: TOEIC, TOEFL, GMAT, SAT, GRE, MCAT, PCAT or ASVB? You can do so by clicking:

<http://www.english-test.net>

You can't beat the price; it's FREE . . . this is also a great website for ESL students looking for help in learning English . . . also, I liked the various dictionaries . . . one contained some 5,010 SAT vocabulary words, including zeitgeist (noun) . . . know what it means? if you give up, be grateful that you no longer have to answer such questions in order to get into college!

You also don't have to look up the definition, in that yours truly will provide you with the answer: "The intellectual and moral tendencies that characterize any age or epoch."

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9. Political one-liners

President Obama got a bunch of them off at Saturday's White House Correspondents' Association dinner, including these:

* Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton: He noted that they had been political rivals, but he assured the audience "these days, we could not be closer. In fact the second she got back from Mexico, she pulled me into a hug," the president said, playing off the threat of a spreading swine flu virus that has targeted Mexico the most.

* Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel: "This is a tough holiday for Rahm. He's not used to saying the word 'day' after 'mother.' "

* Former Vice President Dick Cheney couldn't make the dinner, Obama joked, because he was writing his memoir, "How to shoot friends and interrogate people." It was a reference to Cheney's support of harsh interrogation and his accidental shooting of a hunting companion.

* The president directly addressed Republican National Committee Chairman Michael Steele, who was "in the house tonight. Or as he would say, 'In the heezy.' "

* He then added, "Michael for the last time, the Republican Party does not qualify for a bailout. Rush Limbaugh does not count as a troubled asset, I'm sorry," said Obama, referring to recent economic steps of the White House and the radio personality's public criticism of the GOP party leader.

* About the Democratic party, he said his administration has helped in "bringing in fresh, young faces--like Arlen Specter." The 79-year-old Pennsylvania senator switched parties last month.

And these about himself:

* "No president in history has ever named three commerce secretaries

this quickly," Obama said. The president's two top choices for the position dropped out.

* "During the second 100 days, we will design, build and open a library dedicated to my first 100 days."

* And: "My next 100 days will be so successful, I will complete them in 72 days. And on the 73rd day, I will rest."

The mistress of ceremonies for the evening was comedian Wanda Sykes . . . she commented:

* "It's funny to me that [photographers] have never caught you smoking," Sykes told the president, "but they always catch you with your shirt off. I know you're into this transparency thing, but I don't need to see your nipples."

* She also poked fun at Obama giving the Queen of England an iPhone during a recent visit. "What are you going to give the pope, a Bluetooth," asked Sykes. And she questioned first lady Michelle Obama having patted the queen on the back "like she just slid into home plate--way to go, queen!"

Her jab at Limbaugh for suggesting that he wants Obama to fail sparked some controversy.

* She said Limbaugh's view was essentially the same as al-Qaida terrorist leader Osama bin Laden's. She suggested Obama might want to look into the matter "because I think Rush Limbaugh was the 20th hijacker."

Presidential spokesman Robert Gibbs, when asked for President Obama's reaction to the joke, said the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks is a topic "better for serious reflection than comedy."

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10. A quote I like

I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do or any kindness I can show to any fellow human being let me do it now. Let me not defer nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.--William Penn (1644-1718), founder of the English North American colony that eventually became Pennsylvania

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11. Thought for the day

What I have learned
by Janet StraightArrow*

I have learned to slow down and appreciate each moment, each person, each opportunity.

I have learned to stop fighting what is, and surrender to the pain and the pleasure.

I have learned that balance, aligning and being creates amazing, easy doing.

I know that love never dies and life goes on.

I learned that living truth, once discovered, is easier than suffering the lies.

I am so far from alone in the deepest cave and highest mountain of seclusion.

The ones who travel with me support my truth and challenge my illusions.

I have learned that gratitude, compassion and love are more real when you have lost all you thought was real, and survived, and then thrived again.

I have learned that the reason for all pain, disease and suffering in the world is from not living your truth.

I have learned that the highest spiritual teachings are the only wisdoms and truths that explain the world and all of us.

I have learned that the riches you take with you, are the ones of heartfelt loving and living in each moment.

I have learned that we have to stop often and say, "Where am I in this?"

I have learned that people of service, healers, teachers and leaders have to learn to receive love, support and gifts of sharing in order to really give something of value to others.

I have learned that the people who challenge me most have offered me precious gifts of awakening truth and healing illusions.

I have learned it is not selfish to know, value and honor myself; it is essential to being a valuable asset to society.

Loving and seeing others clearly comes from loving and seeing yourself clearly.

We are never totally cleared or healed.

Life is a journey. Better if I allow the lessons to be learned the first time they show up.

Question everything.

Know truth.

No doubt.

No fear.

No blame.

Be love.

* Reprinted with permission of Janet StraightArrow , a Spiritual Mentor-Coach-Healer who teaches people to Be The Medicine for themselves in all areas of their lives. Forty-two years of experience offers you ways to deepen your walk with yourself and enjoy life from

the inside out. You can reach Janet via phone, 973.647.2500 or email, Janetoasis@aol.com.

Also, feel free to visit her website by clicking:

<http://www.oasisforthesoul.com>

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12. Advance planning department

A. John Sheridan, my talented Bucks County Community College colleague, plays jazz every Wednesday at the Temperance House in Newtown from 7:30-10:30 p.m. . . . in addition, he is part of a 17-piece jazz band that will be playing Upstairs at Poco's Comedy Cabaret in Doylestown on Thursday, May 28 at 8 p.m. . . . \$10 cover . . . for more information about this latter gig, call 215.348.3424.

B. Delve into fascinating books in by dropping in on the Bucks County Community College Book Discussion Group. The free, informal gatherings take place the second Thursday of each month during the academic year on the college's Newtown campus.

Michael Hennessey, the BCCC literature professor who convenes the meetings, says group members come from a variety of backgrounds, but share a love of reading. "We love to read and consider it a social activity; by that I mean reading is a conversation, first between reader and text," says Hennessey.

"We like to share our thoughts with others to verify how well (or not) we understand the text and its relation to ourselves and the larger world. [The group is] pretty much readers engaging the world through particular lenses or texts that intrigue us."

The intriguing stories are chosen by the group, Hennessey says. "At the last meeting each semester, participants suggest and 'sell' titles they'd like to discuss next semester. We vote on the suggestions. It's very democratic this way."

Titles include LITTLE HEATHENS by Mildred Armstrong Kalish, which will be discussed on Thursday, May 14, and LOVING FRANK by Nancy Horan, which will be discussed on Thursday, June 11.

Founded in 1988, the BCCC Book Discussion Group meets from 7:30 9:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month in the Rollins Center.

For more information, contact Michael Hennessey via email, hennesse@bucks.edu or call 215.968.8164.

C. FREE Web Resources To TurboCharge Your Business, featuring Lorraine Allen

Visit some super WOW websites and website ideas that will shortcut your time and costs to help you generate your revenues.

DATE:

Monday, May 18; TIME: 12-1 p.m.

LOCATION: Online Webinar

Learn from Your Home or Office or on the Road from Your Cell Phone

FEE: \$9.95

To register:

<http://tinyurl.com/r9cjuf>

For more webinar programs, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/pf7jxe>

D. If you're depressed: Attend our free intro to Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression. Learn about this innovative, effective program and meet the program leaders. Bring your questions and begin to travel the path to brighter days.

NEXT Wednesday, May 20, 3:30-5:00 p.m. at the Princeton Center for Yoga & Health in Skillman, NJ.

LIMITED ENROLLMENT - register now by clicking:

<http://tinyurl.com/p4nkpj>

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#657

5.4.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I paid our first visit to the Asheville Community Theatre to see ENCHANTED APRIL . . . it was a delightful production, well-acted by the entire cast of eight performers . . . we particularly enjoyed the creative staging; kudos to Jack Lindsay, scenic designer, for his work.

The story is about two frustrated London housewives who decide to rent a villa in Italy for a holiday away from their bleak marriages . . . they recruit two other women to share the cost and experience . . . as for the outcome, you'll have to see it for yourself . . . but I will share with you what Andrew Gall in his director's notes for the play had to say:

[The message] of this play is less a message and more of an invitation to re-embrace the simplicity of a joyful life. I hope you will accept it.

Afterward, we stayed for a very informative talk-back session--led by Phil Atwood, managing director of Asheville Community Theatre. . . it featured the director of the play, as well as the entire cast.

ENCHANTED APRIL runs through May 17 . . . do see it if you can; you won't be disappointed . . . for more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/odamfc>

RUMOR CENTRAL:

Facebook members have the option to get upcoming tickets at half price . . . to see for yourself, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/pzzw9q>

After the show, we went around the corner to join Beth and Steve--our new neighbors--for dinner at Vincenzo's Ristorante . . . I tried something new, grouper, and enjoyed it though found the portion on the small

side . . . Cynthia said her ribeye was a bit fatty . . . our server, Christopher, was excellent . . . we also enjoyed the ambience upstairs where we dined . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.vincenzos.com>

B. I'll remember this past Thursday night for being the night of "the call" . . . at around 7:30 p.m., Cecile Kandl was nice enough to call me from Bucks County Community College to tell me that her Election Committee had finished counting the votes, which meant that my term of office as president of the Faculty Federation was officially over . . . what a relief!

As perhaps my final official act, I left this story for all the new officers--who I'm confident will do a great job:

Two envelopes

The new chief of police finds a note from his predecessor: "There are two envelopes in the upper drawer. When you are in trouble for the first time, open the first envelope. When you are in big trouble a second time, open the second envelope."

In a couple of years, he got into trouble, opened the first envelope he got from his predecessor and read: "Shift the blame onto me." He did so and got out of trouble.

A few years later, he got into big trouble and opened the second envelope. It said: "Prepare two envelopes."

C. CONGRATULATIONS to Chris Field, one of my friends and colleagues at Bucks County Community College . . . after 19 months of intensive study, she recently was ordained as a non-denominational interfaith minister.

As such, she is now legally able to marry folks . . . in addition, she is able to perform baptisms, naming ceremonies, marriages, funerals, commitment ceremonies, etc.--any type of ceremony someone would want to have . . . some of these (such as the latter one) are not yet legally binding, but they do fulfill the need for spiritual bonding . . . all ceremonies are personalized.

For more information, please feel free to contact Chris via email: chris18940@hotmail.com or give her a call at 215.280.4216.

D. REQUEST:

When and if you change your email address, please let me know as soon as possible . . . that way, I can make the correction in my email address book . . . I can also continue to send you BLAINESWORLD in a timely fashion.

If, by chance, I don't have your current email address--then resend it now . . . please put ADDRESS CHANGE in subject line . . . thanks!

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

This week, it goes to Ashley Drake--a server at Fatz Cafe in Asheville; 828.665.9950.

That restaurant is rapidly becoming one of our local favorites in the area . . . my chicken wraps are prepared just the way I like them, and Cynthia tells me her ribeye steaks always hit the spot . . . she also very much enjoys one of the side dishes, a vegetable skewer.

Every time we've gone there, the service has been fine too . . . but the other night, it was beyond fine . . . Ashley greeted us with a big smile, and we were impressed by her enthusiasm . . . she truly made us feel welcome and that somehow made our food taste even better.

I was so impressed with the job Ashley did, in fact, that I called the manager (Mike Eveland) over to tell him . . . he thanked me and told me that I wasn't the first customer to compliment Ashley's work.

We then had a nice chat with Mike, which further reinforced our plans to keep returning to Fatz Cafe . . . methinks you won't go wrong there, and if you get the chance, ask to have Ashley as your server . . . send our regards to Mike . . . and say "hello" to Daron Clayton, operating partner, who we previously had the pleasure of meeting when we went there for our first visit back in February.

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2. FYI

YOU'RE INVITED:

Come join me as a member of the Perfect Club . . . this is an organization that I recently joined, thanks to an invitation from Sue in Pennsylvania . . . and because I'm so impressed with my membership, I'd like to use this opportunity to have you also become a member.

Perhaps best of all: There are no dues!

All you need to do is find somebody or something that you don't like and/or approve of . . . then, when thinking about that person or thing, say out loud (or yourself) words to this effect: "They're NOT a member of the Perfect Club."

Sue and her husband Phil often use the technique . . . it frees them of feeling upset about things that are of their control . . . in addition, it helps explain much of what happens in life that has no explanation.

The Perfect Club can also be useful when dealing with a spouse, significant other, friend or relative . . . when you think about it, they all can't be expected to be like us--perfect!

FYI, part 2

* Jean in Pennsylvania asked me to describe what I shared with the Asheville Playback Theatre (see Section 1A in BLAINESWORLD #655), the improv group that took my story and built a skit around it . . . here's the Reader's Digest version:

When I was 17 or 18, I was driving home from work one day with my father . . . I was working for the advertising firm that he headed, and somewhat out of the clear blue sky, he told me to get a haircut . . . now mind you, I have never had what would be considered long hair . . . so I asked him, "What if I don't?" . . .his reply was that "you won't work for me" . . . it turns out that I never got the haircut and except for some summer and vacation periods and one year in the mid-1980s, I never did work for him.

* Janet in New Jersey:

Great newsletter! I enjoyed it very much. Thank you, Blaine.

Bea Arthur's death gave me a wake up call to how time has gone by so quickly. She was an amazing comedian and had such a way with timing in her work. Lisa enjoyed her and all the GOLDEN GIRLS.

THANKS to the several readers who responded to my question about my possibly buying a Kindle 2; among the responses were the following:

* Nancy in North Carolina:

I have a Kindle 2. LOVE It! I got the entire works of Charles Dickens--about 200 volumes--for under \$5. It's very light, easy to read, easy to take with me and holds loads of books.

I love that I can browse at Amazon, see if I'm interested in a book, get a free sample of it, and if I want it, just buy it from the Kindle. It holds a charge for a long time, and it's got a combo recharge cord and usb cord, so one less piece of wire to deal with.

The reader voice is computer-generated, of course, but it's easy to listen to and doesn't sound annoying. There is a port for earphones. I got a "skin," a reproduction of van Gogh's "Starry Night" that I put on it, and it's beautiful and protective. You can also buy a leather cover for it at Amazon that has a metal hinge system that keeps it secure. If you'd like to see my Kindle, and how it works. . . invite me over!

* Phil in New Jersey:

I love my Kindle. I take it everywhere and except for some history and economics books, I find nearly everything I want to read. My the way BEST book of the year is: HUNTING EICHMAN. It's the true story, reads like a novel and is brilliant.

* Joan in New York:

I had a Kindle 1 and gave it to Mark when I upgraded to a Kindle 2. Love the whole concept. My favorite things are:

Wireless capability for downloads (when I finish a book and still have more time on the train or want the WSJ on a particular day).

Portability.

No one knows what you are reading.

Kindle 2 is a big improvement in terms of battery. It's slightly better in look

and feel. Greg has a Sony Reader and that's the best for look and feel. However, it doesn't have wireless capability and there aren't as many books available as there are for the Kindle. I don't use the read to me feature, so I can't comment on that.

* Pat in Pennsylvania:

My daughter who travels lots has the Sony Ebook reader. She loves it. It holds many books. It also has the read feature but not sure she uses it that much? (I think the Ipad is used for this with the younger generation?). Anyway, the book reader is very compact and light. I think if you travel, especially by air, it is a must to have. Her friend has the Kindle, and I think that is a great device too. I will ask my daughter what she likes about each one. Stay tuned.

* Pat in Pennsylvania (after checking with his daughter):

My daughter has the Sony book reader. She says hers is lighter and has a bigger screen than the Kindle. But she said you can download things wirelessly to the Kindle, like the New York times. You can download this wirelessly among other products. She said her Sony Ebook reader has to be connected to download items. She said she uses hers more for reading books so not having the download feature is no big deal. She has an Ipad for things she wants to download things other than books. She said she does not really use the talk aloud feature as the voices are too robotic. It's not like having the author read them. It's kind of dorky robotic audio. I guess if you want to have like books on tape you need to download them from iTunes? I have several books downloaded to my I touch. It's great as you can refer back to them and they are usually read by the author or a professional speaker. Hope this helps.

Pretty sure both the Sony reader and the Kindle have adjustable screens so you can adjust them for darker areas or sunlight. I think either device is really made for reading.

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3. Update (on the story of the three bears)

The three bears had been having some trouble recently and had ended up in family court. Mama and Papa bear were splitting up, and baby bear had to decide who he was going to live with.

So the judge wanted to talk to baby bear to see what he thought about living with either of his parents. When he asked baby bear about living with his father, baby bear said "No, I can't live with Papa bear, he beats me terribly."

"OK," said the judge, "then you want to live with your mother, right?"

"No way!" replied baby bear, "She beats me worse than Papa bear does."

The judge was a bit confused by this, and didn't quite know what to do. "Well, you have to live with someone, so are there any relatives you would like to stay with?" asked the judge.

"Yes," answered baby bear, "my aunt Bertha bear who lives in Chicago."

"You're sure she will treat you well and won't beat you?" asked the judge.

"Oh definitely," said baby bear, "the Chicago Bears don't beat anybody."

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4. Reviews

A. I've always liked films that ask the question: What would you do if you got a second chance at life? So I thought I might like *17 AGAIN*, given that its premise had a middle-age guy getting a second chance to right the big mistake that he made as a kid.

Yet overall, I I was disappointed with it . . . although there were a few funny parts, the whole thing felt contrived . . . and the old guy (Matthew Perry) who become young (Zac Efron) didn't even look remotely alike. . . . yet that said, I did like Efron's work--along with that of Leslie Mann as the Perry character's wife . . . rated PG-13.

B. *LAST CHANCE HARVEY* is now out in DVD format . . . my review from *BLAINESWORLD #643* follows:

LAST CHANCE HARVEY is a rare romantic comedy that features stars who are not teenagers . . . so that alone made me appreciate the unlikely coupling of Dustin Hoffman with Emma Thompson as two lonely singles who spend most of the film adrift in London . . . the scenery is beautiful, and so is the cinematography . . . I also liked the story, and though you had a pretty good idea about how it would end, it still kept me interested until the very last scene . . . rated PG-13.

C. Literature courses would have been a lot more fun if professors had also assigned Robert Schnakenberg's engaging book, *SECRET LIVES OF GREAT AUGHORS* . . . its subtitle tells you why: *WHAT YOUR TEACHERS NEVER TOLD YOU ABOUT FAMOUS NOVELISTS, POETS ADN PLAYWRIGHTS*.

I never knew, for example, that:

- * J. D. Salinger drank his own urine;
- * Ayn Rand was a big fan of *CHARLIE'S ANGELS*;
- * Louise May Alcott had a crush on both Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau; and
- * Frank Kafka refused to drop his shorts at a nudist camp.

I also did not know that Mark Twain adored cats:

* In fact, in his later years he would rent kittens from his neighbors to keep him company during his summer-long sojourns in New Hampshire. "If a man could be crossed with the cat," Twain once observed, "it would improve the man, but it would deteriorate the cat."

And I was fascinated to learn that F. Scott Fitzgerald had a devil of a time coming up with a good title for his greatest novel:

* He originally planned to call *THE GREAT GATSBY* by the title *TRIMALCHIO IN WEST EGG* (a too-clever reference to a character in Petronius'

SATYRICON). His editor, Maxwell Perkins, thought better of that and persuaded him to change it. For a while, Fitzgerald was hot on THE HIGH-BOUNCING LOVER before hitting on the classic, succinct title we know today. Even then, Fitzgerald had his doubts. Just before the book was to be printed, he cabled Perkins with the suggestion that they change the name to UNDER THE RED WHITE AND BLUE. What would be the consequences of delaying publication, Fitzgerald asked. Perkins's cabled, one word reply: "Fatal."

There was a fun, interesting Appendix that contained some great rejection letters, such as this one:

* An American publisher apparently missed the point of George Orwell's ANIMAL FARM. He sent back the manuscript with the note: "It is impossible to sell animal stories in the USA."

There was also a listing of famous last words, including this moving quote from Arthur Conan Doyle to his wife:

* You are wonderful."

Lastly, illustrations by Mario Zucca greatly added to my enjoyment of this book.

D. ABOUT ALICE, written and read by Calvin Trillin, is a moving tribute to his wife that can be heard (or read) in about an hour.

I laughed at parts, such as this one where the author describes his romance that began at a Manhattan party when he desperately tried to impress a young woman who seemed to glow:

* You were never again as funny as you were that night," Alice would say, twenty or thirty years later.

"You mean I peaked in December of 1963?"

"I'm afraid so."

Other sections helped me gain more of an appreciation for Alice, who also served as Trillin's muse:

* She got engaged with people's lives. If she said to a friend's son or daughter, "How's school?" she wasn't just being polite; she wanted details, and she wasn't shy about offering advice. If people we were visiting mentioned that they'd been thinking about renovating their house, Alice was right on the case, room by room. In such architectural conversations, she could get bossy, and sometimes I felt obliged to warn our hosts that one of her characteristic gestures--the gesture she used when she was saying something like "You have to open all this up"--was remarkably similar to the gesture you'd use to toss money into the wind.

ABOUT ALICE left me agreeing with one of the condolence letters that Trillin received:

* "I always thought of you as a wonderful guy, but still I couldn't figure out how you managed to get Alice. Harris once told me it was just dumb luck."

When I read that [the author added], I burst out laughing.

Harris had nailed it again.

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5. TV alert

A. George in Pennsylvania speaks very highly of the following show:

PITCHMEN follows the adventures of infomercial kings Billy Mays and Anthony Sullivan as they search the world for inventions they can take to the big time . . . Wednesdays at 10 p.m. on DISCOVERY.

B. CHINA'S UNNATURAL DISASTER: THE TEARS OF SICHUAN PROVINCE airs on Thursday at 8 p.m. on HBO . . . it is the story of the catastrophic earthquake that took the lives of 70,000 people in 2008 . . . according to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, " . . . there is more vivid testimony to the way the state party apparatus works to prevent any expressions of dissent from reaching foreign news sources than any piece of reporting in memory."

C. WALLANDER is a new British detective 90-minute mystery, starring Kenneth Branagh (alone worth viewing just for his performance) . . . according to TV GUIDE, " . . . he's a keeper" and the show is "awfully compelling" . . . Sundays at 9 p.m. on PBS, though because PBS times and dates often vary, check local listings.

D. THE ALZHEIMER'S PROJECT debuts on Sunday night at 9 p.m. on HBO . . . this will be the first of a five-part series, and it will feature a profile of seven patients in various stages of the illness.

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6. Exercise for people over 50

Begin by standing on a comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room at each side. With a 5-lb potato bag in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them there as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute, and then relax.

Each day you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer. After a couple of weeks, move up to 10-lb potato bags.

Then try 50-lb potato bags and then eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100-lb potato bag in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute.

(I'm at this level.)

After you feel confident at that level, put a potato in each bag.

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7. Websites

A. You've long hear the admonition to don't drink and drive . . . you'll want to add texting after you watch the following:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTT92BHbh3U&feature=related>

Scary, wasn't it?

B. If you're a fan of THE SOUND OF MUSIC, please click:

<http://video.yahoo.com/watch/4816051?fr=yvmtf>

You'll see it performed in a fashion you've never seen before, and methinks that it will leave you smiling!

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

When I'm in Asheville on a full-time basis (beginning in late May), I'm thinking that I would like to resume my radio career . . . or even perhaps attempt a cable TV show . . . my first interest would be in a public affairs-type show where I would interview guests on a wide variety of topics . . . for more information on my background, please see "Radio Show" to the left.

SPECIAL REQUEST:

If you have any radio and/or cable contacts anywhere in western North Carolina or possibly eastern Tennessee, please do share . . . in return, I'd be most grateful. .. I'd even be willing to cut you in on part of the part of what I would be paid . . . let's see, 15% of say \$2,000 a show . . . wow, that would be quite a windfall for you . . . but being Mr. Reasonable here, I'd be willing to settle for less--much less . . . in fact, as long as I didn't have to pay anything to be on the air, I'd consider that possibility also.

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8. Computer tip

When you replace a cartridge on your printer, always make sure you have another one on hand . . . or make sure you go out and buy one that day . . . that way, you'll never face a situation where you can't print something when you want or need to do so because your cartridge needs replacing.

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9. I think I need a computer

ABBOTT: Super Duper computer store.Can I help you?

COSTELLO: Thanks. I'm setting up an office in my den, and I'm thinking about buying a computer.

ABBOTT: Mac?

COSTELLO: No, the name's Lou.

ABBOTT: Your computer?

COSTELLO: I don't own a computer, I want to buy one.

ABBOTT: Mac?

COSTELLO: I told you, my name's Lou.

ABBOTT: What about Windows?

COSTELLO: Why? Will it get stuffy in here?

ABBOTT: Do you want a computer with Windows?

COSTELLO: I don't know. What will I see when I look at the windows?

ABBOTT: Wallpaper.

COSTELLO: Never mind the windows. I need a computer and software...

ABBOTT: Software for Windows?

COSTELLO: No. On the computer! I need something I can use to write proposals, track expenses and run my business. What do you have?

ABBOTT: Office.

COSTELLO: Yeah, for my office. Can you recommend anything?

ABBOTT: I just did.

COSTELLO: You just did what?

ABBOTT: Recommend something.

COSTELLO: You recommended something?

ABBOTT: Yes.

COSTELLO: For my office?

ABBOTT: Yes.

COSTELLO: OK, what did you recommend for my office?

ABBOTT: Office.

COSTELLO: Yes, for my office!

ABBOTT: I recommend Office with Windows.

COSTELLO: I already have an office with windows! OK, let's just say I'm sitting at my computer and I want to type a proposal. What do I need?

ABBOTT: Word.

COSTELLO: What word?

ABBOTT: Word in Office.

COSTELLO: The only word in office is office.

ABBOTT: The Word in Office for Windows.

COSTELLO: Which word in office for windows?

ABBOTT: The Word you get when you click the blue "W".

COSTELLO: I'm going to click your blue "W" if you don't start with some straight answers. . . . what about financial bookkeeping? You have anything I can track my money with?

ABBOTT: Money.

COSTELLO: That's right. What do you have?

ABBOTT: Money.

COSTELLO: I need money to track my money?

ABBOTT: It comes bundled with your computer.

COSTELLO: What's bundled with my computer?

ABBOTT: Money.

COSTELLO: Money comes with my computer?

ABBOTT: Yes. No extra charge.

COSTELLO: I get a bundle of money with my computer? How much?

ABBOTT: One copy.

COSTELLO: Isn't it illegal to copy money?

ABBOTT: Microsoft gave us a license to copy Money.

COSTELLO: They can give you a license to copy money?

ABBOTT: Why not? THEY OWN IT!

(A few days later.)

ABBOTT: Super Duper computer store. Can I help you?

COSTELLO: How do I turn my computer off?

ABBOTT: Click on "START" . . .

DATING MYSELF HERE:

The above routine is actually very similar to a routine that comedians Abbott and Costello started performing in the late 1930s . . . to view actually doing it, please click:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sShMA85pv8M>

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10. A quote I like

I think of life itself now as a wonderful play that I've written for myself . . . and so my purpose is to have the utmost fun playing my part.--Shirley MacLaine (born 1934), American Academy Award-winning film, and theater actress, dancer, activist and author

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11. Thought for the day

If you didn't know when you were born, how old would you be?
by Jim Donovan*

Now there's a question that can change the way you perceive the whole idea of age and aging. After all, what is age?

It's really just a number, even though we have been conditioned into "believing" that it dictates everything from when we start to go downhill in terms of our health to, in many cases, when we feel as though we are of no value to society.

Broadway actress, Billie Burke, remarked, "Age only matters if one is a cheese."

When you come right down to it, most of what your life is comprised of has little or nothing to do with your age. Your health, creativity, talent, mind and your ability to continue to make a significant contribution to society is not determined by your age but rather your attitudes and beliefs.

While some physical abilities do slow with age even these are being challenged as we learned when swimmer Dara Torres, at age 41, won three silver medals at the Beijing Olympics. While it's unlikely she'll be in swimming competitions at 70 or 80, she can still make a contribution to her chosen field as a coach or trainer. By the way, her new book, AGE IS JUST A NUMBER, was just published.

I love her attitude. In the book, she says, "The water doesn't know how old you are."

Martha Graham, considered to be one of the foremost pioneers of modern dance, choreographed until her death at age 96.

What about you? What are your beliefs about aging?

Since my new book, DON'T LET AN OLD PERSON MOVE INTO YOUR BODY, (due in June), is about making the rest of your life the best of your life, I will be writing more about this going forward.

In the meantime, I urge you to re-examine your own attitudes and beliefs about aging. It's a biological fact that we are all aging, however, getting old is optional and, in my opinion, a state of mind. You can choose not to let an old person move into your body, regardless of your present age.

Pretend you do not know when you were born. How would you act?
What would you do?

* Reprinted with permission from Jim Donovan--author, motivational speaker and success coach. For more information, please click:

<http://www.jimdonovan.com>

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12. Advance planning department

A. On Friday at 4:30 p.m. in the Dodds auditorium at Princeton University:

Lisa Jackson, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator, will speak on "Environmental Justice in the 21st Century, A Bipartisan Approach."

B. Jeanne in Pennsylvania:

I do not usually recommend movies or shows, but Wednesday night I attended the dress rehearsal for THE BUTLER DID IT I laughed through the entire play. It is reminiscent of Agatha Christie with her tongue in her cheek.

Performances: May 8, 9, 15, 16, 17 (matinee), 22 and 23

Friday and Saturday night shows have an 8 p.m. curtain; Sunday matinees start at 3 p.m.. Tickets are \$15. For more information, please click:

<http://www.townandcountryplayers.org/>

C. Professor Caren Friedman--my talented colleague, artist and friend from Bucks County Community College--will speak at the Michener Museum in Doylestown, PA at 1 p.m. . . . her presentation will be about the work of Philadelphia area paper artists for the show "Pulp Fiction" . . . for more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/dy3bqp>

D. Cynthia(Greenfield; also see Section 1A) in North Carolina:

Please come to an upcoming Breema program.

Breema is form of bodywork that is comfortable, enjoyable, relaxing and revitalizing. Received fully clothed on a padded floor, this method uses comfortably supported movements including firm yet gentle stretches, precise and gradual leans into the muscles, nurturing brushes and holding postures, and a wide variety of playfully rhythmic movements.

The unique aspect that separates this type of bodywork from others is the main concentration on the Breema principles. These are principles that you can use in your other forms of bodywork and/or more importantly in your life. Some of these principles are being in the present moment, body comfortable, no force, no judgment, full participation, no extra and mutual support. Seeing how people respond with so much joy and enthusiasm when they get a taste of even one of the Breema principles is reason enough to give this a try.

This session is open to all interested in learning more about this exciting topic. You do NOT have to be a massage therapist to participate and/or benefit, though if you are one, you would certainly benefit from the day.

Date: Sunday, June 14

Time: 9-5. p.m. (Bring lunch.)

Location: 19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way, Biltmore Lake, NC

Cost: \$100 if you register on or before June 4; \$115 if you register thereafter (\$10 paperwork fee that's extra if you want CEU credits)

Instruction to be provided by Laura Ike and Katherine Correa, both of whom are Breema-certified.

For more information and/or to register, contact Cynthia Greenfield at 828.633.1049 or email: Cgreenfield1001@aol.com (please put BREEMA in subject line).

PS. Happy Cinco de Mayo to all those who, like me, celebrate all such holidays . . . more good food and drink that way, plus don't forget the camaraderie . . . for more information about the days' historical significance, please click:

<http://www.vivacincodemayo.org/history.htm>

Furthermore, whatever you do, don't forget that Sunday is Mother's Day . . . do spend it with your mother, if at all possible, or at least remember her in some fashion . . . I will miss the fact that I won't be able to spend the day with my mother, something that I grew to appreciate doing more so every year she was alive.

In addition, I grew to value both her wisdom and advice . . . yet that said, while I can remember much of what she told me, I don't recall her ever saying any of these expressions (though maybe I had hoped she would):

- * "Well, if all the other kids are doing it, it must be OK."
- "Do your homework later. Watching cartoons is better for you."
- "Leave all the lights on. It makes the house feel cheerful."
- "Let me smell that shirt. Yeah, it's good for another week."
- "Honey, please smoke in the house."
- "You can keep that stray dog. I'll be glad to feed and walk him every day."
- "The curfew, it is just a ballpark time. Come home whenever."
- "If you don't like that, I'll cook something else for you."
- "Grades aren't that important, as long as you're having fun at school."
- "If you need beer money, just ask."
- "Of course you can use the car. It's not like you need a license."
- "Use your sleeve. It's better than tissues."
- "How can you see the TV that far away? Move closer."
- "Don't worry about cleaning your room. I'll be glad to do it."

- "That's OK. Keep doing it. You won't go blind."

Also, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#656

4.27.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I saw ART at the Flat Rock Playhouse--the State Theatre of North Carolina located in Hendersonville . . . this is the third production we've seen there, and they have all been excellent.

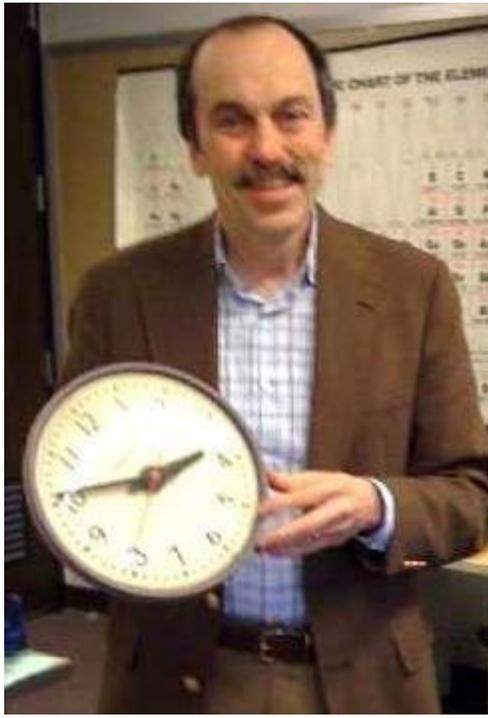
This particular play is a comedy about three friends who debate the merits of a purchase made by one of them: a pricey piece of modern art that appears to be just a white on white painting . . . I liked the dialogue and, in particular, this one line: "Nothing of value ever came out of a rational argument."

Scott Treadway (who recently excelled in STONES IN HIS POCKETS, a play we saw a few weeks ago) and Bill Munox were both great in two of the main roles . . . however, it was Damian Duke Domingue as the third friend who had us laughing just about every time he had a monologue.

When I was in Pennsylvania, I had the pleasure to catch friends Chic and Joni Dowburd in 42ND STREET . . . this was put on by the Neshaminy Valley Music Theatre, and it was a lively success.

I'm biased, of course, but I thought Chic nearly stole the show with his only piece of dialogue: "Move it along!" . . . he said it with such passion that I believe that bigger things are in store for him, as in . . . next . . . Broadway? You never know!

Lastly, I'll remember the week because it marked the last meeting I ran as president of the teacher's union at Bucks County Community College . . . halfway through it, a special presentation was made when I was given a clock:



(SPECIAL THANKS to Michael Hennessey for taking the above.)

But this just wasn't any clock; it was symbolic of the clocks at the College that never ran on time . . . I battled for well over 10 years to have them replaced and finally, they were . . . though that said, the new clocks aren't running much better!

B. MR. CURIOUS HERE:

I'm seriously thinking of getting Kindle 2, Amazon's wireless reading device . . . is any BLAINESWORLD reader using it (or any other wireless reader)? if so, please share your feedback . . . I'm particularly interested in the read-to-me option and whether that works.

C. CONGRATULATIONS to Betty and Gore Tsai on the birth of Miranda, their first grandchild.

CONGRATULATIONS, also, to K. Ward Vinson and Helen Wilson, two longtime readers and colleagues, for being recognized as "Outstanding Part-Time Faculty" members at a recent Dean's Reception that I attended at Bucks County Community College.

D. Some sad news to report:

* CONDOLENCES to Jean Konkel and family on the loss of Jean's father, Leslie Mitchell, who passed away unexpectedly . . . donations in Mr. Mitchell's memory may be made to the Bucks County Community College Foundation for the Matthew W. Stuski Student Art Prize (Matthew was Mr. Mitchell's grandson) . . . mail to: BCCC Foundation, 275 Swamp Road, Newtown, PA 18940.

* Kingdon Swayne taught at Bucks Community College for more than two decades . . . he passed away on Wednesday . . . I valued him as both a colleague and mentor.

He was also the first political candidate I ever supported financially . . . I

remember that I did so when he ran for Bucks County controller in 1985 . . . after he lost, he was quoted in the BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES as saying had he won, he would have retired from the College to work full-time in his new position . . . I immediately called to tell him that had I known that, I would have doubled my contribution . . . he got a chuckle from that.

For more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/c7jr37>

* I was also saddened to hear of Bea Arthur's death . . . has it really been 17 years since THE GOLDEN GIRLS last had a first-run episode on TV? And some 31 years since MAUDE was on the air?

It seems that she was always on screen . . . but that's probably true, in that she even once noted: "After being in the business for such a long time, I've done everything but rodeo and porno."

I always laughed when I watched her . . . and isn't that a great way for anybody to be remembered?

In the unlikely event you're not familiar with her work and/or need a reminder, please click:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gyhInL0Abml>

Aside from her work as an actress, Arthur's commitment to PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) impressed me . . . so did this one quote: "Making lasting gifts for animals in our estate plans is perhaps the single most important thing we can do to ensure animals have the strongest possible voice for their protection."

MY TWO CENTS:

If you are an animal-lover, please do make sure you have made arrangements for your pet(s) in your will!

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

This week, it goes to Gwen Lyons, the person who deals with warranty issues for Biltmore Farms Homes (the development where we live in North Carolina) . . . to quote Cynthia, who was nice enough to suggest her as a nominee:

Any time we have an issue with our home, she is the person to call. It has been delightful to work with Gwen.

Any new home has problems that need attention. Gwen has been pleasant, efficient and responds quickly to any complaint we have had. Most recently, it appeared that our air-conditioning was not working properly. she responded on a Friday night and got someone to our home to fix it on Saturday morning.

She then called a few times to check up on the status of it, personally making sure that our issue was resolved. Thanks, Gwen!

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2. FYI

For some reason, no matter what we used, we could not get the mirrors in our bathroom clean due to a streaking problem . . . so Cynthia asked Warren--our decorator--for a recommendation, and he suggested that we use StreakProff Original Glass Cleaner from a company called Castle . . . he even gave us a sample can to try.

We did and were most impressed with the results . . . so much so, in fact, that we just ordered a whole bunch more of the product . . . for more information, please click:

http://www.castleproductsonline.com/glass_cleaner.html

It is easy to use and leaves a pleasant, clean after-scent . . . in addition, it is very reasonably priced at just \$2.99/can.

FYI, part 2

* Mel in Colorado (commenting on a recent goof, in which an extra copy of this newsletter was sent to all):

Just as I never complain about getting an extra piece of cheesecake, so I never complain about getting an extra dose of BLAINESWORLD.

* Pat in Pennsylvania (commenting on my comments about how friendly Asheville is):

Sorry, but this was how I was raised, and that's how it is here where I live in Newtown. Most of the neighbors simply knock on our door and walk in. It was like that growing up and its like that here. Nothing new for me..

I think all too often people buy houses instead of neighborhoods.

* Jack in Pennsylvania:

I forwarded your story at the end of your latest missive to a bunch of friends. I hope you don't mind.

MIND? NOT AT ALL!

I welcome Jack's forwarding part and/or all of any issue . . . and invite others to do the same . . . when you do, please also invite folks to subscribe to this FREE newsletter . . . all they need to do is drop me an email note with the words "FREE SUBSCRIPTION" in the subject line.

* Ruth in Pennsylvania:

Thanks for the invitation to share the 6 steps to Setting and Achieving your seemingly "impossible" goals.

Here are the six steps that have helped me and my clients achieve that dream that's been in the drawer for years or maybe centuries in a matter of months:

1. Energize your imagination to launch your dream out of the drawer.
2. Make Your Dream a priority by setting up systems of accountability.
3. Set specific parameters for your dream so you become a filter for only things that support your dream.

4. Create anchors in your subconscious that alerts you when your dream is being supported. (mind maps, scripting, sensitive movement skills).
5. Organize your relationships in a way that fuels your dreams.
6. Do what ever it takes to experience your dream now!

Listen to the 30 minute interview about the setting and achieving your goals:

http://scriptingforsuccess.com/6_steps_to_setting_and_achieving_goals.htm

As a special treat to your subscriber, I'm also offering a:

FREE 25 minute "Relationship Rehab" for people who want to really put the 6 Steps to setting and achieving your goals into great use.

In this powerful session you will leave with:

Written positive outcomes for your relationship

A new awareness of what is causing many of the challenges in your relationship right now. (They may not be what you think!)

A renewed sense of energy about turning your relationship around (or you'll know if it's time to call it quits).

A "next-step" action plan for moving your relationship into the next phase of love, connection and passion!

For more information, visit the aforementioned website . . . you can also use it to access the form to get your FREE Rehab.

* Ed in Pennsylvania:

My office manager found a set of keys on the side of Almshouse Road near the St. Johns Methodist Church in Ivyland.

We are taking a strong interest in finding their real owner as the ring attached to the keys is inscribed "Sicily 1943". I'm sure it is sorely missed.

We have posted them on craigslist and placed an ad in Penny Power. Would you be able to mention them in BLAINESWORLD? Possibly the owner is local to the area as many of your readers are.

If you find them, please Ed Knight at 215.368.7600.

Thanks.

* Lee in Pennsylvania:

I wanted to offer my opinion with regards to IE. I absolutely agree with Debbie in New York about Firefox. It is a much more stable browser. I would advise anyone and everyone to go to Mozilla.com and download Firefox.

* Lana in Ohio:

As always a wonderful BLAINESWORLD issue. Kudos to you for your recognition of excellent service by the person at Acme. Too often the services people at stores, dining establishments, civil service etc. go unrecognized by the public they serve.

* Lisa in Pennsylvania:

I'm so sorry to hear about Shanti. I know how much your kitty is a part of your family. We lost one of our cats, Oscar, a couple weeks ago.

I always said he was our sweetest cat, the most accepting of my son; he loved to hang with us. (The others run from my son).

Cynthia's poem is lovely. Writing a poem and journaling memories does help the pain somewhat. When my husband and I lost our first cat (who was our first son), I dedicated a website to him. Also, a friend had given me a candle and told me to light it every time I thought of him. She said every time I lit it, it would get a little easier. I lit it every day until it ran out of wax. I now light one for Oscar. It helps somehow. I think of it kind of like a Yarzheit candle.

* Bob in North Carolina:

I know that you and Cynthia were into Elisabeth Gilbert, and I spotted a video with her on the WP in the Faith section. Thought you might be interested. It seems to get referenced regularly in your newsletter. Seems a little slow to load; I had to be patient, which is one of my challenges, but I hung in there.

<http://tinyurl.com/629o38>

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3. New finding

"Researchers have discovered that chocolate produces some of the same reactions in the brain as marijuana, according to Matt Laurer on NBC's TODAY SHOW. "The researchers also discovered other similarities between the two but can't remember what they are."

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4. Reviews

A. Cynthia and I had been seeing coming attractions for THE SOLOIST for months and couldn't wait to see it . . . the film, based on a true story about a homeless man with amazing musical talent who is befriended by a newspaper columnist, looked like it couldn't miss being a winner . . . sad to say, when we did get to see it this past week, our reaction was one of disappointment . . . we found it watchable, in large part because of the performances of Jamie Foxx and Robert Downey Jr. in the two main roles . . . they were fine, but overall, THE SOLOIST just didn't register with us . . . we weren't as moved by it as we had both hoped and thought we would be . . . rated PG-13.

B. THE READER is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #648 follows:

Kate Winslet won an Oscar for her work in THE READER, but if anything, I actually think she was better in REVOLUTIONARY ROAD . . . it marks her first screen appearance with Leonardo DiCaprio since TITANIC, but don't go expecting a similar romantic tale . . . rather, this is a somber tale about what seems to be the "perfect" couple in the America of the 1950s . . . the reality is quite different . . . the dialogue was excellent, as was the cinematography . . . DiCaprio was also outstanding . . . and Michael Shannon (who received an Oscar nomination for his work) made his few scenes come alive . . . rated R.

C. Harry Paul, coauthor of bestselling FISH! series, is one of my favorite business authors . . . INSTANT TURNAROUND!, coauthored by Ross Reck, might well be his best effort yet.

It is the story of a human resources director at a magazine that is struggling with the problems dealing with unhappy employees . . . there's low productivity and morale, along with high absenteeism and turnover.

If that sounds like your company or any firm that you know about, then get this book immediately . . . by reading it, you'll actually be able to accomplish what is stated in the subtitle: GETTING PEOPLE EXCITED ABOUT COMING TO WORK AND WORKING HARD.

One way to do this is by making it so that work is fun . . . as an example, the authors tell the story of this one flight where the attendant in the front gave what turned out to be a very entertaining safety briefing:

* At one point, he said, "While there may be fifty ways to leave your lover, there are only six ways to leave this aircraft: two forward exit doors, two exits over the wings, and two aft exit doors." Later in the briefing he said, "We will be flying over the Mississippi River and hundreds of swimming pools this afternoon on our way to St. Louis, so in the event of a water landing, your seat cushion can be used as a flotation device." He concluded with, "Pushing your reading light button will turn on your reading light, but pushing your flight attendant call button will not turn on your flight attendant."

Another thing that can make a difference is to just be nice to folks . . . while that may sound basic, the reality is that it isn't done enough . . . as one character notes:

* "And the most important part of being nice is your smile."

"Why is that?" asked Nancy.

"Your smile draws people toward you. It tells people that you're open, approachable, and that you care-the kind of person they want to get to know better."

Jack continued, "The other aspect of being nice is saying or doing something that brightens the day of each person you come into contact with--greeting them by name, complimenting them on something they've done or what they're wearing."

I also liked how Paul and Reck cited real-world research throughout the book, such as in this passage:

* A research study recently reported in the Harvard Business review found that the vast majority of employees are quite excited when they start a new job. This study also found that in 85% of the companies surveyed, this excitement declines sharply after the first six months, and continues to decline for years afterward. One of the big reasons is that tier managers didn't take the time to thank them for a job well done, yet the same managers were quick to criticize them for their mistakes. What these managers fail to realize is that if they would focus their efforts on showing sincere appreciation to their employees instead of pointing out mistakes, their employees would work harder and make far fewer mistakes. Saying "thank you" often not only energizes your employees, it makes you a more effective manager.

Lastly, what added to my enjoyment of INSTANT TURNAROUND! was the fact that I really cared about the characters in the story and what happened to them . . . consequently, being the nice guy that I am, I won't reveal the ending except to say that it doesn't disappoint.

D. Heard HOME GROWN DEMOCRAT: A FEW PLAIN THOUGHTS FROM THE HEART OF AMERICA--written and read by Garrison Keillor.

Please don't be put off by the title . . . even if you're a Republican, methinks you'll like this book . . . it is actually more of a love story about Keillor's strong appreciation for not only this country, but also his home state of Minnesota . . . in fact, if it wasn't so cold there, I may have even wanted to consider it a place to live when retired.

After all, it is a place where if there's one meatball on the plate:

* You take 1/2 and leave the other half for the other person.

It is also a place where:

* If you tell a new joke and tell it well, you'll be welcome here.

I also liked how Keillor talked about his childhood though the time when he was a student in college . . . in describing his appearance, he had my laughing when he said:

* I looked liked a folded ironing board with hair.

He then described that he was a Democrat because:

* I received a good education in the public schools of Anoka, Minnesota, and attended a great state university and when I was 18, John Kennedy ran for president.

Yet he contends:

* We Democrats are deeply flawed people, we can be earnestly boring and awfully righteous about moral issues in faraway places. We can be wannies, capable of doing dumb things in the name of the common good. But we do stick to our guns. We believe in decency and public spiritedness and have refused to hitch our wagon to yahooism and have supported government as a necessary force for good. And we are passionate. This a year for passion.

Now to be fair to both political parties, if anybody can point me in the direction of a similar book by a Republican, please let me know about it.

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5. TV alert

A. DOING DA VINCI airs Mondays at 10 p.m. on DISCOVERY . . . the shows features experts who have been trying to build weapons that Leonardo Da Vinci imagined, drew and wrote specifications for some 500 years ago.

OOPS, my part:

I just noticed that three of the shows mentioned in last week's issue actually run this coming week . . . so if you missed them, you still have a chance to catch them on the following times:

B. PAUL RODRIGUEZ & FRIENDS; COMEDY REHAB airs on Friday at 11 p.m. on COMEDY CENTRAL . . . if you've been feeling down lately because of the recession or any other reason, methinks this will be just the show to lift your spirits.

C. My daughter Risa and her husband JP have been telling me for quite some time that I should watch a show on FOOD NETWORK that features my kind of food . . . so with that recommendation, I'll watch THE BEST OF DINERS, DRIVE-INS AND DIVES on Saturday at 8 p.m.

D. LIVING OUT LOUD stars Gail Grady as a breast cancer survivor who gets a second chance at life . . . Saturday at 9 p.m. on HALLMARK.

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6. Time for church

Three little boys were concerned because they couldn't get anyone to play with them. They decided it was because they had not been baptized and didn't go to Sunday School.

So they went to the nearest Church. But only the janitor was there.

One little boy said, "We need to be baptized because no one will come out and play with us. Will you baptize us?"

"Sure," said the janitor.

He took them into the bathroom and dunked their little heads in the toilet bowl, one at a time. Then he said, "'You are now baptized!"

When they got outside, one of them asked, "What religion do you think we are?"

The oldest one said, "We're not Kathlick because they pour the water on you.

"We're not Babtis because they dunk all of you in the water.

"We're not Methdiss because they just sprinkle water on you."

The littlest one said, "Didn't you smell that water?"

They all joined in asking, "Yeah! What do you think that means?"

"I think it means we're Pisscopailions."

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7. Websites

A. Start every morning with a bit of inspiration and a smile by clicking:

<http://www.famous-quotes-and-quotations.com>

You will get an inspiring and sometimes funny quote, an entertaining fact about today and an interesting article to check out. .

For example, here's a recent quote of the day from Charles Kettering, "You can't have a better tomorrow if you are thinking about yesterday all the time."

B. Lindsay Lohan is newly single and ready to mingle . . . see for yourself by clicking:

<http://tinyurl.com/c4qcmp>

And who says you can't find attractive, bright, somewhat sober folks at eHarmony?

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

Going to the above website makes it soooooo easy for your friends, relatives, colleagues, etc. to subscribe to BLAINESWORLD, the newsletter . . . all they need to do is go to the homepage, then click on the Special Offer toward the bottom.

Of course, you can also forward them this issue . . . then tell them if they like it to just send me an email at bginbc@aol.com and put SUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

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8. Computer tip

Test the speed of your Internet connection, please click:

<http://www.speedtest.net/>

See if you are getting what you pay for and, also, share your results with others on Download Speed, Upload Speed and Ping (Latency) . . . best of all, there's no charge for using this website!

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9. School, then vs. now, part 2 of 2

(concluded from last week)

Scenario #5: Mark gets a headache and takes some aspirin to school.

1959: Mark gets glass of water from principal to take aspirin with.

2009: Police called, Mark expelled from school for drug violations. Car searched for drugs and weapons.

Scenario #6: Pedro fails high school English.

1959: Pedro goes to summer school, passes English and goes to college.

2009: Pedro's cause is taken up by state. Newspaper articles appear nationally explaining that teaching English as a requirement for graduation is racist. AFRE files class action lawsuit against state school system and Pedro's English teacher. English banned from core curriculum. Pedro given diploma anyway but ends up mowing lawns for a living because he cannot speak English.

Scenario #7: Johnny takes apart leftover firecrackers from 4th of July, puts them in a model airplane paint bottle, blows up a bull ant nest.

1959: Ants die.

2009: Star Force, federal police and anti-terrorism squad called. Johnny charged with domestic terrorism, Feds investigate parents, siblings removed from home, computers confiscated, Johnny's dad goes on a terror watch list and is never allowed to fly again.

Scenario 8: Johnny falls while running during recess and scrapes his knee. He is found crying by his teacher, Mary. Mary hugs him to comfort him.

1959: In a short time, Johnny feels better and goes on playing.

2009: Mary is accused of being a sexual predator and loses her job. She faces three years in prison. Johnny undergoes five years of therapy.

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10. A quote I like

If your ship doesn't come in, swim out to it.--Jonathan Winters,
American comedian

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11. Thought for the day

Graduation

A young man was getting ready to graduate from college. For many months, he had admired a beautiful sports car in a dealer's showroom, and knowing his father could well afford it, he told him that was all he wanted.

As Graduation Day approached, the young man awaited signs that his father had purchased the car. Finally, on the morning of his graduation, his father called him into his private study.

His father told him how proud he was to have such a fine son and told him how much he loved him. He handed his son a beautifully wrapped gift box. Curious and somewhat disappointed, the young man opened the box and found a lovely, leather-bound Bible with the young man's name embossed in gold. Angry, he rose his voice to his father and said "with all your money you give me a Bible?" and stormed out of the house.

Many years passed and the young man was very successful in business.

He had a beautiful home and wonderful family, but realized his father was very old and thought perhaps he should go to him. He had not seen him since that graduation day. Before he could make arrangements, he received a telegram telling him his father had passed away and willed all of his possessions to his son. He needed to come home immediately and take care of things.

When he arrived at his father's house, sudden sadness and regret filled his heart. He began to search through his father's important papers and saw the still new Bible--just as he had left it years ago. With tears, he opened the Bible and began to turn the pages.

His father had carefully underlined a verse, Matt. 7:11, "And if ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father which is in Heaven, give to those who ask Him?" As he read those words, a car key dropped from the back of the Bible. It had a tag with the dealer's name, the same dealer who had the sports car he had desired. On the tag was the date of his graduation and the words PAID IN FULL.

How many times do we miss God's blessings because they are not packaged as we expected?

If your gift is not packaged the way you want it, it's because it is better packaged the way it is. Always appreciate little things . . . they usually lead to bigger and better things.

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. Jazz Band Concert

The Bucks County Community College Jazz Band, under the direction of Dr. Michael Hoffman, presents a free concert at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 29, in the Music and Multimedia Center on the Newtown campus.

And at Bucks on Saturday:

James McBride, an author, musician, and screenwriter, shares his talents at Bucks County Community College Saturday, May 2, as part of Arts at Bucks celebrations. The event takes place at 7:30 in the Gateway Auditorium.

Tickets for are \$10 and can be purchased by clicking:

<http://www.bucks.edu/tickets>

B. Mei in Pennsylvania:

Please come to the hilarious improv show this Friday, May 1 in the Library Auditorium, Bucks County Community College, Newtown, PA at 8 p.m. Tickets are just \$5.

C. Following her highly successful appearance on The Oprah Winfrey Show, Mary Carlomagno, will be discussing and signing her latest book, SECRETS OF SIMPLICITY: LEARN TO LIVE BETTER WITH LESS,

on Saturday, May 9, 2009 at 3:00 p.m. in the Princeton Barnes & Noble, MarketFair Mall, 3535 US Route 1 South, in Princeton, NJ.

Mary Carlomagno, founder of Order, a company specializing in clutter control, will demonstrate ways to make practical changes to unburden the home, closets, and calendars and make room for what's really important in your life.

For more information on this event or for a schedule of upcoming events, call 609.716.1570 or email: crm2646@bn.com. All events are free and open to the public.

D. Tyler Tasting Party

21st annual event presented by the First National Bank and Trust Company of Newtown

Join us on June 5, 2009, for one of Bucks County's premier social events. Enjoy food, wine and spirits from Bucks County's finest establishments and network with other business and community leaders at the 21st annual Tyler Tasting Party. Proceeds benefit the students in the College's Historic Preservation Program and the restoration of historic Tyler Hall.

Featuring:
Musical Entertainment
Valet Parking
Silent & Live AuctionEvent Info

Bucks County Community College
275 Swamp Road
Newtown, PA 18940
June 5, 2009
7-11 p.m.

Tickets: \$125 pp

For more information, please call 215.968.8244.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#655

4.20.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I still shake our heads at times about our life in Asheville . . . in all the places we've ever lived, a neighbor never came by to borrow an egg . . . but it happened recently when our friend Julia came by because she was baking with her son Connor and she ran out of the needed ingredient . . . no big deal, we thought . . . but what surprised us was the fact that the next day, Julia came back with a big plate of delicious cookies

Every day, it seems, we find something new to do or see . . . we went over the weekend to the Asheville Playback Theatre, which describes itself as a group that builds "a community of neighbors" by "honoring personal stories" . . . what happens is that members of the audience share things that have happened to them, and the talented troupe then does an improv skit based on what it heard . . . I was impressed, especially since a skit was built around something that I had shared . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.ashevilleplayback.org>

We also "discovered" two new restaurants that have actually been in the area for quite some time . . . on one night, we had great pizza at Mellow Mushroom . . . the only problem is that there are usually very long waits to get into this place . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.mellowmushroom.com>

On another night, we went with friends to Ophelia's World Cafe (828.255.8154) . . . I had trout, actually for the first time in my life, and enjoyed it . . . Cynthia's meatloaf was excellent . . . and we both enjoyed the sweet potato bread pudding . . . our server, Audrey, was also outstanding . . . we'll be back.

Lastly, I attended an informative presentation on the aging brain in our development's clubhouse . . . it was graciously hosted by Chuck

and Linda Hollinshead . . . and though Chuck has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, he is still real sharp--at least to my way of thinking . . . in fact, he even told the following story probably better than I can write it:

He said his wife called him while he was driving to warn him to stay off a certain road because police were reporting that somebody was driving in the wrong direction . . . he replied that she was mistaken because he noticed that there wasn't one car driving the wrong way, there were lots of cars driving in the wrong direction . . . Chuck's joke got a big laugh.

The advice I left with was to "get off your seat and onto your feet" . . . it was repeatedly stressed that physical exercise is important for all of us as we age, as is mental activity . . . also, it is important to retain a purpose in life.

B. PLEASE ACCEPT MY APOLOGY:

I understand that you may have received two copies of last week's issue . . . it seems there was a problem with the company that mails them out, and I believe that has been resolved--or at least I hope it has . . . should this happen again in the future, please let me know . . . naturally,, let me also know if you don't receive a particular issue.

C. CONGRATULATIONS to longtime friend Hanan Issacs . . . to quote from part of a recent news release:

PRINCETON ATTORNEY HANAN M. ISAACS AWARDED CERTIFIED MATRIMONIAL SPECIALIST DESIGNATION BY THE NJ SUPREME COURT

Princeton, NJ (April 21, 2009) – Princeton attorney Hanan M. Isaacs has been designated a Certified Matrimonial Specialist by the New Jersey State Supreme Court. This is a rare designation with only a small percentage of the 70,000-member New Jersey Bar achieving that designation. The Supreme Court awards the Certification only after a thorough review of a detailed application, practice credentials, positive judicial and peer recommendations, completion of significant continuing education, and extensive written testing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Hanan can be reached at 609.683.7400 or via his website:

<http://www.hananisaacs.com>

Personally, I can tell you that I've used Hanan in the past, and I've also worked with him over the years . . . he is the best!

D. MR. CURIOUS HERE:

As I continue in my attempts to get people to quit smoking, I've become increasingly drawn to the field of hypnotherapy . . . as such, I am considering becoming a certified hypnotherapist.

What do you think about such a venture for me; e.g., as I move into my next career as a Rewirement Expert-in-Training (my new job title)? Do you think I have what it takes to become good in this field?

Here's information on the program I'm thinking of taking:

<http://www.hypnowisdom.com>

How does the above sound to you? Any other thought on hypnotism (good, bad or indifferent) that you care to share?

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

This week, it goes to Tom Hutton--a cashier at Acme in Newtown, PA.

I've been going to that Acme for as many years as he has worked there: 15.

He has always been both friendly and extremely competent, and he is one of the many reasons I'll miss shopping at that store when no longer a resident in the area.

In addition, he is one of those folks who can tell you where any item in the store is when you ask for a location . . . I don't know how they (supermarket clerks, in general) do it, but in Tom's case, he is seemingly always right . . . and I've never yet seen him look up even one item!

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2. FYI

Smiles predict marriage success
by Clara Moskowitz, Live Science

(April 13)--If you want to know whether your marriage will survive, look at your spouse's yearbook photos.

Psychologists have found that how much people smile in old photographs can predict their later success in marriage.

In one test, the researchers looked at people's college yearbook photos, and rated their smile intensity from 1 to 10. None of the people who fell within the top 10 percent of smile strength had divorced, while within the bottom 10 percent of smilers, almost one in four had had a marriage that ended, the researchers say. (Scoring was based on the stretch in two muscles: one that pulls up on the mouth, and one that creates wrinkles around the eyes.)

In a second trial, the research team asked people over age 65 to provide photos from their childhood (the average age in the pictures was 10 years old). The researchers scored each person's smile, and found that only 11 percent of the biggest smilers had been divorced, while 31 percent of the frowners had experienced a broken marriage.

Overall, the results indicate that people who frown in photos are five times more likely to get a divorce than people who smile. . . .

The results of the study fit into a larger pattern of research that has found many personality characteristics can be determined from very thin slices of behavior. Basically, we often reveal ourselves in the most subtle, simple ways.

And smiling in photographs has been shown to be correlated with a number

of traits, including a generally happier disposition. . . .

The findings are also notable because they found a connection between photos taken when people were young and marriage outcomes that sometimes occurred much later.

Extracted from a longer article that can be found by clicking:

<http://tinyurl.com/cby4w7>

FYI, part 2

* Charlotte in Pennsylvania:

Thanks for your interest in my work. I had a commission for a large painting for a factory in NJ. They subsequently sold it and moved to Utah, taking the painting with them. Now they have purchased two new paintings to balance the fireplace wall where the first painting is hanging. It's very gratifying.

MY TWO CENTS:

Charlotte is an amazing artist . . . you can see for yourself by clicking:

<http://charlotteschatz.com/>

* Freddie in New Jersey:

Great issue as always.

Can you please mention my message board called:

<http://nedthetoothpick.com>

It's for folks that enjoy good discussions regarding many issues, such as politics, religion and funny stuff.

I would appreciate it very much.

We are coming close to one million posts, and I would be happy to host your newsletter as well as promoting it.

We are a wild group of folk, but of course it's all Kosher.

Here is a sample of what we are all about:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PsiW8IYAago>

* Wendy in Pennsylvania:

This year's 2K Friendship Walk on May 3, 2009 is sure to make history!

Every week, Shelley and Ilana visit kids with special needs at their home and bring joy, laughter and friendship into these children's lives.

Shelley and Ilana are one of around 80 teenagers in our community who volunteer for the "Friendship Circle" which organizes these weekly visits and sponsors all types of programs and support groups for children with special needs and their families. In addition to introducing a whole new dimension of connection and respite into the lives of children

with special needs and their families, the Friendship Circle inspires the teenagers with the ideals of leadership, selflessness and sacrifice. It is an amazing program for everyone involved!

On Sunday, May 3rd, our family will be walking for the benefit of children with conditions like Down's syndrome, ADD, autism and other such physical and/or emotional challenges. It is our goal to raise \$500 with our 2K effort.

Would you please be a sponsor of our effort and help us reach our goal?

Thank you so much!

PS. Contributions to the Friendship Circle are tax-deductible. Any amount will help. Please help us go that extra mile. Follow This Link to visit my personal web page and help me in my efforts to support Friendship Circle Philadelphia North.

Here's the link:

<http://tinyurl.com/dd7ty4>

* Mary in Pennsylvania:

We have just received a supply of nomination forms for the Fall 2009 Academic Scholarship for Returning Students to Bucks County Community College. The deadline for receipt of nominations is Friday, May 1, 2009, and the completed forms should be turned in to the Academic Affairs Office, Tyler 122.

MY REQUEST:

If you're a returning student to Bucks and you'd be interested in having me nominate you, please let me know at once . . . even if you've previously expressed interest in this scholarship, please remind me.

* Ken in Pennsylvania (responding to my April Fool's prank of a few weeks ago, in which I saw I was moving back to Washington Crossing, PA):

I was ready to try to get my neighbors to move out. (NOT Rosie, of course!)

* Ken in New York:

I stayed to the final curtain in DUPLICITY . . . I wish I had your sense and walked out an hour earlier. I also like both actors, but there was absolutely no warmth between them. The only saving grace (early in the movie so you must have seen it) is that it was shot in Lord & Taylor.

* Debbie in New York:

As I was reading your newsletter and reached the section where you talked about IE, the first thought that entered my mind was writing about Firefox (Mozilla). It is a free download @ mozilla.com. The program far outshines anything IE does and runs more smoothly. You should check it out.

* Sharon in North Carolina:

What you offer in your reviews of restaurants, movies, plays, businesses, etc. is your opinion about "products" and if readers suggest products/items

they have used or recommend, or have to sell, it's no different. Further, in your BLAINESWORLD column, it's mentioned to "Network Network Network" . . . and that's what people are doing when they send in their suggestions of items to sell. All items may not interest everyone, but I'm certain all of your reviews and suggestions for things to don't interest everyone also. I look forward to your email each week. Since you asked, your instincts of what to include are perfectly fine with me!

* Robin in Pennsylvania:

Have you thought about creating a blog? Seems you'd be a natural. While I loved the idea of you returning to the area, I'm glad to hear the idea was an April Fool's joke. You need at least six months to settle into a new place. Thanks, as always, for all the terrific information.

* Walt in Pennsylvania:

In your newsletter, you said that the men's department was on the first floor, by the exits, where men don't wade thru aisles looking for deals, etc. For men, shopping is catch it, bag it, and bring it home. We don't shop.

For women, shopping is an experience; they plan a day with lunch.

* Mary Lou in North Carolina:

Your April Fool's joke WAS NOT FUNNY! I really fell for it--until I read down the page!!

I must comment on your piece about the pizza in Brevard. If you have not yet tried Asheville Pizza and Brew on Merrimon Avenue, you must. It is our favorite place for pizza and beer, and you can take in a movie for \$2 as well. I think popcorn is \$1. Great place-. Rather eclectic clientele and strange ambience. The pizza is thin and not the Chicago type.

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3. Those were the days

A grandmother was telling her little granddaughter what her own childhood was like:

"We used to skate outside on a pond. I had a swing made from a tire; it hung from a tree in our front yard. We rode our pony. We picked wild raspberries in the woods."

The little girl was wide-eyed, taking this all in. At last she said, "I sure wish I'd gotten to know you sooner!"

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4. Reviews

A. ADVENTURELAND is billed as a coming-of-age comedy, but frankly, I don't recall laughing very much . . . it traces the tale of a recent college grad who takes a summer job as a games attendant at a local amusement park . . . what I did like was the acting of Jesse Eisenberg in the main role, as well as

Kisten Stewart's work as the woman who captures his heart . . . though the film got very good reviews, I wouldn't recommend that you rush out to see it . . . rated R.

B. THE WRESTLER is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #642 follows:

Micky Rourke gives an Oscar-winning performance in THE WRESTLER, a moving drama about a has-been whose life is falling apart . . . it is a film that is often violent, but always compelling . . . Marisa Tomei is also excellent as a stripper who is Rourke's only true friend . . . I still have THE WRESTLER in my mind and imagine that it will be there for quite some time . . . even if you're not a wrestling fan, catch it . . . rated R.

C. Malcom Gladwell is rapidly becoming one of my favorite authors . . . his brilliant first book, THE TIPPING POINT, was followed-up with an equally compelling second effort, BLINK . . . and his most recent effort, OUTLIERS, is perhaps his best to date.

Subtitled THE STORY OF SUCCESS, it gets you thinking from the very beginning about why some people succeed far more than others . . . for example, I never imagined that when you were born could affect whether you'd be a success in sports or even in school . . . but as the author notes:

* Hockey and soccer are just games, of course, involving a select few. But these exact same biases also show up in areas of much more consequences, like education. Parents with a child born at the end of the calendar often think about holding their child back before the start of kindergarten: it's hard for a five-year-old to keep up with a child born many months earlier. But most parents, one suspects, think that whatever disadvantage a younger child faces in kindergarten eventually goes away. But it doesn't. It's just like hockey. The small initial advantage that the child born in the early part of the year has over the child born at the end of the year persists. It locks children into patterns of achievement and underachievement, encouragement and discouragement, that stretch on and on for years.

Gladwell then goes on to dissect the greatness of pro athletes and entertainers, explaining that while it is important to have natural ability, much hard work is every bit as important:

* The Beatles ended up traveling to Hamburg five times between 1960 and the end of 1962. On the first trip, they played 106 nights, five or more hours a night. On their second trip, they played 92 times. On their third trip, they played 48 times, for a total of 171 hours on stage. The last two Hamburg gigs, in November and December of 1962, involved another 90 hours of performing. All told, they performed for 270 nights in just over a year and a half. By the time they had their first burst of success in 1964, in fact, they had performed live an estimated twelve hundred times. Do you know how extraordinary that is? Most bands today don't perform twelve hundred in their entire careers. The Hamburg crucible is one of the things that set the Beatles apart.

And when it comes to success in mathematics, Gladwell contends that we need to revisit our entire thinking about schooling in America:

* Suddenly the causes of Asian math superiority become even more obvious.

Students in Asian schools don't have long summer vacations. Why would they? Cultures that believe that the route to success lies in rising before dawn 360 days a year are scarcely going to give their children three straight months off in the summer. The school year in the United States is, on average, 180 days long. The South Korean school year is 220 days long. The Japanese school year is 243 days long.

Space prevents me from listing many other fascinating examples of success cited in *OUTLIERS* . . . however, if you're always wondered how Bill Gates became as wealthy as he is . . . or why certain airplanes crash more than others . . . then this is the book for you.

You will truly not want to put it down once you begin reading . . . in addition, after you read it, you'll find yourself discussing Gladwell's ideas (as I have been doing) for quite some time.

D. Heard *BLACK MUTINY*, a novel written by William Owens in 1953 . . . it is a historical retelling of the true story of 53 illegally enslaved African who revolted against their captors . . . when their ship was intercepted and seized by the United States Navy, they were forced to stand trial for mutiny and murder in a case that reached the Supreme Court.

If any of this sounds familiar, it is because you may have seen *ARMISTAD*, a movie that was based on Owen's book . . . I found the tale a fascinating one; however, its execution left me wanting something more--perhaps a non-fiction account.

It was difficult to discern what exactly was fact and what was fiction . . . in fact, after listening, I then went online to research what actually happened.

Yet that said, *BLACK MUTINY* did make me more fully appreciate the many Americans who did stand up to oppose slavery before it was abolished . . . and, also, made me realize that there were far too many others who stood by and did nothing.

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5. TV alert

A. Catch Ed Begley, Jr. hosting *GREENER LIVING* on Wednesday at 10 p.m. on QVC . . . you'll learn how to take small steps that can help you live green every day.

B. *PAUL RODRIGUEZ & FRIENDS; COMEDY REHAB* airs on Friday at 11 p.m. on COMEDY CENTRAL . . . if you've been feeling down lately because of the recession or any other reason, methinks this will be just the show to lift your spirits.

C. My daughter Risa and her husband JP have been telling me for quite some time that I should watch a show on *FOOD NETWORK* that features my kind of food . . . so with that recommendation, I'll watch *THE BEST OF DINERS, DRIVE-INS AND DIVES* on Saturday at 8 p.m.

D. *LIVING OUT LOUD* stars Gail Grady as a breast cancer survivor who gets a second chance at life . . . Saturday at 9 p.m. on *HALLMARK*.

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6. Retirement dinner

After 25 years in the parish, a priest was being honored at his retirement dinner. A leading local politician and member of the congregation was chosen to make the presentation and to give a little speech at the dinner.

However, he was delayed, so the priest decided to say his own few words while they waited:

"I got my first impression of the parish from the first confession I heard here. I thought I had been assigned to a terrible place. The very first person who entered my confessional told me he had stolen a television set and, when questioned by the police, was able to lie his way out of it.

"He had stolen money from his parents, embezzled from his employer, had an affair with his boss's wife, taken illegal drugs, and gave VD to his sister. I was appalled.

"But as the days went on I learned that my people were not all like that and I had, indeed, come to a fine parish full of good and loving people."

Just as the priest finished his talk, the politician arrived full of apologies at being late. He immediately began to make the presentation and gave his talk:

"I'll never forget the first day our parish priest arrived," said the politician. "In fact, I had the honor of being the first person to go to him for confession."

Moral: Never, never, never be late!

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7. Websites

A. Natalie in New Jersey sent along the following websites that's as fine a tribute to a politician that you'll ever see:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fY79KbCptTo>

It will also make you want to send this along to your local politicians, union leaders, etc.--actually, to anybody who is in a position to make a difference for others

B. Nancy in North Carolina sent this website about what it is like to fly on Southwest Airlines:

<http://tinyurl.com/c3ej5l>

I'm sure not all flights are like this, but just imagine if they were!

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

That dapper guy on the right is yours truly . . . to see what gets my attention, move your mouse over my eyes and then drag it to left to any of the subjects there . . . when you do, pay attention to my eyes!

D. For more information about Susan Boyle, the overnight singing sensation on BRITAIN'S GOT TALENT (mentioned in last week's issue), please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/djkpf7>

Yet it now appears that she will be challenged by a 12-year-old boy named Shaheen Jafargholi . . . you can see his appearance by clicking:

<http://tinyurl.com/co8ba2>

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8. Computer tip

Too often, I've been including very long URLs; e.g., for you to click for more information.

That was then; this is now.

I will now try to go to a very helpful website:

<http://www.tinyurl.com>

It takes very long URLs and greatly reduces them . . . for instance, in Section 2, the original URL was 177 characters . . . it is now 25 . . . quite a difference!

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9. School, then vs. now , part 1 of 2

Scenario #1: Jack goes rabbit shooting before school, pulls into school parking lot with rifle in gun rack.

1959: Vice principal comes over, looks at Jack's rifle, goes to his car and gets his rifle and chats with Jack about guns.

2009: School goes into lock down, Star Force called, Jack hauled off to jail and never sees his ute or gun again. Counselors called in for traumatized students and teachers.

Scenario #2: Johnny and Mark get into a fistfight after school.

1959: Crowd gathers. Mark wins. Johnny and Mark shake hands and end up buddies.

2009: Police called, SWAT team arrives, arrests Johnny and Mark. Charge them with assault, both expelled even though Johnny started it.

Scenario #3: Robbie won't be still in class, disrupts other students.

1959: Robbie sent to office and given six of the best by the principal. Returns to class, sits still and does not disrupt class again.

2009: Robbie given huge doses of Ritalin. Becomes a zombie. Tested for ADD. School gets extra money from state because Robbie has a disability.

Scenario #4: Billy breaks a window in his neighbor's car and his Dad gives him a whipping with his belt.

1959: Billy is more careful next time, grows up normal, goes to college and becomes a successful businessman.

2009: Billy's dad is arrested for child abuse. Billy removed to foster care and joins a gang. State psychologist tells Billy's sister that she remembers being abused herself and their dad goes to prison. Billy's mom has affair with psychologist.

(to be concluded next week)

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10. A quote I like

In honor of Wednesday being Earth Day, here's a Native American proverb that I think says it all:

We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.

For more information about Earth Day, please click:

<http://www.earthday.net/>

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11. Thought for the day

Last week, THE COURAGEOUS HEART OF IRENA SENDLER was a TV-movie that ran on CBS . . . it was as fine a production as I've seen in quite some time . . . look for it to be repeated and/or when it gets released as a DVD . . . in the meantime, if you missed it, her true-life story follows:

The prize doesn't always go to the most deserving; it goes to those who want to push the agenda. See below and you will see why:

There recently was a death of a 98 year-old lady named Irena Sendler. During WWII, she got permission to work in the Warsaw Ghetto, as a plumbing/sewer specialist. She had an "ulterior motive" . . . being German, she KNEW what the Nazi's plans were for the Jews

So Irena smuggled infants out in the bottom of the tool box she carried, and she carried in the back of her truck a burlap sack (for larger kids). She also had a dog in the back that she trained to bark when the Nazi soldiers let her in and out of the ghetto. The soldiers, of course, wanted nothing to do with the dog, and the barking covered the kids' noises.

During her time of doing this, she managed to smuggle out and save some 2,500 children. She was caught, and the Nazi soldiers broke both her legs and arms and beat her severely.

Irena kept a record of the names of all the kids she smuggled out and kept them in a glass jar, buried under a tree in her back yard. After the war, she tried to locate any parents that may have survived it so that she could reunite them with their families.

Unfortunately, most had been gassed. Those kids she helped got placed into foster family homes or were adopted.

Irena was up for the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. She was not selected.

Al Gore won instead . . . for a slide show on global warming.

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

THE REST OF THE STORY:

The above is one of those stories that gets passed around on the Internet that is actually true . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.snopes.com/politics/war/sendler.asp>

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12. Advance planning department

A. The Actors NET of Bucks County presents BOOTH
by Austin Pendleton

May 29-June 14, 2009

Following the successful run of *ORSON'S SHADOW* in February, the ActorsNET presents another backstage tale by Austin Pendleton. Based on the true story of Junius Brutus Booth, a tormented, alcoholic, 19th-century actor. His glory would be forgotten, while son Edwin would win fame as a great actor and his other son, John Wilkes, would win infamy as Lincoln's assassin. "As the twig is bent, so grows the tree . . ."

You won't want to miss this one because it stars one of my favorite local actors, George Hartpence, as Julius Brutus Booth . . . his presence alone guarantees an excellent show . . . in addition, others featured in the cast include Tom Smith as Edwin Booth; Ben Weinstein as John Wilkes Booth; Carol Thompson as Mary Ann, the mother of Booth's children; and Susan Fowler as Adelaide, his wife.

For more information, please click:

<http://actorsnetbucks.org/>

B. Book discussion at the Lower Bucks Campus Library of Bucks County Community College in Bristol, PA.

Join us for an informal discussion of *The Soloist* by Steve Lopez at the Lower Bucks Campus Library on Thursday, April 30th, 12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.

The book discussion is sponsored by the Margaret R. Grundy Memorial Library. Copies of the book are available to borrow through the Lower Bucks Campus Library.

The book discussion is open to students, faculty, BCCC staff and the community.

C. Maria in Pennsylvania:

Please join "Hope for the Animals" for their 2nd Annual Casino Night and Auction. The event will benefit Boris & Natasha's Fund, which supplements the cost of emergency veterinary care for area homeless and rescued dogs and cats. Hope for the Animals is a non-profit, no-kill, animal rescue organization serving Bucks County, PA and the surrounding areas.

The 2nd Annual Casino Night & Auction will be a night to remember with blackjack, craps, roulette and poker; full buffet dinner and cash bar; silent and live auction including a live bachelor auction featuring some of Bucks County's Most Eligible Bachelors; live entertainment and dancing. The event will be held on Saturday, May 2nd, 2009 at 7:30-11:30 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus at 1492 Woodburne Road in Levittown and catered by Georgine's.

For more information about Hope for the Animals' 2nd Annual Casino Night & Auction Event or on making a life-saving donation, please visit:

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

D. Joey in New Jersey:

Our next Louder Than Words Story Telling will be at Maxwell's in Hoboken, NJ on Tuesday, May 26th and hereafter (hopefully), the last Tuesday of each month.

For more information, please go to:

<http://www.louderthanwordsstories.com>

Some important details:

- * Story tellers can experience a new venue for story telling.
- * Stand-up comedians have the opportunity to exercise a "creative muscle" beyond your current stand-up comedy act.
- * Real people from all walks of life can share their true stories.
- * Actors and writers can experience creating the beginnings of a one-person show in front of a real audience.

Please feel to contact me if you're interested in appearing at Louder Than Words!

Joey Novick
908.89. 6859
joeynovick@earthlink.net

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her

neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#654

4.13.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I got to scatter the ashes of our beloved cat Shanti over the lake behind our home . . . when doing so, Cynthia read this poem to commemorate the occasion:

Goodbye
by John Quealy

With heavy hearts and a tear in our eyes
after all these years, we must say goodbye.
Please understand we've done all we could
if there was anything we could do, you know we would.

I'm sitting right here, gently rubbing your ears
while I talk to you softly, trying to hold back the tears.
The memories you gave us we'll never forget,
especially the ones of the day we all met.

One last hug and one last kiss
you have no idea how much you'll be missed;
To look into your eyes this one last time
you tell me it's ok, you know it's your time.

Close your eyes now and go to sleep
we'll pray to the Lord you' soul he'll keep.
Go in peace now our good friend
we'll stay right here with you until the end.

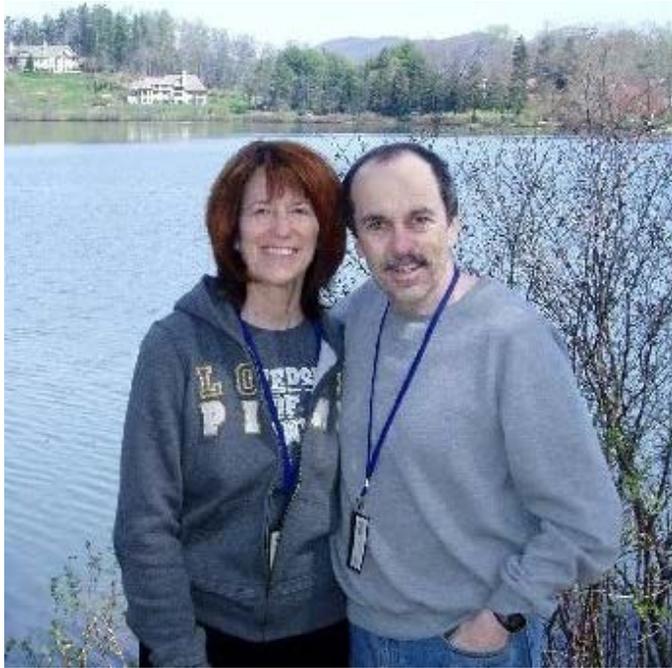
Dream of that special day and time
when we'll meet at the bridge and all will be fine.
We'll run and play, side by side
with a soft warm feeling deep down inside.

Your memory will live on in each one of us
you'll always be number 1 to all of us.
Have a safe journey through the night

I promise when you awake, you'll be in God's light.

So with heavy hearts and tears in our eyes
just for now my friend, we say goodbye.

B. Many readers have asked to see what I keep raving about; i.e., that lake . . . and also the mountains that surround us . . . so by popular request, please see below for a picture of the two of us in front of the view we see every time we drive into our development:



C. Much of the week, I spent in Bucks County, PA . . . two events struck me as memorable.

At Bucks County Community College, I presided over the last General Meeting as president of the teacher's union . . . I was moved by the standing ovation the group gave me after my monthly report.

And then one night, I got to eat dinner with my good friends Kevin and Ginny . . . we went to Paganini Cafe & Pizza in Doylestown, PA (215.348.9600) . . . there's quite an eclectic menu, and our food was all good . . . I stuck with what's rapidly becoming a staple for me: a chicken wrap . . . however, the highlight of the evening was going back to their home where Kevin entertained us by playing a collection of Sinatra tunes that he had recorded . . . I was impressed.

D. I LOVE to hear good news about friends, as well as readers . . . so please do keep those emails and/or letters coming.

This past week, there seemed to be a lot of information about some of my favorite folks--including the following:

* CONGRATULATIONS to Tony Wolf, named as recipient of the 2009 Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award at Bucks County Community College . . . a better choice couldn't have been made!

* CONGRATULATIONS, also, to Suzanne Smith . . . she's our

favorite local realtor (who helped us purchase our home in Asheville) who has also become our good friend . . . she recently was certified as an Accredited Staging Professional . . . so she now can add that designation to the other impressive certifications after her name, including CRS, ABR, SRES, CNHS and GREEN . . . I have no idea what all these letters stand for, but if you'd like to find out more, contact her directly at 828.551.4609 or via email, suzannesmith54@gmail.com.

You also won't go wrong having Suzanne as your realtor, particularly if looking to join us anywhere in the western part of North Carolina.

* And Roberta Mayer, a teaching colleague of mine at Bucks, was mentioned in THE NEW YORK TIMES:

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/03/arts/design/03anti.html?_r=1&emc=eta1

In addition, she just won a book award from the Metropolitan Chapter of the Victorian Society.

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

This week, it goes to Sue Hinkle--a former student who is now assisting me with the smoke cessation programs I'm running as my sabbatical project this semester.

The highest compliment I can pay anybody I've ever taught is to hire them, and this is the second time I've hired Sue to work for me.

She is a natural in this latest project, in that she had been a one-time smoker . . . thus she can really relate to the participants.

Sue has been doing a great job, keeping in touch with everybody . . . she has also led some of the lively group discussions.

In addition, Sue is one of most knowledgeable individuals I know when it comes to holistic health matters . . . I have frequently turned to her for advice and have been impressed with both her advice and knowledge.

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2. FYI

The Challenge: Baking and roasting pans with a layer of gunk that never seems to wash off no matter how hard you scrub.

Make Do: Soak with water and a dryer sheet--overnight is best. We've gotten unanimous approval ratings on this one.

Go All the Way: Get to the problem before it even starts. Lay two sheets of aluminum foil across the bottom of the pan. It'll serve as a buffer and keep the food from sticking. We found this one from the trusty folks over at TheKitchn.com.

SOURCE:

You'll find the above and a lot more useful tips by clicking:

http://home.aol.com/organize/photo-gallery/cleaning-tips/_a/nasty-cleaning-tasks-tackled/20090320140309990001?icid=main|htmlws-main|dl3|link3|http%3A%2F%2Fhome.aol.com%2Forganize%2Fphoto-gallery%2Fcleaning-tips%2F_a%2Fnasty-cleaning-tasks-tackled%2F20090320140309990001

FYI, part 2

MANY THANKS to all those who wrote us about Shanti . . . see below for just a small sampling of the emails and letters that we received . . . please feel free to skip over this section if you don't want to read them.

* Mandy in Pennsylvania:

My Dad, who is and always has been my hero, once told me that a wise woman once told him "When you get the chills from something that you observe, read, or hear, it means that you are witnessing the TRUTH." I'm grateful, thanks to you and Cynthia, your beautiful bride, for sharing your beautiful relationship.

* Jeannie in Pennsylvania:

Cynthia's words are so full of describing you and so very thoughtful and loving. I thank you for having her in your column praising you, her husband, with so much insight and kindness. Thank you for sharing that with all of us.

* Donna in New Jersey:

Cynthia's note made my cry. Very sweet and touching. Losing a pet is like losing a member of our family.

* Terri in Pennsylvania:

So sad about your kitty. What Cynthia contributed brought tears to my eyes. Making the decision to put your pet down is stressful and heart breaking. It is certainly something in life that no one should do alone. Glad you had each other!

* Debbie in New York:

So sorry to hear about Shanti. Coping with the loss of a member of the family (human or furry) is difficult. Our heartfelt sympathy to you and Cynthia.

It's an awful thing when you have to put a pet to sleep. We have a cat, "Boot Kitty Babies," a beautiful Maine coon . . . who I've been bringing to Cornell University Animal Hospital for glaucoma treatment since January and more recently a local vet for bladder problems.

I know in the future that eventually we're going to have to put him down, and it breaks my heart to think about it. The way that I've been trying to deal with the whole thing is to tell myself that no one could love him more or treat him better. I too brush him, carry him around and talk to him, rub my forehead against his and rub his belly . . . at end of the day, he's having the best life possible, as I'm sure Shanti did.

Your story was very helpful to me. Thank you for sharing.

* Julien in Maryland:

Please accept my sympathy over the loss of your dear pet and long-time

companion. Having lost three pets myself, I know the sadness you feel. I too wondered at the time where our furry friends went and I have to agree with Blaine's response, "They all live in our hearts every time we think about them." God Bless.

* Barbara in New Jersey:

We were both sorry to hear about your kitty.

I believe there is one big heaven that includes everyone and everything--even bugs. . . .

Our pets hang out with those who are waiting for us over there. They know who they are since animals are really angels sent to make life more tolerable. And when its our time to cross over, they know our smell and run like the goofballs they are (they are like puppies and kitties cause there is no pain or age) right into our arms.

The people souls we know just sort of stand there and smile, welcoming us but pets are a whole other spectrum of a welcome. There is also no poop to worry about in heaven either, so you never have to watch where you step.

Whenever I had to put one of my kids down, I did it for them although I wish I could hold on to them just a little longer. But it was my way of thanking them for making my life so much richer by letting them go peacefully. And my face is the last thing they see.

* John in Pennsylvania:

Sorry to read about the loss of Shanti.. Went through that a few years ago with my wife's cat that I came to know and love after we moved in together.

* Tracy in South Carolina:

I am so sorry to hear about your cat. I am a Vet Tech, and I know from my job and from personal experience that it is very hard to lose a member of the family. My heart goes out to you and your wife during this difficult time.

* Roger in Pennsylvania:

I am sorry for the loss of your kitty. Our animal companions are members of our family and when they pass on we miss them as much as any member of our family.

* Kathe in Pennsylvania:

So sorry to hear about Shanti. Coping with the loss of a member of the family (human or furry) is difficult. Our heartfelt sympathy to you and Cynthia.

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3. Bad break

"I told the doctor I broke my leg in two places," noted comedian Henny Youngman. "He told me to quit going to those places."

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4. Reviews

A. SUNSHINE CLEANING is a quirky comedy-drama, stars Amy Adams and Emily Blunt (so fine in THE GREAT BUCK HOWARD, a film I reviewed last week) as two sisters who join forces to start a crime-scene cleanup business . . . parts of it are funny, while others are quite touching . . . the supporting cast includes Alan Arkin and Steve Zahn, both among my favorite actors . . . it will remind you of LITTLE MISS SUSHINE, and that's no surprise given that the producers were the same . . . rated R.

B. Enjoyed MARLEY AND ME, now out on DVD, a family comedy about a dog who never met a leg he didn't like . . . he even got kicked out of obedience school (in perhaps the funniest scene in the film) . . . Owen Wilson and Jennifer Aniston are perfect as the couple who first take on the dog, then a family . . . the ending was a bit upsetting and may make some cautious about watching this with very young kids . . . rated PG.

C. What did James Brown and Muhammad Ali have in common?

They both took much of their act from GORGEOUS GEORGE, an entertaining biography by John Capoya . . . it tells the story of the transformation of journeyman wrestler George Wagner from a dark-haired clean-cut good guy to a blond braggart who cheated whenever he got the chance . . . he also drove crowds wild back in the early 1950s when wrestling first gained widespread popularity.

In reading it, I was also reminded of THE WRESTLER (the recent film)--particularly this one passage:

* Wrestling was becoming family television fare, but the Romans in the arenas still went berserk at the sight of gladiatorial blood. The subset of wrestlers down as "blade men" gave theirs intentionally. To get heat, a boy would conceal an eighth-of-an-inch razor blade on a wrist or finger, fixing it there with tape. When his opponent slammed him face-first into a turnbuckle, he'd put a hand to his forehead, drawing the cutting tool across it and opening up a slash that gushed crimson. When the crowd saw the blood, or "juice," running down his face and neck and staining the mat below, it let out a primal roar. A star like George would never have to resort to blading or "getting color," as it was also known. But quite a few other did, their foreheads gradually becoming hatch-marked with tiny whitish scars.

Though the wrestling parts of the book were interesting, I found his story out of the ring even more fascinating . . . such as this account of when he met Ali (then Cassius Clay) and told him:

* "You got your good looks, a great body, and you've got a good mouth on you. Talk about how pretty you are, tell 'em how great you are. And a lot of people will pay to see somebody shut your big mouth. So keep on bragging, keep on sassing and always be outrageous."

And then there was this account of his appearance on Eddie Cantor's radio show:

* This segment ended with Cantor asking his guest star: "There is one thing I always wanted to know. What makes you call yourself

Gorgeous?"

To which George answered: "Honesty."

I was moved by Capoya's portrayal of George toward the end of his career--and particularly the description of the bout he lost and was forced to have his curls shaved in the ring . . . things went steadily downhill afterwards, and when he died at 48, he was both broke and virtually friendless.

Adding greatly to my enjoyment of the book were the pictures from the various stages of his career . . . they really helped me understand his popularity and why he had been such a cultural icon.

D. Heard THE MAN IN THE BLACK SUIT, four unabridged short stories by Stephen King.

Although I've liked some of the movies that have been made out of King's work, I've never actually read (or listened to) very much by him until this collection . . . and now, having spent several hours listening to these tales, I'm not sure I want to read too much more by this acclaimed author.

The very first story, "The Man in the Black Suit," just didn't do anything for me . . . its' about a suicidal father, which to begin with, is not one of my favorite topics . . . overall, it was a gloomy beginning to what followed.

Only one story kept my attention: "The Death of Jack Hamilton" . . . it is about John Dillinger and Hamilton, his friend, over the last days of the latter's life . . . I don't know if things happened exactly as they are written here, but it didn't really matter . . . I was entertained from beginning to end.

The other two stories were so-so, at best . . . fortunately, the narration was not done by King but by a quartet of professional actors: Becky Ann Baker, John Cullum, Peter Gerety and Arliss Howard . . . they all were just fine.

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5. TV alert

A. Kathy Griffin is in a stand-up show, then she hosts THE A-LIST AWARDS on Wednesday at 9 p.m. on BRAVO.

B. Amber Tamblyn, so fine in JOAN OF ARCADIA, takes on the role of a tough cop in THE UNUSUALS . . . Wednesdays at 10 p.m. on ABC.

C. GREY GARDENS has Jessica Lange and Drew Barrymore playing the real-life mother-daughter act of Edith and Edie Bealer, faded East Hampton society belles . . . TV GUIDE says the film is both "mesmerizing and creepy" . . . Saturday at 8 p.m. on HBO.

D THE COURAGEOUS HEART OF IRENA SENDLER stars Anna Paquin in the true story of a social worker in Nazi-occupied Poland who smuggles Jewish children out of the Warsaw Ghetto to safety from deportation . . . Sunday at 9 p.m. on CBS.

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6. Technology's effect

Fax machines can have a great effect on politicians. Somebody just sent a fax message to every member of our state legislature.

Each fax message was exactly the same: "The press has found out everything."

Both houses of the legislature emptied out within thirty minutes.

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7. Websites

A. As you type, she speaks . . . see for yourself by clicking:

<http://www.oddcast.com/home/demos/tts/frameset.php?frame1=talk>

This is toooooo cool . . . you can even change the person doing the talking and perhaps best of all, you can choose from 24 different languages!

B. A lot of folks on Facebook are circulating information about an amazing singer called Susan Boyle . . . to see the full version of her appearance on BRITAIN'S GOT TALENT, please click:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXX_gMFeWlc

It is worth watching, if just to get the opportunity to see Simon Cowell smile!

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

To see past issues of this missive, see "Newsletter" on left, then "Past Issues" . . . there's a search engine box at the top . . . for example, it recently helped me revisit this great quote from BLAINESWORLD #512:

The mind and body are connected. When Nixon was lying through his teeth, he got phlebitis in his leg. The body expresses what the mind is trying to suppress. But if you have a positive attitude, and the faith and love of people around you, you heal faster.--Christopher Reeve (1952-2004), American actor/author/humanitarian

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8. Computer tip

What's 11×2 and $37 + 19$? If you can answer such a total of three other math problems along the same lines (all at the 3rd grade math level), then you will be able to take advantage of a new email application from Google called Goggles.

It is what might be considered an email sobriety test . . . it allows users

to opt into a protective setting that effectively measures their sobriety before sending out late night emails.

While most sober emailers can control their urge to tell off their boss, ex-boyfriend or mother-in-law, the cybernannies at Google recognized that emailers who have drunk too much alcohol often lose access to their better judgment.

When you opt in to Mail Goggles, the feature is only active for late night hours on weekends, but you can go into General Settings and adjust what times you want Mail Goggles to be active depending on your own personal drinking patterns.

Unlike driving while drunk, emailing while drunk will not cause physical harm, but it could wreak emotional havoc. Google engineer Jon Perlow implied on his Gmail blog post that introduced Mail Goggles that he developed the new feature partly because he himself was a victim of reckless emailing. Perlow once sent a late night email to an ex-girlfriend suggesting they get back together.

In a way, it's too bad we can't use Mail Goggles' math quiz concept in other aspects of our life when we need help with impulse control. For instance, before saying something we regret to our spouse or children, we could first try to remember all the lyrics to our favorite song or the names of all our elementary school teachers.

SOURCE:

Based, in part, from material at this website:

http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/1090770/google_gmail_mail_goggles_helps_prevents.html?cat=15

IF YOU WANT TO GET USE MAIL GOGGLES:

You must first get and start using Gmail . . . you can do so by clicking:

<https://www.google.com/accounts/NewAccount?service=mail&continue=http%3A%2F%2Fmail.google.com%2Fmail%2Fe-11-aadf0cfb7991f8da6dd8f1a2eab6e-5500fced23529e365e086a498e3be036617e3d06&type=2>

Then go into Gmail's settings and turn on Mail Goggles in the "Labs" tab. You can adjust how and when it works in the "General" tab.

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9. Flight buddies

A Baptist preacher was seated next to a cowboy on a flight to Texas. After the plane took off, the cowboy asked for a whiskey and soda, which was brought and placed before him. The flight attendant then asked the preacher if he would like a drink.

Appalled, the preacher replied, "I'd rather be tied up and taken advantage of by women of ill-repute, than let liquor touch my lips."

The cowboy then handed his drink back to the attendant and said, "Me too, I didn't know we had a choice."

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10. A quote I like

Happiness is essentially a state of going somewhere, wholeheartedly, one-directionally, without regret or reservation.--William H. Sheldon (1898-1977), American psychologist

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11 Thought for the day

A cat's life

by Ted Gagne, DVM

When you first found me I heard you say,
"Little Kitty, have you lost your way?"
My eyes said yes, and I guess I knew
Just exactly what you would do.

You reached for me as I tried to discover:
Should I take a chance or run for cover?
But tired and hungry and sadly alone,
I was desperately in need of a friendly home.

Your hands spoke of kindness and safety too,
You carried me in and before peeking from afar
Brought me warm milk and tuna named "Star."

You hoped I'd stay, and that I did;
But behind the sofa I usually hid.
The days passed on but not my despair
Until we shared your favorite chair.

How happy you were when I saw fit
To finally with you enjoy a sit.
You stroked my head and combed my fur,
And I gave thanks with a new found purr.

From that day there was no doubt:
We both knew what it was all about.
Love and joy with trust were there,
And year after year the best of care.

I hope you know how much I cared
For you and the life we daily shared.
No more of you could I expect or ask,
But sadly for you there's one more task.

Because the day will come when we must part
A time I know will break your heart.
If I could I'd help you decide,
But your love for me will be your guide.

Please don't let me linger when my time has come,
And there's nothing more that can be done.
Let me go to my final rest.
Knowing as always you've done your best.

Go with fond memories from when I first heard you say,
"Little Kitty have you lost your way?"

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12 Advance planning department

A. Mei in Pennsylvania:

Please come to a Dance Show that will help raise money for Red Cross and Habit for Humanity. It takes place on Wednesday night at 7 p.m. at Bucks County Community College (in the Library Auditorium) in Newtown, PA.

I'll be dancing, along with Tim Respass and a whole bunch of others.

Tickets are just \$5.

B. If you're anywhere near Allentown, PA, check this place out (that Joe in Pennsylvania emailed me about):

Bulgari Collection Brings Automotive Elegance of a Bygone Era to America On Wheels

America On Wheels (AOW) transportation museum celebrates its First Anniversary in April, marking a successful inaugural year that brought a visit from Indy legend Mario Andretti, a congratulatory letter from late-night talk show host Jay Leno and approximately 30,000 visitors who enjoyed two highly popular changing exhibits, numerous educational programs and the institution's growing reputation as a new hotspot for auto enthusiasts across the nation.

A Birthday Celebration is scheduled for 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 18, with a visit from "Herbie, the Love Bug," the Volkswagen Beetle that became an icon in the 1969 film. In addition, the Minsi Trails Boy Scout Trexler District Pinewood Derby Finals will start at 9 a.m. and from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., British car enthusiast Richard Miller will hold an interactive discussion on the "Post-World War II Invasion of the British Cars."

For more information, call the museum staff at 610.432.4200 or please click:

<http://www.americaonwheels.org>

C. Carole in New Jersey:

Help needed for this Sunday, April 19.

Again this year, the Mercer County Million Mom March Chapter will be hosting a gun violence prevention information table at the Law Enforcement Expo being held at the Quakerbridge Mall, Lawrenceville, NJ from 11 am.-6 p.m.

PLEASE consider volunteering to help at our table this year. We currently have someone scheduled to set up by 11:00 and remain until approximately 2:30. As this is a full-day event, we're hoping to get *at least two others* to fill in until wrap-up at 6:00. .

This is always a very popular event with police cars and police dogs on hand as well as numerous community organizations. It attracts quite a crowd.

Please respond by return email if you can volunteer: mercermmm@gmail.com.

For more information about our group, please click:

<http://www.millionmommarch.org>

D. Berta in New Jersey:

The **Taskforce For Humanity Coalition** is an organization I am involved with to make this world a better place. We are having a conference on October 10th at Seton Hall University in South Orange, NJ.

The purpose of this conference is to inspire a humanitarian consciousness and to motivate people to make a personal contribution to creating a better, more compassionate world. We wish to demonstrate, using creative, dynamic and compelling techniques various ways, many very simple, each individual or group can make a difference.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.suntfprograms.iwarp.com/index.html>

You can buy half-priced tickets now for only \$10 (to cover the cost of renting Seton Hall space). Please come; you make a difference.

I will be leading at least one workshop, and there are other exciting events and giveaways during the day.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

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#653

4.6.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had to put one of our cats to sleep . . . Shanti, once a beautiful, vibrant fluffball, had recently gotten a tumor . . . unfortunately, it grew far too rapidly for us to do anything about it.

Shanti, along with Precious and Tiger, had been Cynthia's before we were married . . . they quickly became mine as I took on the role of being their stepdad . . . in particular, I'll remember Shanti because she was the first of the cats to welcome me into Cynthia's life . . . she (Shanti, that is and not Cynthia) let me feed her treats and brush her . . . I was even able to teach her a trick; i.e., to jump for her snack . . . or maybe, it was she who taught me how to hold it up just right?

B. Over the weekend, I attended the 2009 Higher Education Coalition Conference in Plymouth Meeting, PA . . . it was the last one I'll probably be attending, having gone to them for some 20-plus years.

Two moments stand out for me . . . I got to speak to my esteemed colleague, Rhoda McFadden--president of the Federation of Teachers at Montgomery County Community College . . . in doing so, I realized how much I'll miss her . . . it was a joy working with her for most of the above time period . . . she has always been generous with both her time and ideas.

I can also say the same about Karen Schermerhorn, president of the same group at Philadelphia County Community College . . . Karen was always there for me when I needed an answer via email or on the phone, and she too had many worthwhile suggestions for me over the years.

And at one of the meal functions, I was presented with a beautiful plaque . . . that's yours truly on the left and Ted Kirsch,

AFT president, on the right:



(THANKS to Jared Freedman for taking and sharing the photo.)

Since you can't read the inscription, I'll share it with you here:

The American Federation Of Teachers Pennsylvania

Presents this award to

BLAINE GREENFIELD

In recognition of your many years of service as the President
of the Bucks County Community College Federation of Teachers

April 3, 2009

Jim Freeman, my longtime friend and colleague at Bucks, then embarrassed
me somewhat by writing the following for our Union newsletter:

Of greatest importance to our local on Friday's agenda, Local President
Blaine Greenfield received a Distinguished Service Award from AFTPA
President Ted Kirsch for Blaine's 32 years of unionism and quality
teaching at BCCC, 24 of those years as a local officer and over a decade
as our President. Genuinely surprised, Blaine earned a standing ovation
from the large roomful of delegates and spoke briefly and humorously,
as only he can, about his distinguished union career. Congratulations,
Blaine! And thank you! We are going to miss you and will count on
your ongoing vision and advice.

C. On Sunday, I got to see DEFIANCE at the Bristol Riverside
Theatre in Bristol, PA . . . this is a riveting drama about life
in the military in 1971, set in North Carolina's Camp Lejeune . . . catch
it through April 12 for outstanding performances by all in the cast
of six, but in particular to see the two leads: Lindsay Smiling
and Keith Baker . . . direction by Susan D. Atkinson was
equally outstanding.

TO NOTE:

John Patrick Shanley wrote this play . . . if you don't know the name, you will soon . . . his previous claim to fame was DOUBT . . . Shanley is now working on the final piece in what he says will be a trilogy . . . I'll be looking forward to that one.

For more information about tickets, please click:

<http://www.brtstage.org/>

Afterward, I concluded a near-perfect day by going to Zebra-Striped Whale in Newtown for some ice cream, at which time I also got to hear my friend John Strauss give a mini-concert in the back room.

He played his guitar, as well as his kazoo, and delighted the crowd with renditions of songs by the Beatles, Phil Ochs, Tom Lehrer and the Monkees . . . I hadn't realized John was such a talented musician/singer, and frankly I was quite impressed . . . as he pointed out when I saw him a few days later, he could tell I was enjoying myself by the fact that he could see my foot tapping away.

The only thing missing was Cynthia's presence!

D. CONGRATULATIONS to Betsy Sell . . . she was just named to be Director of Counseling and Success Grant Programs at Bucks County Community College . . . I'm confident that she will continue to be an asset to that organization, just as she has been in the past.

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

I don't typically allow others to take over this (or any other section of the newsletter, for that matter), but Cynthia insisted . . . so here is what she submitted for this week:

This week, the award goes to Blaine Greenfield. Blaine has continued to make deposits into what I call the BGHF (Blaine Greenfield Heart Fund). What he did this week that was extra-ordinary was he held my hand while in the process of putting our cat, Shanti, to sleep. He gave me what I needed to comfort me. He gave me his presence and touch . . . a gift that is so important to me when going through losses and difficult times. When I was holding my cat in my arms as she was leaving this world, Blaine asked to hold me at the same time. That touched my heart in a way that I will never forget.

We walked afterward and held hands and talked about Shanti, and other important losses in our family Blaine's mother, father and my mother. I kept asking, "Where do they go? Where are they now?" Blaine kept repeating, "They all live in our hearts every time we think about them."

I keep thinking about life, and the miracle of it all. That we walk along this path with our family, friends and even those momentary people that we meet along the way that say something we will never forget. There is a saying that we are with people in this lifetime for a reason, a season or a lifetime. What a miracle and a blessing that we get this opportunity to be alive and share it with the beings that are walking this path with us.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Blaine for all of his contributions into the BGHF. He never fails to make deposits into this account. It helps to keep our hearts open, and reminds us that we are not alone. This award goes to my loving husband and handsome groom. I love you.

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2. FYI

Ward in Pennsylvania was gracious enough to share the following (a MUST READ, if not for you, for your relatives and friends--particularly those over 50):

I want to pass this warning along. Just before Christmas, I contracted shingles. It is still giving me pain in early April. Anyone over fifty whoever had chicken pox should go to a physician and get a shot to prevent the disease. It hurts like Hell and is debilitating--and it is preventable.

FYI, part 2

* Jess in New Jersey:

Thank you for highlighting that Natasha's organs were donated to give others a second chance at life. As a heart transplant recipient at age 16, I truly believe there is no greater gift you can give. And yes, my whole family is registered as organ donors!

Your readers may be interested to know that April is "Donate Life Month" for organ and tissue donation. In NJ, we're very excited to launch our online donor registry, which will enable users to register without waiting for their next license renewal. Right now they can sign up to be notified when the registry is up and running by visiting:

www.donatelifenj.org

For readers in all other states, they can visit:

www.donatelife.net

to find the best way to designate their wishes.

* Dana in Pennsylvania:

I do agree with Kathy that you should not be promoting these types of posts [that advertise "stuff"] . . . you may be inundated with all types of things people are trying to unload or sell . . . I don't think BLAINESWORLD readers want to sift through all of that, but you know your readers better than I do. If you wish to help folks sell things, suggest that they use Craig's List or perhaps post on Facebook or some other type of free service.

* Mel in Colorado:

The VERY WORST thing about DUPLICITY . . .

I fell out of love with Julia Roberts. For years, I was smitten with her, and I "knew" she was in love with me, and that it was just a matter of time before she would realize it. Now, I'm done with her. It's time for me to move

on, find another young gorgeous actress to replace her. My wife never liked her, so it never was a problem.

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3. Times are tough

A little boy wanted a bicycle very badly, but was told he couldn't have it because it would cost \$100, and the family just couldn't afford that in this bad economy.

He prayed for weeks, but nothing happened, so he decided God just couldn't hear his tiny little voice, so he decided to write God a letter requesting the \$100.

When the postal authorities received the letter to "God, USA", they decided to send it to the President. And sure enough, it was one of the sample letters that reached President Obama's inbox.

The president was so touched that he put a \$5 bill in the envelope and sent it to the little boy. The president thought that this would appear to be a lot of money to such a young child.

The little boy was delighted with the \$5 bill and sat down to write a thank-you note to God:

Dear God,

Thank you very much for sending the money. However, I noticed that for some reason, you sent it through Washington, D.C., and those damned Democrats took \$95 in taxes.

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4. Reviews

A. John Malkovich does his best work in some time (perhaps since BEING JOHN MALKOVICH) in THE GREAT BUCK HOWARD, a charming tale of an aging mentalist--in the tradition of the Amazing Kreskin . . . his corny persona had me chuckling throughout the film . . . I also liked how Emily Blunt lit up the screen every time she appeared as Howard's publicist . . . rated PG, though I have my doubts that young children would appreciate it.

What I did appreciate: How Malkovich constantly screamed "I love this town!" to half-full rooms in such towns as Wausau, Wisconsin, and Bakersfield, California . . . his energetic handshake also is something that still sticks in my mind.

B. YES MAN is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #640 follows:

If you're in the mood for a sweet romantic comedy, catch Jim Carrey in YES MAN . . . it's the story of a loser who begins to turn his life around after participating in a seminar designed to help him say "yes" to all opportunities that come his way . . . the only problem is that he can't ever say "no" . . . when Zooey Deschanel (a Debra Winger lookalike) enters the film, it really takes off . . . she

is just terrific, much like she has been in such other pictures as ELF, ALMOST FAMOUS, etc. . . . one scene, in particular, had me laughing out loud . . . Carrey puts a glass of wine on a Tempurpedic bed he has just purchased to see if it will spill when he jumps up and down . . . it didn't and damned if that wasn't also the case with my own Tempurpedic bed (I tried a similar experiment) . . . rated PG-13.

C. What a neat concept: List things you want to accomplish, then share them with others so they can root for you . . . that's also the premise behind DREAM IT. LIST IT. DO IT! by Lia Steakley and the many others at 43things.com.

Steakley, one of the creators of this Webby award-winning social networking site, has taken much of what people have submitted and put it all together in book form . . . I'm not quite sure why it works, but it does.

I was surprisingly inspired by much of what I read . . . and, hopefully, as a result will know (to quote the subtitle) HOW TO LIVE A BIGGER & BOLDER LIFE.

Many of the ideas I've heard before, yet it was good to revisit them . . . for example:

* Build a Rainy Day Fund

Everyone should have an emergency savings account that holds enough money to live for six months. Begin by assessing your monthly expenses. Then create a savings strategy, such as trimming 10 percent of all expenses, which lowers the amount you need to save, and funnel the money into a designated account. Pinch pennies by taking lunch to work, using a water bottle instead of bottled water, and clipping coupons. Eliminating minor expenses and saving as little as \$2.80 per day nets an extra \$1,000 a year. The important thing is to get started.

Or something as simple as this one that I don't do nearly enough:

Apologize

Saying you're sorry is rarely easy. It involves overcoming pride and hurt feelings and sometimes deciding that the relationship in jeopardy is more important than winning a disagreement. Sometimes it's easier to extend an olive branch by writing a heartfelt letter or sending a bouquet of flowers with a note. But nothing beats an apology made in person. It may mean giving the other person a chance to say their peace and air grievances, but don't get defensive—remember, your goal is to move on. If you don't think you can make a sincere apology, then you're not ready to apologize (people, especially when they're angry, can smell insincerity a mile away). But when it's done honestly and with feeling, looking someone directly in the eye and saying "I'm sorry" can be a powerful healer.

Lastly, there was this tidbit that I think we could all benefit from doing:

* At home, turn off the computer when you've finished online tasks to break the habit of constantly checking email, browsing news or shopping. Turn off email notification features and check and respond to messages only at specific times.

One other great thing about the book was that it listed many websites where you could get further information . . . in fact, as soon as I finish this review, I'm going to find something called MeeTimer, which can record and analyze where I spend my time online.

D. Some books come along at just the right time in your life . . . such was the case with DEWEY: THE SMALL-TOWN LIBRARY CAT WHO TOUCHED THE WORLD by Vicki Myron.

I had the pleasure to listen to a CD version at the same time one of our cats (see Section 1A) died . . . for some reason, the tale was very comforting to me--and I would recommend it to cat lovers, librarians and other folks who want to better understand either of those two groups.

Dewey was an abandoned cat who Vicki found in the book drop in front of the library she heads . . . she took him in, then watched in amazement as the whole town joined her in falling in love with the adorable feline.

I smiled at the many misadventures of Dewey, but was also moved by Myron's story . . . she interweaves it throughout the book, along with a description of how the small town of Spencer, Iowa managed to survive the farm crisis of the 1980s.

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5. TV alert

A. Amy Poehler (enough of a reason to watch) stars in PARKS & RECREATION, a new sitcom that focuses on the local government of a small Indiana town . . . Thursday at 8:30 p.m. on NBC.

B. THE AGE OF BELIEVING: THE DISNEY LIVE ACTION CLASSICS is a documentary that revisits some of the classic non-animated films . . . immediately following is a HERBIE THE LOVE BUG marathon . . . Friday at 7 p.m. on TCM.

C. THRILLA IN MANILA is a documentary about the 1975 battle in the Philippines between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier . . . Saturday at 8 p.m. on HBO.

D. WITCH HUNT examines how dozens of parents in Bakersfield, California were imprisoned on bogus child-abuse charges two decades ago . . . Sean Penn narrates; he also was the executive producer . . . Sunday at 10 p.m. on MSNBC.

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6. Something different

A bachelor goes into a pet shop and asks the shopkeeper for a new pet to keep him company.

"I don't want a cat or a dog. I want something different," specifies the man.

The shopkeeper informs him that they have some talking centipedes for \$50.

Happy with that, the man buys his new pet and carefully takes it home in a match box.

When he gets home, he carefully opens the matchbox, looks down at the centipede and says: "Hello! Would you fancy going down to the bar for a drink?"

The centipede says nothing. Assuming it must be tired from the trip from the pet shop, he thinks, "I'll give it half an hour and then ask again".

Half an hour later, he again goes to the centipede and says, "Hello. Would you fancy going down to the bar for a drink?"

Again the centipede says nothing. The man thinks to himself: "OK, I will give it another 30 minutes, and if it doesn't talk to me then, I'm taking it back!"

Thirty minutes later, the man goes to the centipede and says, "Hello. Would you fancy going down to the bar for a drink?"

The centipede replies, "I heard you the first time. I'm putting on my shoes!"

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7. Websites

A. My all-time favorite movie is UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG, a French musical starring a very young Catherine Deneuve . . . incredibly, you can see just about the whole thing by clicking:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4wiNQFbJ9U&feature=Playlist&p=023E710F566D6CC7&index=0&playnext=1>

Just let it keep playing . . . each part automatically goes directly into the next part.

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

A lot of Facebook friends have been responding to this question, What are you favorite films? Mine are UMBRELLAS, RANOM HARVEST, THIN BLUE LINE, AMERICAN PRESIDENT and ARLINGTON ROAD.

Care to share yours?

B. Reaction test

The automobile driving manual says the average driver's reaction time is .75 seconds . . . or 1 car length for every 10 mph . . . test your average time by clicking:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/sleep/sheep/reaction_version5.swf

Be very careful; this can be addicting.

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

If you're ever wondered what BLAINESWORLD is all about, check out the description in the box at the very top of the homepage.

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8. Computer tip

THANKS to Mary Ellen in Pennsylvania for sharing the following information:

Google has launched YouTube EDU, which centralizes the content from over 100 universities and colleges. This collection gives access to lectures by professors and world-renowned thought leaders, new research and campus tours. Find the link on the Faculty Web Resources site Multimedia Page at:

<http://www.bucks.edu/facultywebresources/multimediacontent.php>

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9. Wal-Mart through the decades

Scenario:

You are in the middle of some kind of project around the house--mowing the lawn, putting a new fence in, painting the living room or whatever. You are hot and sweaty, covered in dirt or paint. You have your old work clothes on. You know, the outfit: shorts with the hole in crotch, old T-shirt with a stain from who knows what, and an old pair of tennis shoes. Right in the middle of this great home improvement project, you realize you need to run to Wal-Mart to get something to help complete the job.

Depending on your age you might do the following:

In your 20s:

Stop what you are doing. Shave, take a shower, blow dry your hair, brush your teeth, floss, and put on clean clothes. Check yourself in the mirror and flex. Add a dab of your favorite cologne because you never know, you just might meet some hot chick while standing in the checkout lane. You went to school with the pretty girl running the register.

In your 30s:

Stop what you are doing, put on clean shorts and shirt. Change shoes. You married the hot chick so no need for much else. Wash your hands and comb your hair. Check yourself in the mirror. Still got it. Add a shot of your favorite cologne to cover the smell. The cute girl running the register is the kid sister to someone you went to school with.

In your 40s:

Stop what you are doing. Put a sweatshirt that is long enough to cover the hole in the crotch of your shorts. Put on different shoes and a hat. Wash your hands. Your bottle of Brute Cologne is almost empty so you don't want to waste any of it on a trip to Wal-Mart. Check yourself in the

mirror and do more sucking in than flexing. The spicy young thing running the register is your daughter's age and you feel weird thinking she is spicy.

In your 50s:

Stop what you are doing. Put a hat on, wipe the dirt off your hands onto your shirt. Change shoes because you don't want to get dirt in your new sports car. Check yourself in the mirror and you swear not to wear that shirt anymore because it makes you look fat. The cutie running the register smiles when she sees you coming and you think you still have it. Then you remember the hat you have on is from Buddy's Bait & Beer Bar and it says, " Got Worms."

In your 60s:

Stop what you are doing. No need for a hat anymore. Hose the dog poop off your shoes The mirror was shattered when you were in your 50s. You hope you have underwear on so nothing hangs out the hole in your pants. The girl running the register may be cute, but you don't have your glasses on so you are not sure.

In your 70s:

Stop what you are doing. Wait to go to Wal-Mart until they have your prescriptions ready, too. Don't even notice the dog poop on your shoes. The young thing at the register smiles at you because you remind her of her grandfather.

In your 80:

Stop what you are doing. Start again. Then stop again. Now you remember you needed to go to Wal-Mart. Go to Wal-Mart and wander around, trying to think what the hell it is you are looking for. Pass gas out loud and you think you heard someone call out your name. You went to school with the old lady who greeted you at the front door.

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10. A quote I like

Happiness is good health and a bad memory.--Ingrid Bergman (1915-1982), Swedish three-time Academy Award-winning actress, perhaps best known for her performance in CASSABLANCA

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11. Thought for the day

Sack lunches

I put my carry-on in the luggage compartment and sat down in my assigned seat. It was going to be a long flight. "I'm glad I have a good book to read. Perhaps I will get a short nap," I thought.

Just before take-off, a line of soldiers came down the aisle and filled all the vacant seats, totally surrounding me. I decided to start a conversation. "Where are you headed?" I asked the soldier seated nearest to me.

"Petawawa. We'll be there for two weeks for special training, and then we're being deployed to Afghanistan ."

After flying for about an hour, an announcement was made that sack lunches were available for five dollars. It would be several hours before we reached the east, and I quickly decided a lunch would help pass the time..

As I reached for my wallet, I overheard the soldier ask his buddy if he planned to buy lunch. "No, that seems like a lot of money for just a sack lunch. Probably wouldn't be worth five bucks. I'll wait till we get to base."

His friend agreed.

I looked around at the other soldiers. None were buying lunch. I walked to the back of the plane and handed the flight attendant a fifty dollar bill. "Take a lunch to all those soldiers." She grabbed my arms and squeezed tightly. Her eyes, wet with tears, she thanked me. "My son was a soldier in Iraq ; it's almost like you are doing it for him."

Picking up ten sacks, she headed up the aisle to where the soldiers were seated. She stopped at my seat and asked, "Which do you like best--beef or chicken?"

"Chicken," I replied, wondering why she asked. She turned and went to the front of plane, returning a minute later with a dinner plate from first class. "This is your thanks."

After we finished eating, I went again to the back of the plane, heading for the rest room. A man stopped me. "I saw what you did. I want to be part of it. Here, take this." He handed me twenty-five dollars.

Soon after I returned to my seat, I saw the Flight Captain coming down the aisle, looking at the aisle numbers as he walked. I hoped he was not looking for me, but noticed he was looking at the numbers only on my side of the plane. When he got to my row he stopped, smiled, held out his hand and said, "I want to shake your hand."

Quickly unfastening my seatbelt I stood and took the Captain's hand. With a booming voice he said, "I was a soldier and I was a military pilot. Once, someone bought me a lunch. It was an act of kindness I never forgot." I was embarrassed when applause was heard from all of the passengers.

Later, I walked to the front of the plane so I could stretch my legs. A man who was seated about six rows in front of me reached out his hand, wanting to shake mine. He left another twenty-five dollars in my palm.

When we landed, I gathered my belongings and started to deplane. Waiting just inside the airplane door was a man who stopped me, put something in my shirt pocket, turned and walked away without saying a word. Another twenty-five dollars!

Upon entering the terminal, I saw the soldiers gathering for their trip to the base. I walked over to them and handed them seventy-five dollars. "It will take you some time to reach the base. It will be about time for a sandwich. God bless you."

Ten young men left that flight feeling the love and respect of their fellow travelers. As I walked briskly to my car, I whispered a prayer for their safe return. These soldiers were giving their all for our country. I could only give them a couple of meals.

It seemed so little.

A veteran is someone who, at one point in his life, wrote a blank check made payable to "United States of America" for an amount of "up to and including my life."

That is honor, and there are way too many people in this country who no longer understand it.

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. LAST CHANCE:

If you're interested in either of the two smoking cessation programs that begin this week (one at Bucks County Community College, the other at the Courier Times), send me an email . . . send it to: ipla2quit@aol.com . . . there are still a limited number of seats available.

B. Come see the Dowburds, Chic and Joni, in:

42nd STREET, "Broadway's Song and Dance Extravaganza", is presented by one of Bucks County's oldest and most respected theatre groups, Neshaminy Valley Music Theatre, on April 17-19 and April 24-26, 2009 at the State Theatre of Pennsylvania, the Bucks County Playhouse.

CLICK HERE FOR EVENT DETAILS:

<http://www.neshaminy-valley-music-theatre.ticketleap.com>

C. You're invited you to see Ahn Molloy perform in "The Masterwork Chorus Spring Concert" on Saturday, April 25 at 8:00 p.m.

Event: The Masterwork Chorus Spring Concert
"Flights of Fancy - An Evening of Poetry and Song"

Where: Dorothy Young Center at Drew University, NJ

To see more details and RSVP, follow the link below:

<http://www.facebook.com/n/?event.php&eid=62132109335&mid=422b99G1ef4e094G14becd7G7>

D. Be there or be square:

HIPPIE-FEST 2009
TUES., AUG. 4 @ 8 PM
Keswick Theatre, Philadelphia

Flo & Eddie of the Turtles (arguably the greatest rock band of all time) will be there, along with Felix Cavaliere of The Rascals, Chuck Negron of Three Dog Night, Denny Lane of the Moody Blues and Joey Molland of Badfinger.

Tickets: \$49.50. To purchase, please click:

[https://oss.ticketmaster.com/html/pack_searchtix.html?
l=EN&CNTX=9d43a62d36549d5a6985ed9cbd3a85bb](https://oss.ticketmaster.com/html/pack_searchtix.html?l=EN&CNTX=9d43a62d36549d5a6985ed9cbd3a85bb)

PS. As I've often mentioned in the past, one of the great things about celebrating ALL holidays is that not only do you get more presents, but you get more food . . . so with that in mind, if Easter is your day, here's some information that I thought you might find useful:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I_AGz3T6CPw

Keep me in mind if you try the above (hint-hint).

And if you celebrate Passover, here's a video you MUST see:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Olg1efSlvLg>

Actually, methinks that folks of all religions would enjoy seeing both of the above clips:

Happy, healthy Easter and/or Passover to you and yours . . . also, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq . . . and that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINES WORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#652

3.30.2009

In this issue:

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I have enjoyed our relocation to Asheville . . . it is a great city, and we love our home, as well as our new-found friends . . . but after much deliberation, we have decided to come back "up North" because there's just so much we miss . . . so effective immediately, we have put our house up for sale (details to follow) . . . and we are in the process of seeking a home, probably somewhere in Bucks County, PA . . . that way, we can be closer to our respective families.

And I'm wondering here . . . should I continue babbling on . . . or just confess that the preceding was my April Fool's joke . . . what a wit, huh? (Dim wit? Half wit?)

So that said, we will be remaining just where we are . . . however, because we truly do miss our friends and family in the Northeast, we will come back to visit as often as possible . . . we also hope that folks will come visit us where we are . . . it's very nice this time of year; in fact, it's very nice anytime!

B. While together, we journeyed to the Brevard Little Theatre on Brevard, NC to see a production of THE CEMETERY CLUB . . . this is a cute comedy about three Jewish widows who encounter a lonely man on one of their visits to their late husbands' graves . . . toward the end, the play shifts to take a more serious tone and the result is a positive one; i.e., it made us think about how it is important to value what we both now have.

We liked much of the dialogue . . . this one line, in particular, we remembered: "I'm through being a member of a club where half the members are dead."

All five members of the ensemble cast were excellent.

The play runs through this coming weekend . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.brevardlittletheatre.com>

Returning home, we were in the mood for pizza . . . so we stopped at Jet's Pizza in Brevard at College Station, next to Food Lion (828.833.2888) . . . our slices were thin and tasty, just like we wanted them.

Jet's Pizza is part of a chain that we had not known about . . . however, it will now be on our radar screen when we next want pizza . . . our only disappointment is that there doesn't appear to be a location in Asheville.

When in Pennsylvania, I went with friends to see THE MOST HAPPY FELLA . . . this was a musical presented by the Jenkintown Music Theatre in Montgomery County, PA.

I can safely say it is the best community theater production I have seen in quite some time . . . everything about it was great: the singing, the dancing, the story, etc. . . . what really impressed me was the sheer joy that could be seen in the face of every member of the large cast.

There were also kids in the play, and each one of them came across as performers--as opposed to being kids on stage

because their parents forced them to be.

THE MOST HAPPY FELLA runs one more weekend . . . if you're lucky enough to be able to get tickets, do what you can to get there . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.jenkintownmusictheatre.org>

C. CONDOLENCES to Elaine Bilk on the passing of Rose (Lily) Goldstein, Elaine's mother. Lily was a remarkable woman who survived the Holocaust and lived a life rich in love and kindness.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia, 2100 Arch St., Philadelphia, PA 19103.

D. LAST CHANCE:

You and/or your friends, relatives, colleagues, students, etc. can still enroll in FREE quit-smoking seminars offered this spring . . . also, please feel free to share this information with your company's HR offices . . . see below for a Press Release, put together by my good friend Jean Dolan (THANKS, JEAN!):

NEWS RELEASE March 27, 2009

Contact: Jean Dolan, Assistant Director of Public Relations, 215.968.8094

Free Quit-Smoking Seminars Offered This Spring

Sessions, to be held at Newtown or Levittown, focus either on an effective plan outlined in a book or on hypnotherapy treatments

Bucks County Community College Professor Blaine Greenfield knows first-hand the heartbreak caused by smoking. Within a year, he lost both of his parents to complications caused by a lifetime of nicotine addiction.

"My dad lived a great life, up until his last 10 years," says Greenfield. "That's when his lifelong habit of smoking caught up with him. He had 10 operations, two amputations, and the last years of his life were very difficult for him." A year after his father died, Greenfield's mother was diagnosed with lung cancer and also died.

So when it came time for Greenfield to take his final sabbatical before retiring, he decided to dedicate his time to trying to help people quit smoking. He arranged for the college's Women's Center, in conjunction with the Bucks County Courier Times and the Intelligencer newspapers, to offer a series of free seminars for people who are ready to give up cigarettes.

Each series involves three, one-hour sessions. The seminars will be held at Bucks County Community College, located at 275 Swamp Rd., Newtown, on April 7, 21 and May 5, and the Bucks County Courier Times, Route 13, Levittown, on April 9, 23 and May 7.

Participants can choose between a 6:30 p.m. session, which features a discussion of the book THE EASY WAY TO QUIT SMOKING, or an 8 p.m. session, featuring hypnotherapy. Both sessions are available at each location. Participants must choose one method and attend all three dates.

Greenfield says he hopes the seminars save someone from the heartbreak of losing a loved one.

"I don't want to see others go through the same thing, so one of my goals is to help others not go the same route," adds Greenfield. "If we can get at least one person to quit, that will be great. If we can reach more than one person, so much the better."

It's not the first time Greenfield has dedicated himself to helping others quit. In 2006, when he won the prestigious Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching, Greenfield used part of the award to fund free hypnotherapy sessions to help people to give up cigarettes. The marketing professor will retire in May after teaching at Bucks for 33 years.

To register for the free quit-smoking seminars, contact Bridget Hughes at 215.968.8254 or e-mail iplan2quit@aol.com.

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

This week, it goes to JT Taylor--owner of House Help, a company we have begun using and appreciating in Asheville.

As he indicates on his business card, House Help is "the answer to all your handyman and home maintenance needs."

We have found JT to be punctual, courteous, professional and very reasonable when it comes to price . . . moreover, he does excellent work.

For more information, call him at 828.551.9388 . . . or visit his website by clicking:

<http://jtshousehelp.com/>

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2. FYI

MAGICAL, NATURAL CURE FOR COLDS, FLU OR JUST PLAIN OUT OF SORTS FEELINGS.

Try a Dry Salt Bath.

Good for body and energy body clearing. To heal from Colds, flu or just feeling out of sorts.

Good for healers and if you have been in an environment that is full of "stuff"

This is a full body treatment to detoxify, relax, clear.

Use after bath or shower or anytime.

Do not wash this off immediately!

Take a hand full of table salt or sea salt and rub it into skin gently and smooth over skin away from you and down. Start at the top of your head, face, neck and work down. Your entire body will take 2 cups or more of salt.

After you use each handful of salt, allow it to go down drain. Do not reuse; it is full of toxins.

Use a dry towel to remove surface salt; allow the remained to stay to complete removal of energies and toxins.

Bad flu or cold? Use 3 x in 24 hours and feel good as new or better! Used for 5 years with clients, self and family with great success. Ancient remedy that works!

THANKS to Janet StraightArrow for both submitting the above and allowing me to use it in this newsletter . . . Janet is an amazing medical intuitive/energy coach . . . for more information about her work, please click:

<http://www.OasisfortheSoul.com>

FYI, part 2

* Marcy in Pennsylvania:

A note about settling:

"The minute you settle for less than you deserve, you get even less than you settled for."--Maureen Dowd

* Jerry in Pennsylvania:

Thank you for another great issue. You seem to have "it" in tow. How fortunate for us readers. . . .

When you talk about events up here, does that mean that you will be attending? It would be good to visit with you and Cynthia.

Your clinics on not-smoking are well known by my decreasing number of smoking acquaintances. I'm afraid they are going to their reward, coughing.

Looking forward to your next issue.

* Tobi in Pennsylvania:

The Bucks County Community College Foundation is pleased to offer a limited edition fine art print painted by the late Joan Weiss Proceeds benefit the Joan Weiss Legacy Scholarship

"Olivia's Lookout"

In July 2007, Joan Weiss created this beautiful watercolor while vacationing in the Berkshire Mountains near Lennox, Mass. A limited edition giclée print was created to honor the memory of Joan Weiss.

Framed:
\$150
Matted: \$55
Choose from three elegant custom frames.

\$90 from each framed print and \$35 from each matted print will benefit the Joan Weiss Legacy Scholarship at BCCC.

Checks should be made payable to the BCCC Foundation.

As a distinguished professor of 25 years in BCCC's Department of Business Studies, Joan was an extraordinary teacher who made a difference in the lives of her students. She was also very active in her community, dedicating much of her free time and energy to numerous nonprofit organizations.

For more information or to place an order, contact Debbie Grant at grantd@bucks.edu; Sue Gittlen at Whispering Woods Gallery, 215.364.321 or whisperingwoodsgallery@yahoo.com; or visit Whispering Woods Gallery:

http://rs6.net/tn.jsp?et=1102510795410&e=001OhoBMw7QcEKswridJesyj2I9LNpF-j2KLU_GTmhwZCA48ynoZgr7ZXZ6OeaK4_N6lyfWYvYwpKUWBHvnpcaNxvApEXUHxCjfh57TKcTn0d2jOT4hI00vHz67LPIY2FGId4RZOx5r__UtMBMr2fKjg==

* Diana in Pennsylvania:

Usborne Books are award-winning educational children's books that make reading and learning FUN!! More than 1,500 titles incorporate puzzles, humor, detailed illustrations, hands-on activities and experiments, in well-made, durable bindings with eye-catching covers and parent-approved content (No character books!). My daughter loves these books, and being a librarian, it just seemed smart to become an educational consultant for Usborne. I earn lots of free books that way for my daughter and make money on the side. Just by hosting a home book show, I earned \$120 in free books! Plus I get to work with schools and libraries to get them free books and advocate children's literacy through book fairs and fundraisers. I look forward to sharing these incredible books with other folks who value education and children's literacy. If you know anyone who is interested in receiving fabulous free books for their personal library or their child's school, have them contact me!

Diana Loreman, MLSdloreman@todayareader.com
267.253.0561

<http://www.TodayAReader.com>

* Ryan in Pennsylvania:

CAR FOR SALE:

2003 Acura rsx 5spd. Garage kept and in excellent mechanical and cosmetic condition. Silver with black leather and only 68000 miles.

Contact: nitr031677@yahoo.com; 215.964.5200.

RESPONSES TO MR. CURIOUS QUESTION (from last week):

Several readers wrote about Kathy in Florida's concern about items being mentioned for sale; among the responses:

* Janet in New Jersey:

No worries.

Enjoy your newsletter. Asheville sounds amazing. You will get us all to move down there, which I am sure is your goal.

* Pat in Pennsylvania:

What planet does your writer/friend Kathy reside on? Have no idea where she is coming from . . . am I missing something? Were the things that writers advertised on eBay adult gifts or something? I am confused.

To be honest, I have suggested and encouraged more ads in your newsletter. Why not help friends?

* Maria in Pennsylvania:

As for Kathy not wanting certain items in the newsletter . . . if she's not interested, she should just skip over it.

I read about your life in NC, but kind of pass over the information about particular establishments you visit, since I'm not in NC. Put whatever you want in your newsletter, Blaine. After all, it is YOUR newsletter!

On a more personal note, I read your item about Natasha Richardson's

family. When Joe passed away in June, I knew that he wanted to have anything and everything given for someone to have a better life. It was the most difficult thing I ever did, not because of the actual donation, but questions you have to answer. I was told that 2 people were given the gift of sight and burn victims were helped, along with many others.

No, the Gift of Life does not tell you the who, but it's really not necessary. Several people I know were kind of squeamish about doing something like that, but I'm glad to say that after they saw the good that was accomplished they have changed their mind and know what a true gift it is.

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3. Letter to my bank

Dear Sirs,

One of my checks was returned marked "insufficient funds." In view of current developments in the banking industry, does that refer to me or to you?

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4. Reviews

A. Saw DUPILCITY . . . or make that, tried to see the film . . . I just couldn't get into it and walked out after one hour . . . It is about two spies involved in the midst of a clandestine love affair . . . for me, there were far too many plot turns . . . and I'm not a big fan of a storyline that jumps back and forth in time . . . I'm usually a fan of both the stars, Julia Roberts and Clive Owen, but not this time around . . . also, DUPLICITY was written and directed by Tony Gilroy . . . I saw his last effort, MICHAEL CLAYTON, and somewhat liked it--but not to the extent of it getting seven Oscar nominations . . . after I wrote my review, several readers complained that they hated it . . . if you were one of them, definitely don't see his latest . . . rated PG-13.

B. SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #639 follows:

SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE is the story of a street kid who lands an appearance on India's version of WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE? . . . when he does better than anybody thought would be possible, the police take him in for questioning . . . his life story unfolds during this process, and it is an amazing one that will keep you on the edge of your seats . . . you won't recognize any of the stars, but don't let that stop you from seeing this film . . . stay for the credits, too, for a lively musical number featuring the entire cast . . . rated R.

C. I remember in my dating days, I would ask for advice--or at least an opinion--from women . . . if they were unmarried, that was even better because that was the type person I wanted to meet.

Steve Harvey in ACT LIKE A LADY, THINK LIKE A MAN provides similar advice for women . . . he contends that when it comes to relationships, many can't figure out why men tick . . . this happens because they're asking other women for advice when no one but another man can tell them how to find and keep a man.

Harvey, who was one of the stars in THE ORIGINAL KINGS OF COMEDY (a film I liked very much), does an excellent job in letting women inside the mindset of a man . . . I found myself frequently nodding as I would read what he had to say about such topics as shopping:

* We'll go if you make us and it's the only way we can spend time with you. But it's not what we want to do. Think about it; the Men's Department is almost always on the first floor, by the door, and always one of smaller sections in the store. There is not a juniors department, no couture department, none of that. It's so we can get in and get out. You never walk in and see men rummaging through the sales racks and holding shirts up to their chests and openly asking if they'd look better in the blue or the green. We go in knowing exactly what we want, and come out with it. Rarely anything more. In and out: that's what we like about shopping. Getting in, and getting out.

As for kids, Harvey presents this easy way to determine if the new man in your life will be good with them:

* If he actually knows something about kids and likes them, he'll be able to start and hold a conversation with a six-year-old; the biggest test of someone's children skills is whether they can talk to kids in a way that will keep them engaged and elicit a response. If he freezes up and acts like he's on the witness stand--he just can't think of anything to say or ask--then chances are his intense reaction is a sign he's just not all that good with children.

The book concludes with an informative q-and-a section . . . this one, in particular, caught my attention:

WHAT'S THE INTERNATIONAL MAN SIGNAL FOR "I'M NO LONGER LISTENING TO YOU"?

Once a man gives his answer to whatever question you're asking (or he thinks he heard, even if you never asked one), he's probably not listening to you anymore. Your cue is when he gives an answer. As far as he's concerned, his solution will fix whatever it is you're talking about, and if you're still talking after that, he's not listening anymore.

If you're looking for the ideal gift for any single woman, you won't go wrong with ACT LIKE A LADY, THINK LIKE A MAN . . . even married women (and guys, too) will pick up some useful suggestions from what Harvey has to say.

D. I was pleasantly surprised that I liked THE RHYTHM OF LIFE, written and read by Matthew Kelly, as much as I did.

Ordinarily, I'm not big on books that synthesize Christian theology--or any religion, for that matter . . . yet Kelly, an Australian-born, Cincinnati-based minister does it in such a way that any reader can find what he terms "the perfect combination of rest, activity and peace" that will make it possible to become "the best version of yourself."

What a great concept!

I liked the examples that he used, many of them drawn from his own life . . . in addition, I liked the fact that each chapter was presented in a brief sermon-like essays that got me thinking about many of the points he raised.

Just to cite a few of them:

- * Whether you're 6 or 60, you cannot change one day of your past. But you can change your future.
- * Relationships thrive on one thing: carefree timelessness.
- * Life is short. And you're dead a long time. Live passionately.
- * The challenge is to have fun doing work.
- * We don't need more time, we need more energy. Energy is our most valuable resource.
- * Successful people just have better habits.
- * There are 6 billion people now on the planet. And 5.9 people go to bed every night starving for 1 kind word of appreciation.

Lastly, there was this idea that I think we should all try to implement:

- * Make it a habit of making somebody's day. Every day.

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5. TV alert

A. I GET THAT A LOT airs on Wednesday, which is just so happens to be April Fool's Day (see also Section 1A) . . . celebrities including Heidi Klum, Jeff Probst, Ice-T and Mario Lopez pose as regular people doing everyday jobs--like working a grocery-store checkout line or waitressing at a diner--and trick unsuspecting customers . . . 8 p.m. on CBS.

B. ER, the series finale, airs on Thursday at 9 p.m. on NBC . . . I gave up watching the show quite some time ago, but will watch to see how things get wrapped-up after 15 seasons.

C. Do you remember Flock of Seagulls? See them and other popular--yet short-lived--artists are counted down on 100 GREATEST ONE HIT WONDERS OF THE 80s . . . Saturday at 10 p.m. on VH1.

IF YOU CAN'T WAIT:

You can listen to the group's one big hit by clicking:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uUjIA3Rt7gk>

D. IN TREATMENT returns on Sunday at 9 p.m. on HBO . . . Gabriel Byrne is excellent as the moody shrink . . . look for Hope Davis and John Mahoney to join the list of clients sorting out their many issues.

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6. Shopping experience

I went up to the clearance rack last night and walked over to the table which read "medium"." I asked if I would have a good year . . . and got no answer. Some medium!

SOURCE:

Posted by Carol in Pennsylvania, a Facebook friend, on her wall . . . THANKS for allowing me to run it here.

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7. Websites

A. Looking for a little inspiration for yourself or someone else? The following website has an assortment of FREE videos that methinks will be just right when you're in need of a pick-me-up:

<http://www.simpletruths.com>

In fact, I'm getting just that by watching "Every Monday Matters," which can be found by looking on the right side of the above screen . . . or even easier, just click:

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

B. If you love Paris (and plenty of other cities, too) in the springtime, please click:

<http://CityDailyPhoto.com>

The website started out as a way for one man to share his vision of Paris with the world, but soon grew to over 900 photography blogs that document daily life in places as distant as Accra, Ghana and Auckland, New Zealand . . . Asheville is even included, though I noticed that they are looking for somebody to take over for that city in case anybody is interested.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

For a FREE subscription to one of my favorite online publications (after BLAINESWORLD, of course), click "Blaine's Best" on the left and then "This Is True" . . . you'll get syndicated Colorado humorist Randy Cassingham's report of bizarre--but true--news items from legitimate newspapers from around the world . . . each story ends with commentary by Randy, a tagline which is humorous, ironic or opinionated.

For example, there was this one taken from the This Is True archives:

Hot Hot Hot

The Firefighters Historical Society in Winnipeg, Man., Canada, are planning a new museum in town to hold their antique fire equipment and memorabilia. They even have a site: an old firehouse. However, the building does not meet fire codes. The Society is raising money to bring it up to current standards, but they had better hurry: the building is the third firehouse on the site. The first two burned down. (AP) . . . The third time's the charm.

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8. Computer tip

I'm still using Internet Explorer 7 as my browser, but that said, I should tell you that version 8 is now available . . . it can be

downloaded for free by clicking:

http://www.microsoft.com/windows/internet-explorer/default.aspx?pkw=internet%20explorer%20&vendor=google&ocid=iSEM_G_IE8&mtcr=bj2753034820&refcd=go24ebe70d2d

If you download it and find that a website doesn't load properly, it's probably because older versions of Internet Explorer used some non-standard, proprietary techniques for rendering Web pages . . . you can try to get around this problem by clicking the compatibility button in IE8 . . . it can be found in the top toolbar, just to the right of the of the address field (when the browser detects you are on a page that requires it).

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

What browser do you use and/or recommend; e.g., if anything other than IE7? And why? I'm particularly interested to find out if anybody likes Firefox, Google Chrome or Opera.

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9. Thoughtfulness

Two guys were talking at work.

"I've got a problem," said the first one.

"What is it?"

"My wife has done it to me again. I'm supposed to buy my mother-in-law a present for her birthday, from the two of us. And I am fresh out of ideas. I mean it's HER mother, why can't she buy it?"

"What did you buy her last year?" the other one asked.

"Last year I bought her a VERY EXPENSIVE cemetery plot."

"Hmmm, hard to top that one," said the other.

The two guys couldn't come up with anything. So the son-in-law didn't buy his mother-in-law anything for her birthday.

When the big day arrived the next weekend, she was a bit upset. At the family gathering for her birthday, she announced out loud to everyone, "Thank you all for the wonderful gifts. Too bad my daughter and son-in-law weren't so thoughtful!"

Thinking quickly, the son-in-law responded, "Well, you haven't used the gift I gave you last year!"

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10. A quote I like

Friends are quiet angels who lift us to our feet when our wings have trouble remembering how to fly.--Anonymous

IF YOU ALSO LIKE THIS QUOTE:

Check out following song and accompanying pictures:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7X7d7UI6Pml>

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11. Thought for the day

Ancient Chinese fable

A monkey and a fish were caught in a terrible flood and were being swept downstream amidst torrents of water and debris. The monkey spied a branch from an overhanging tree, and pulled himself to safety from the swirling water.

Then, wanting to help his friend the fish, he reached into the water and pulled the fish from the water onto the branch.

The moral of the story is clear: Good intentions are not enough. If you want to help the fish, you must understand its nature.

Author unknown

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

12. Advance planning department

A. AN INTRODUCTION TO CONSCIOUSNESS SHIFTING DRUMMING AND SOUND HEALING

Saturday, April 4th, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

For all who have wondered about the possibility of healing our body, mind, soul and planet, through the use of sound, I invite you to stop . . . and listen. I encourage you to attend . . . and listen. I urge you to experience . . . AND LISTEN. People today are on a tremendous spiritual search. Behind this surging energy is a yearning to understand who we are and what our purpose in life is. We long to live meaningful lives in harmonious rhythm with the sacred energies of the earth. Consciousness-transforming practices such as rhythmic drumming and healing sounds can put us in touch with these energies. Frame drums will be provided and newcomers to this work are honored and welcomed.

ABOUT THE TEACHER:

Cyndy "Snake Dancer" Paige

Cyndy is of Muscogee Creek and Choctaw heritage, and is a Council member of the Buffalo Trace Society. She completed a several year, initiatory apprenticeship with an incredible Cherokee Medicine Woman, and studied extensively with a Master Drummer; a Grammy nominated Sound Healer, and numerous healers. She assists Vision Quest experiences on the east and west coasts, facilitates Drum and Rattle Birthing Retreats, numerous workshops, and is a guest speaker at conferences and independent schools.

INVESTMENT: \$60.00 (Credit cards are accepted)

LOCATION: 155 Coopers Hawk Lane, Landenberg, PA

BRING: A journal, blanket, pillow, your lunch, and an open heart. Bring your frame drum if you have one; if not, loaners are available.

TO REGISTER: Contact Cyndy at 610.274.3109 or email to SnakeDancer@RhythmOfTheEarth.com.

For more on Cyndy or her work, please visit:

<http://www.RhythmOfTheEarth.com>

B. Book Group Discusses A Mercy in April

The Book Discussion Group meets Thursday, April 9, to discuss A Mercy, Toni Morrison's latest novel. Set at the close of the 17th century, a Maryland slave offers up her daughter to a relatively humane Northern farmer, Jacob, as debt payment from their owner, according to Publisher's Weekly. The ripples of this choice spread to the inhabitants of Jacob's farm, populated by women with conflicting desires.

The discussion gets underway at 7:30 p.m. in the Quiet Study Room near the Fireside Lounge in the Rollins Center. For more information, contact Michael Hennessey at hennesse@bucks.edu.

C. Little Women, the Broadway Musical: April 16-22 in Newtown, PA
Volunteer ushers earn a ticket!

Ushers are needed for all performances. Usher assignments are given on first come, first served basis. Ushers may request a ticket for the performance at which they work or another performance during the run of the show. Email Nancy at nacinfo@newtownartscompany.com or call 215.860.7058 and leave name, date to usher and date of preferred ticket.

There are a limited number of tickets for Sunday, April 19.

Ushers are expected to be in place one hour prior to curtain, wear white shirts and black pants or skirts, be adult or late teen age, and expected to stay at least 15 minutes after show begins to seat latecomers.

Show times:

Thursday, April 16 7:30 p.m.

Friday, April 17 8 p.m.

Saturday, April 18 8 p.m.

Sunday, April 19 3 p.m.

Tuesday, April 21 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 22 7:30 p.m.

For more information about the show, please click:

<http://www.newtownartscompany.com>

D. The Princeton Festival 2009 runs from June 13-28 in Princeton, NJ . . . catch such events as THE FANTASTICKS, A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM (the opera), etc. . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.princetonfestival.org>

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and, also, that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors. . . . make it a great week, too!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#651

3.23.2009

In this issue:

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I keep marveling at how much there is to see and do in Asheville . . . one night, we attended a meeting of the Asheville Storytelling Circle . . . this particular session was devoted to St. Patrick's Day and members exchanged stories about the holiday . . . some of them were funny; others were quite moving.

I liked how this one person began her tale by citing an Indian proverb:

If you tell me a fact, I'll learn.
If you tell me the truth, I'll believe.
But if you tell me a story, it will live in my heart forever.

On another night, we participated in something called InterPlay . . . it is a philosophy and set of practices based in creativity, community and change . . . we had fun and met a lot of nice folks. . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.interplaytexas.com/whatis.html>

Lastly, we found a new community theater: Hendersonville Little Theatre in Hendersonville, NC and saw a cute comedy: THE KITCHEN WITCHES.

It is the story of two women who appear on a local cable cooking show . . . they often battle, such as in this one scene where there's a competition for who makes the best dessert . . . Cynthia volunteered me to be one of the judges, and so I was called up on stage . . . I was covered by an apron and then had food stuffed into my face for the next minute or so . . . in retrospect, I have no idea what I ate or even if one item was better than the other.

That's me (after the show) with Cheryl Anders on the left and Monica Kayne on the right:



These two women were the two witches, and they both were excellent . . . I'm only sorry that you won't be able to see the play because it will have ended its limited run by the time you read this issue . . . but do plan to join us at the next production, DEATHTRAP, sometime between May 8-24 . . . we were probably going to attend anyway, but now we'll definitely be there because I received passes for having been the celebrity judge!

For more information, please click:

<http://www.hendersonvillelittletheatre.org/>

B. I was a guest at a meeting of the Asheville Rotary this past week . . . two things about the meeting still stick in my mind.

For one thing, the location was magnificent . . . it was held at Billy Graham's Training Center, overlooking the mountains . . . the food was superb . . . and if I ever had the chance to run a program, that facility would certainly be one of my first choices for locale.

In addition, I very much enjoyed the program . . . it featured the Prodigal Son-Gospel Choir, which is comprised of prisoners who are using music to help get their lives back together . . . I got to ask a question about the impact of the choir's work on the recidivism rate . . . the response: 60-80% of the prisoners typically return, but when they get involved in religion in any form, the rates drop down to 20%.

SPECIAL THANKS to Phil Murphy for having invited me to be his guest . . . he heads his own firm, Phil Murphy Household Management . . . he promises to "take care of your home while you're away" . . . for more information about this company, please click:

<http://go2guy.biz/>

C. I was saddened to read about the skiing accident that took Natasha Richardson's life . . . she was a fine actress, and I particularly enjoyed her work in the remake of PARENT TRAP.

However, two things have come out of her death that I hope others will note:

* She was not wearing a helmet. It would seem to me that this is something that all those who ski should wear. Maybe others will now start using this item.

* After she was taken off life support at Manhattan's Lenox Hill Hospital, her family requested that her organs be donated to other patients whose lives they might save. What a marvelous way to honor the memory of somebody who just died!

D. CONGRATULATIONS to my good friend Natalie Kaye in Pennsylvania on the launch of her new business . . . see below for more information:

Natalie Kaye announces the launching of her new company--On Demand Programs and Events--for corporations, non-profits and any organization needing help lining-up speakers or talent for upcoming meetings/events. Whether you're looking to raise funds, increase staff productivity, provide lunch-n-learn seminars or put on community/educational awareness programs, On Demand can provide affordable, prompt assistance. Contact Natalie Kaye via phone, 215.579.1836 or natkaye@starlinx.com to ensure a successful event.

MY TWO CENTS:

I've been to many events run by Natalie. They are always top-notch. And though Natalie currently lives in Bucks County, Pennsylvania (I'm hoping she and her husband move to Asheville), she can arrange events for anybody--regardless of state.

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

This week it goes to Bill Yorke--one of my many talented colleagues at Bucks County Community College.

Bill is an excellent Science professor, well-respected by both his students and peers . . . he also does a fine job as chair of the College's Advisory Council.

However, I'm nominating him for another reason: his continued service as first vice president of our teacher's union . . . in particular, Bill was the driving force behind the Salary Inequities Committee . . . this group worked for some two years and as a result of its efforts, we now have a tentative agreement with the administration that will result in 47 faculty members receiving increases in their pay.

Jim Freeman, who also worked tirelessly with Bill to help get the above settlement, had this to say about this week's nominee:

"I'd go to battle with Bill Yorke again anytime. Not only is he great with the numbers (in studies and in negotiations), but he is also fearless in fighting for the right thing for teachers and students."

I agree!

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2. FYI

I recently had a great visit with a longtime friend, Steve Seidner, who runs Bagel Junction in Newtown, PA . . . we were discussing our families, and somehow we got to talking about one of my favorite TV shows: WHAT WOULD YOU DO? (It airs on Tuesdays at 10 p.m. on ABC.)

He told me about an employee who saw a \$5 bill on the floor in his restaurant . . . though the employee knew who dropped the money, he said nothing and picked the bill himself . . . Steve was obviously not impressed, and he dismissed the employee shortly thereafter because he was the type person he did not want working for him.

Steve then shared this bit of wisdom that he teaches to his children: Act as if you're on camera.

What a great way to lead all our lives!

AN ASIDE:

For the absolutely best bagels (and great wraps, soups, etc.), check out Bagel Junction:

<http://www.bagelj.com>

In particular, I'm a big fan of the tuna fish . . . I kid you not . . . Steve has it prepared in a way that mothers even come in to buy it

for their children who won't eat it when they make it.

FYI, part 2

* Sue in Pennsylvania [discussing her attempts to quit smoking]:

I will tell you I never really believed I would quit. I was not happy about it, nor did I care to lose what felt like my best friend. I really never expected to succeed, and yet I did.

I am smoke free for over 2 years, and best of all, I have no desire to ever smoke. I never think about it, which is a big problem for people who quit. We miss it terribly, and the longing is very difficult.

But somehow, I did not experience the longing. I was able to quit and not look back--all thanks to the book and you, of course.

My point is that I do not think people have to have any real desire or will power or positive attitude since that was not my experience, although I suspect it helps in all areas of life.

I think sometimes even just letting go of expectations frees a person from the attachment. Sometimes what we resist persists.

I think your program can help anyone who just makes even a small attempt. It's that simple.

YOU CAN STILL ENROLL:

There's still room in the smoking cessation programs that I'll be running next month in Bucks County, PA . . . for more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/c9tye9>

Even if you're a non-smoker, please share this information with your friends, relatives, colleagues, students, HR offices, etc. . . my goal is to help 100 people stop smoking!

* Mel in Colorado:

This [what you write in your PS each week] implies that there once was peace in Israel, which you and I know was never the case.

Consider a change of language:
that peace comes to Israel
that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors
that peace and security come to Israel

You can think of more, I'm sure.

CHANGE MADE:

Mel, who just so happens to be one of my favorite rabbis, always makes good points when he writes me . . . as you can see in this week's PS, I already incorporated a change.

* Jean in Pennsylvania:

Thanks for alerting your BLAINESWORLD readers that THE CHANGELING is now out in DVD. A dear friend of mine, Wendy Worthington, a character actor in LA, plays a nurse in the psychiatric hospital in the film. The last year has been particularly hard on actors like her with very little work to go around. Therefore, I really appreciate your endorsement of the film, for every time someone buys or rents the DVD, she'll get another small royalty check. By the way, she said she loved working with Clint Eastwood, a brilliant director.

* Disputing the theory that there's no such thing as a free lunch, Jerry in Pennsylvania wants to invite you to one:

Friday March 27th
"How to live the good life in this uncertain economy"
1-2:30 p.m.
Includes Free Lunch

The Township Library of Lower Southampton
1983 Bridgetown Pike
Feasterville, PA 19053

Click to register:

[http://rs6.net/tn.jsp?
t=nxmu8ycab.0.fj7fpxcab.csp9fkcab.4950&ts=S0393&p=http%3A%2F%2F006ffd5.netsolhost.com%2Ffinancialworkshplibrary.html](http://rs6.net/tn.jsp?t=nxmu8ycab.0.fj7fpxcab.csp9fkcab.4950&ts=S0393&p=http%3A%2F%2F006ffd5.netsolhost.com%2Ffinancialworkshplibrary.html)

* Kathy in Florida:

I found it strange that you allowed all those people to advertise their eBay and sale items in your newsletter [last week's issue]. It does not seem consistent with the high quality I've come to expect from your weekly newsletter. You also put yourself in a position now to have everyone under the sun asking to do the same thing, and once you allow it for one person, you can't say no to someone else.

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

Does what Kathy write bother anybody else? I can appreciate what she is saying, but on the other hand, I've always tried to use BLAINESWORLD to help my friends (and readers) spread the word about their various activities, programs, etc.

Tell me what you think, please.

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3. Sad news

Due to the deepening economic crisis, stock market crash, budget cuts and the rising costs of insurance, electricity, petroleum, housing, and taxes, "The Light at the End of the Tunnel" has been turned off.

We apologize for any inconvenience.

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4. Reviews

A. If you're in the mood for some laughs, catch I LOVE YOU, MAN . . . it's a comedy about a guy who proposes to his girl friend, but then comes to the realization that he has no male friends; e.g., to ask to be the best man at his wedding . . . Paul Rudd was fine in one of the lead roles; however, I thought his counterpart (Jason Segel) was hilarious . . . I first noticed him in FORGETTING SARAH MARSHALL; he'll now be somebody I look for in future films . . . I also liked the work of Rashida Jones as Rudd's girlfriend . . . rated R.

B. ROLE MODELS is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #633 follows:

Paul Rudd and Seann William Scott play two men who are hardly model citizens in ROLE MODELS, a very funny comedy . . . when their bad behavior puts them in trouble with the law, they soon must complete community service in a Big Brothers-type program . . . Christopher Mintz-Plasse, who made his debut as in SUPERBAD, continues to impress me here in what's essentially a costarring role . . . the language is foul; however, if you can get past that, you'll find that the laughs never stop coming . . . there was also a ending that was surprisingly touching . . . rated R.

C. You must read Shari Faden Donahue's CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOKS: HOW TO SELF-PUBLISH YOUR WAY TO SUCCESS! if you've ever considered writing and/or illustrating such books . . . me thinks that even published authors in this field will pick up valuable tips, too.

It is a comprehensive insider's handbook that contains information

on writing, illustration, design, printing, sales, distribution and publicity.

One of the things I liked most about it was that it did not talk down to the potential author . . . that is the feeling I get when reading some "Idiot's Guides" on various subjects . . . Donahue, instead, makes you feel like you are her partner in the process . . . and she even tells you, "Sure, it's simple, writing for kids . . . just as simple as bringing them up."

Yet don't let that discourage you . . . she goes on to tell you exactly what you need to every step along the way . . . in doing so, she includes both informative examples and colorful illustrations from one of the other books she has authored: THE ZEBRA-STRIPED WHALE WITH THE POLKA-DOT TAIL (one of my favorite children's books, by the way).

You know that Donahue knows what she is talking about because she has been there . . . so when she says something, you should make a mental note to do it--such as when she advises how to minimize your errors:

* According to Brent Sampson, author of *Publishing Gems, Insider Information for the Self-Publishing Writer*, a writer benefits from reading his/her manuscript aloud—as well as backward—to find errors. He states, "When you read a manuscript backward, word for word, misspellings literally jump off the page."

Also, you'll find yourself vowing to get out more because that's one of the keys to your book's future success . . . Donahue says that it is absolutely crucial to:

* Network . . . Network . . . Network

Attend local book signings. Get accustomed to talking to children's picture book authors about their unique publishing experiences. I have discovered that authors who have already succeeded at the publishing game are among the most willing to assist hopeful writers. When a local children's book author is featured in the media, it is common for him/her to feel like a "king/queen for the day." Be bold. Go straight to the source. Make an effort to contact members of the community, and is likely to feel flattered by your interest in his/her title. Local author contact information may be obtained by calling the journalist directly, accessing the author's Web site, or utilizing directory assistance. Keep a brief list of relevant questions at your fingertips. The opportunity to share dialogue with a publicized children's picture book author enables you to obtain useful, relevant "insider information. Stay connected? Publishing information is abundant. You can learn tricks of the trade at every turn.

And I liked this bit of marketing advice that is applicable to just about any business:

* The Scoop

Place of bowl of wrapped candy, such as Hershey's Kisses, on your exhibit table to attract picture book buyers with a sweet-tooth!

Several useful appendixes contain additional information for any would-be author on such topics as book reviewers, industry vendors and resources, websites, and conferences.

One final comment: If you get this book and you're anywhere near Bucks County, PA, take a copy over to Donahue's store: the Zebra-Striped Whale in Newtown . . . you'll have a blast reading it there and if you're lucky, you might even get the author as the person who gives you one or more of your favorite scoops of ice cream.

D. I recently heard the audiobook version of PATTON: A GENIUS FOR WAR, hosted by A&E's Jack Perkins . . . this was apparently the exact same program that appeared on BIOGRAPHY, the TV show--minus the pictures.

In some respects, I liked it better in that it gave me the freedom to listen to the show while driving . . . also, it was commercial-free.

General George S. Patton was one of America's most celebrated generals in history . . . this informative program traces his life from his spoiled childhood through his many conquests during World War II.

What I really enjoyed was hearing Patton's own words, as spoken by him:

* [on dealing with his dyslexia] I have trouble with my As, Bs and what was that third letter?

* I don't know why they [his men] like me as I curse them freely on all occasions.

* I believe that I reported more men than any officer this summer. They don't like me, though when I get out in front of them, the foolishness stops.

* It is as natural for me to be a soldier as it is to breathe.

And my favorite passage, in which he described his battle with German Field Marshall Rommel:

* It would be like a combat between kids in the old days. If I killed him, I'd be the champ. America would win the war. If he killed me, well, he wouldn't.

As a result of listening to this program, I'm now going to revisit PATTON (the excellent movie, starring George C. Scott) . . . and seek out more A&E biographies, if I can find them in book version.

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5. TV alert

A. Megan Mullally returns to TV on the season premiere of IN THE MOTHEROOD, which is based on the Web series about the real-life experiences of moms . . . Thursday at 8 p.m. on ABC.

B. Grammy-winning soul singer Jill Scott stars in THE NO. 1 LADIES' DETECTIVE AGENCY, based on Alexander McCall Smith's best-selling series of short and sweet novels set in Botswana . . . Sunday at 9 p.m. on HBO.

C. LITTLE DORRIT runs on Sundays at 9 p.m. from March 29 to April 26 on PBS . . . according to TV GUIDE, this "is a Cinderella story played out against a socioeconomic backdrop that allows for broad social satire, treacherous villainy and, naturally, aching romance. The cast (including the poignant Tom Courtenay as Amy's delusional father) is splendid, as are the production values." . . . check local listings since PBS dates and times often vary.

D. JIM GAFFIGAN: KING BABY airs on COMEDY CENTRAL on Sunday at 9 p.m. . . . if you don't know who this funny guy is, view his "Hot Pockets" routine by clicking:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J9c9IAfXQHs>

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6. Bus trip

A woman gets on a bus with her baby. The bus driver says: "That's the ugliest baby that I've ever seen. Ugh!"

The woman goes to the rear of the bus and sits down, fuming. She says to a man next to her: "The driver just insulted me!"

The man says: "You go right up there and tell him off--go ahead, I'll hold

your monkey for you.”

BELIEVE IT OR NOT:

The above joke was judged the funniest in England and the United Kingdom in a 2002 scientific study designed to find the funniest joke in the world. . . . For more information, please click:

<http://www.innocentenglish.com/best-funny-jokes/funniest-jokes.html>

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7. Websites

A. Finally, some sense on the bailout plan . . . you can learn all you need to know in slightly more than two minutes by clicking:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wROX3ELIPs>

Now this is one person who seems to get it!

B. And to see even more than one person getting it, please click:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQ3d3KigPQM>

You'll love the joy on the people's faces!

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

In case you've always wondered how many others were visiting this website when you do, look to the bottom left of the homepage to view the counter . . . pretty impressive, huh?

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8. Computer tip

Google Alerts are email updates of the latest relevant Google results (web, news, etc.) based on your choice of query or topic.

Some handy uses of Google Alerts include:

- * monitoring a developing news story
- * keeping current on a competitor or industry
- * getting the latest on a celebrity or event
- * keeping tabs on your favorite sports teams
- * see how often your name gets mentioned on the Internet

Create an alert by clicking:

<http://www.google.com/alerts>

CLARIFICATION:

Lee in Pennsylvania:

I just wanted to mention in response to your computer tip [last week] that it is important when turning the equipment back on that you turn on the modem first and wait for about 45 seconds. Then the router. Then the computer. This insures you first get the signal from the your Internet provider and that your computer will then get the wireless signal from the router.

Lee White
phone: 215.701.3988, ext. 705

<http://www.etcontrols.com>

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9. Creative puns for "educated minds," Part 2 of 2

(concluded from last week)

13. Two hats were hanging on a hat rack in the hallway. One hat said to the other, 'You stay here; I'll go on a head.'

14. I wondered why the baseball kept getting bigger. Then it hit me.

15. A sign on the lawn at a drug rehab center said: "Keep off the Grass."

16. A small boy swallowed some coins and was taken to a hospital. When his grandmother telephoned to ask how he was, a nurse said, "No change yet."

17. A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.

19. The short fortune-teller who escaped from prison was a small medium at large.

20. The man who survived mustard gas and pepper spray is now a seasoned veteran.

21. A backward poet writes inverse.

22. In democracy it's your vote that counts. In feudalism it's your Count that votes.

23. When cannibals ate a missionary, they got a taste of religion.

24. Don't join dangerous cults: Practice safe sects!

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10. A quote I like

A true friend never gets in your way unless you happen to be going down.--Arnold H. Glasow (1905-1998), American humorist

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11. Thought for the day

How easy it is to "settle"
by Julie Piper, my teaching colleague at BCCC and, also, Facebook friend

I was thinking today about how it is to settle for something that we are not happy with as long as it is not making us miserable, especially the longer we keep doing it. I have said that I want to make a big change in my life, have gone back to school for it, am essentially chucking the only career I have ever known out the window and it all seemed so exciting until.....I actually have to start making the final transition. Now I feel a million excuses bubbling out why it won't work, it is a bad idea, how no one is every happy at their jobs, how I am not totally miserable, I am too old, I can't afford it, on and on.

"Settling" is like quicksand. Once you start to do it, it is so hard to pull yourself out. I feel like it sucks right back every step of the way. I wonder how many people waste their lives because of fear of change.

I wouldn't mind giving up on this dream of mine if I really didn't want it. But I mind giving it up because of fear. And now that the reality is drawing closer, and this is no longer a fantasy that I moon over, I see that the choice is going to require major changes in the near future, I am doubting myself. I am afraid.

But I think I am more afraid having my life go by content with not being miserable with my work.

I am not settling.

What have you taken a chance on? What do you want to take a chance on?
I'd love to hear about it.

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12. Advance planning department

A. Give & Take Jugglers appear for FREE at the Free Library of Philadelphia, 1901 Vine St., Philadelphia on Sunday, March 29 at 2 p.m. . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.library.phila.gov>

B. Judith Viorst, best-selling author will discuss "Control" at Bucks County Community College on Monday, April 6, at 7 p.m. in the Library Auditorium. Judith is the author of 16 children's books, 4 non-fiction including best-seller, "Necessary Losses" and 7 collections of poems. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at:

<http://www.bucks.edu/tickets>

For further information, contact Natalie Kaye at 215.968.8015. There will also be an opportunity to meet and greet the author.

C. . For another opportunity to see Tom Orr (one of my favorite New Jersey/Pennsylvania performers) appear, catch the following FREE performance that he recently wrote me about:

I will be understudying two roles in the World Premiere of Bruce Graham's "Something Intangible" at the prestigious Arden Theatre in Philadelphia. The understudies will have a special performance of their own for the artistic staff and anyone we want to invite. This free performance is Wednesday, April 22nd at 1:30 p.m.

Location: 40 N. 2nd Street, Philadelphia

D. Web World: The Future of Online Journalism

Featuring: Chris Krewson, Executive Editor for Online News; Robert Moran, Online Reporter for The Philadelphia Inquirer; and Bob Kellagher, CFO for Interactive Media.

Wed, April 22 at 10 a.m. Gateway Auditorium, Bucks County Community College,

The event is free and open to the public.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.bucks.edu/journalism/mediaday2009.htm>

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and that peace comes to Israel and her neighbors . . . also, make it a great week!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#650

3.16.2009

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-

1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I had a blast with several of our new friends on Saturday . . . we first went to Eddie Spaghetti (828.277.9300) in Asheville for dinner . . . our pizza was quite good, though the wait was rather long given the fact that the place was relatively empty when we got there . . . we then went a few stores down to South Asheville Yoga Center where they were having a free Nia Dance Party . . . if you're not familiar with Nia, it is a joyful fusion of dance, martial arts and healing movement . . . the instructor, Ondine Constable, was excellent.

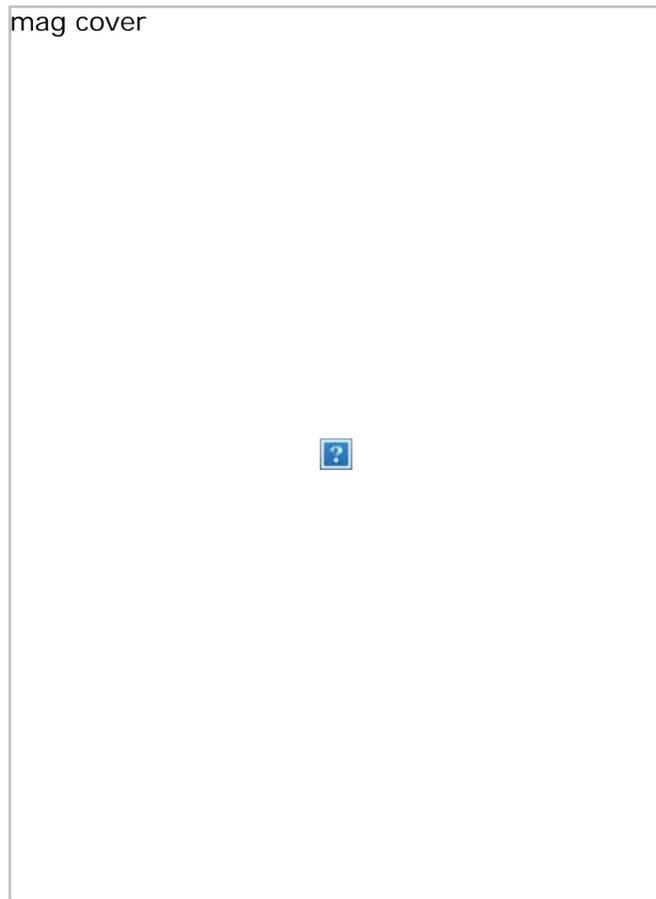
Ondine runs a regular Nia course every Saturday morning at 9:30 at the above facility . . . in addition, on the 2nd Saturday of each month, she runs the aforementioned free party . . . do check it out; you'll have a fun time . . . all ages are welcome, no experience is needed, and you can come with or without a partner . . . for more information, please click:

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

Afterwards, we all journeyed to Marble Slab Creamery (828.277.0575) for ice cream . . . this place is rapidly becoming another of our favorites, in that the ice cream is always tasty . . . and the hours are good, too . . . in fact, I believe it is the place in Asheville that stays open the latest when you need an ice cream "fix."

On Sunday, we saw STONES IN HIS POCKETS at the Diana Wortham Theatre . . . this comedy-drama is about a little Irish village, besieged by a crew of Hollywood moviemakers . . . incredibly, it features only two actors: Charles McIver and Scott Treadway who between them, play a variety of roles including two blokes who are extras in the movie, an American movie starlet, a film director, the director's assistant, children, other extras, etc. . . . their performances were as fine as we've seen in quite some time.

B. I always appreciate it when readers send me something that they come across and/or they think I can use in future issues . . . such was the case recently when Risa, my daughter, saw my picture on the cover of a magazine:



So now you know what I do in my spare time!

That said, in your spare time, you might want to check out this website:

<http://www.faceinhole.com>

I don't know if you'll wind up on INSIDE KUNG-FU; however, you could well appear on another magazine cover, in an ad or even as Glenn from the Village People!

C. There's still room for you or your relatives, neighbors, friends and colleagues to enroll in the FREE smoking cessation programs that I'll be running in Bucks County, PA next month . . . for more information, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/c9tye9>

Don't forget to share the above with your organization's HR Office; e.g., to make it available to all area employees.

And THANKS to Steve Bacher, the fine director of e-marketing at Bucks County Community College, for both creating and posting this link.

SPEICAL OPPORTUNITY (and p-t job):

I'm looking to possibly distribute flyers on the Bucks campus during the week of March 23-27 and part of March 30-April 3 . . . the times would be 11:30-1:30 p.m. and 5:30-7 p.m. . . . I would even pay you if you (or somebody you know) could help distribute the flyers . . . if interested or you know somebody else who would be, send an email to: iplan2quit@aol.com and put SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY in subject line.

D. CONDOLENCES to Roger Clark on the loss of his brother Bernie . . . interested, please feel free to make a donation in Bernie's name to the following organization: Livengrin Foundation, Scholarship Program, 4833 Hulmeville, Rd., Bensalem, PA 19020.

Unfortunately, I never had the pleasure of meeting Bernie . . . however, I can tell you that the Livengrin Foundation for Addiction Recovery is a non-profit drug and alcohol addiction treatment center that does excellent work . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.livengrin.org/>

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

This week it goes to Peter Hughes--VP of Sales and Marketing for Abbey Group Companies in Philadelphia.

However, I'm recognizing Peter for another reason; i.e., because of his excellent work as head coach of the Pennsbury High School soccer team.

He recently stepped down from that position after his teams compiled a record of 64 wins, 31 losses and 9 ties . . . this past year was one of the most successful ever: 14-5-1, including the conference championship (the second time this happened during Peter's tenure).

Wins and losses, though, tell only part of the story . . . to be on Peter's team, players had to agree to give back to the community . . . as he wrote them in an email that I quoted in BLAINESWORLD #452, "Please make sure you are volunteering for the right reasons. . . . After all, the spirit of giving should be at its strongest when there is nothing to be gained."

Peter will now be taking on additional work responsibilities . . . also, he will be spending more time with the family and to quote him, "finally complete about 50 half-finished chores around the house."

He'll also have more time for his hobby of drawing, which he has recently picked up again . . . he specializes in drawing guitarists/singers out of pastel or charcoal, and his work can be seen hanging in the living rooms of family and friends.

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2. FYI

For a great travel idea, consider this one from EAT, PRAY, LOVE (see also Sections 4C, 10 and 11) by Elizabeth Gilbert:

Mostly, you meet your friends when traveling by accident, like by sitting next to them on a train, or in a restaurant, or in a holding cell. But these are chance encounters, and you should never rely entirely on chance. For a more systematic approach, there is still the grand old system of the "letter of introduction" (today more likely to be an email), presenting you formally to the acquaintance of an acquaintance. This is a terrific way to meet people, if you're shameless enough to make the cold call and invite yourself over for dinner. So before I left for Italy, I asked everyone I knew in America if they had any friends in Rome, and I'm happy to report that I have been sent abroad with a substantial list of Italian contacts.

FYI, part 2

* Mary Lou in North Carolina:

Good seeing you and your "beautiful bride" Friday night at the social. BTW—after reading your last newsletter, I wanted to tell you about Fiddlin' Pig. If you haven't already been introduced to the group, Balsam Range, do try to go back to Fiddlin' Pig when they're scheduled to play. They are incredible musicians from Haywood County—they do basically a combination of bluegrass and gospel—and have very witty comments throughout. They put on a good show!

Thanks, also, for the recommendation of Restaurant.com. Do you know about the WNC Insiders Savings Card? That's another "must have" for this area!

* Danny in North Carolina:

Have you tried eating at the Apollo Flame [in Asheville] yet? It is practically down the road from you. They serve Greek and Italian food. What I like most there is the food is fast and hot, and the atmosphere is great. I have no problems going there for lunch for a sit-down meal and getting back to work in time.

* Marco in New Jersey:

Thomas Sweet is being considered for best ice cream in NJ by New Jersey Life Magazine. Please take a minute and cast a vote for us by following this link. Also, please pass on to anyone you know who loves Thomas Sweet!

<http://www.newjerseylife.com/current-issue/index.aspx?pageID=1049>

* Natalie in Pennsylvania:

I'm letting your readers know about a new group forming in Newtown, Pennsylvania.

The mission of the group is as follows: "In order to insure that Newtown remains a vital residential and business community that respects its past and looks forward, we feel that it is important at this time to plan for the future. This planning should encompass zoning, traffic conditions/congestion, architectural size, style and mass of buildings, future development and community uses."

Membership is open to any committed resident of the Township or Borough. The group is actively seeking those with expertise in issues affecting senior citizens, teenagers, architecture, traffic, and environmental issues.

Notes of meetings will be maintained and are available for public review. For more information, please click:

<http://www.newtown21stvoice.blogspot.com>

* Tom in New Jersey:

As a result of networking on Facebook, I got my first collection of 6,000 comics to sell. My old boss mentioned that I should try to find collections for their auction or sell things they won't take on eBay. Times are tough and people need extra cash. Tell your friends and relatives not to sell until they talk to me! I can get them the best offer out there. Read how I sell on my all sorts of collectibles on my website:

<http://www.actorr.com/comicinvestments.htm>

* Jerry in Pennsylvania:

I have a lot of eBay items for sale that I think your readers would be interested in; please click:

<http://www.homebound101.com>

* Nancy in California:

I have a friend who has something different that she's selling on eBay:

<http://cgi.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewItem&ssPageName=STRK:MESELX:IT&item=170310843585>

* Bev in Pennsylvania (about an apartment in Brooklyn):

PRICE REDUCTION! This sunny, recently renovated 2BR is in pristine, move-in condition. It has beautiful hardwood floors, a superb layout, and a location on historic Clinton Avenue, right off booming Myrtle Avenue. The co-op has an active board and friendly residents. This is a beautiful space as well as an incredible investment.

For more information and photos, please click:

<http://www.jerushadesign.com/153clinton>

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3. My friend Murray

So, after landing a new job as a Wal-Mart greeter, a good find for many retirees, my friend Murray lasted less than a day.

About two hours into his first day on the job a very loud, unattractive, mean-acting woman walked into the store with her two kids, yelling obscenities at them all the way through the entrance. As Murray had been instructed, he said pleasantly, "Good morning and welcome to Wal-Mart. Nice children you have there. Are they twins?"

The ugly woman stopped yelling long enough to say, "Hell no, they ain't twins. The oldest one's 9, and the other one's 7. Why the hell would you think they're twins? Are you blind, or just stupid?"

Murray replied, "I'm neither blind nor stupid, Ma'am, I just couldn't believe you had sex twice. Have a good day and thank you for shopping at Wal-Mart."

His supervisor told him that he probably wasn't cut out for this line of work.

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4. Reviews

A. You'll probably have to dig to find THE CLASS, but if you succeed, you'll be glad that you did . . . it's the absorbing journey into a multicultural high school in Paris over the course of a school year . . . though not a documentary, it has the feel and look of one . . . François Begaudeau--an actual teacher and the author upon whose work the film was based--turns in a believable performance in the lead role . . . his students are mostly non-professional actors, but they too are excellent . . . rated PG-13.

B. THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PAJAMAS is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD # 634 follows:

Do whatever you can to see THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PAJAMAS, my pick so far for this year's Best Film . . . it is the touching story about a young German boy and his forbidden friendship with a Jewish child who lives at a nearby "farm" that's really a concentration camp . . . they eventually find a way to meet, which leads to the film's climax that will blow you away . . . Asa Butterfield and Jack Scanlon are both remarkable as the two youths, and I liked the work of Vera Farmiga (so watchable in THE DEPARTED) as one of the mothers . . . rated PG-13.

C. Several people had suggested that I read Elizabeth Gilbert's EAT, PRAY, LOVE (see also Sections 2, 10 and 11) . . . yet I kept resisting the recommendation, in large part because it sounded like a "chick lit" type book that would only appeal to women.

Even the subtitle didn't grab me: ONE WOMAN'S SEARCH FOR EVERYTHING ACROSS ITALY, INDIA AND INDONESIA . . . I could perhaps understand why the first country was there, but the other two?

Was I ever wrong!

This was the best book I've read in quite some time . . . though based on the author's actual journey, it read like a novel . . . I nearly couldn't put it down.

Several parts had me laughing out loud; e.g., when she described her signing-up for Italian lessons:

* Studying a language is something you can actually do. So I signed up for classes at one of those continuing education places (otherwise known as Night School for Divorced Ladies). My friends thought this was hilarious. My friend Nick asked, "Why are you studying Italian? So that--just in case Italy ever invades Ethiopia again, and is actually

successful this time--you can brag about knowing a language that's spoken in two whole countries?"

Other parts moved me, such as when she talked about her divorce:

* The fact that I can even write calmly about this today is mighty evidence of time's healing powers, because I didn't take it well as it was happening. To be losing David right after the failure of my marriage, and right after the terrorizing of my city, and right during the worst ugliness of divorce (a life experience my friend Brian has compared to "having a really bad car accident every single day for about two years") . . . well, this was simply too much.

Lastly, I found myself reading certain passages more than once--something that I rarely do--because they contained such wisdom . . . for instance:

* In a dark moment of confusion about David, I'd once confided my heartache to this monk. He listened respectfully, offered up the most compassionate advice he could find, and then said, "And now I'm kissing my robes." He lifted a corner of his saffron robes and gave a loud smack. Thinking this was probably some super-arcane religious custom, I asked what he was doing. He said, "Same thing I always do whenever anyone comes to me for relationship advice, I'm just thanking God I'm a monk and I don't have to deal with this stuff anymore."

SPOILER ALERT:

I was so interested in Gilbert's story that I researched whether she was still with Felipe, the guy she met in Indonesia . . . it turns out she is, and they're now happily married in New Jersey where they run an import business together . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.elizabethgilbert.com/faq.htm#FAQ10>

D. Enjoyed listening to A LIFE ON THE ROAD, written and read by Charles Kuralt . . . for those not familiar with the name, he hosted CBS News' SUNDAY MORNING show for more than 30 years.

His "On the Road" segments were the best part . . . he would tell stories of ordinary Americans that he had met while touring the country in a recreational vehicle . . . you felt that you got to really know the folks he was profiling--and you appreciated them, too.

Certain tales had me smiling, such as his visit to the world's largest ball of string . . . as he wrote, "the problem with making it is that you're always worried that somebody out there is making a bigger one."

Yet there were other visits that moved me, including his description of a family awaiting a soldier's return from Vietnam.

A LIFE ON THE ROAD is somewhat autobiographical, in that you learn about Kuralt's varied career that took him around the world . . . however, what made it even more interesting was that the author shared many of the

insights he gained from what many others might consider just the simple things in life.

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5. TV alert

A. DHANI TACKLES THE GLOBE has NFL linebacker Dhani Jones journeying around the world trying out other sports, including dragon boat racing in Singapore, a little rugby in England and some hard-core muay thai boxing in Thailand . . . Mondays at 9 p.m. on TRAVEL.

B. For something different, try PRIMETIME: WHAT WOULD YOU DO? . . . Tuesdays at 10 p.m. on ABC . . . each week, you'll see how average citizens would react to actors involved in such situations as a mother telling her daughter that she was fat (when buying a wedding dress), a pharmacist refusing to give a 15-year old birth control pills and fraternity hazing that seemingly got out of control.

C. HEAVY METAL IN BAGHDAD tells the story of Iraq's first and, when the 2007 documentary was released, only heavy metal band . . . according to THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, "The band members are smart and cool, their sound is pretty tight, and there is enough absurdity in their situation for some good, grim humor . . . Thursday at 10 p.m. on SUNDANCE.

D. DEATH ON A FACTORY FARM is a heartbreaking report on animal cruelty within the food industry . . . Friday at 12:30 a.m. on HBO . . . for other dates and times, please click:

http://www.hbo.com/apps/schedule/ScheduleServlet?ACTION_DETAIL=DETAIL&FOCUS_ID=626647

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6. When things go wrong at the White House

Three contractors are bidding to fix a broken fence at the White House.

One is from Chicago, another is from Tennessee and the third is from Minnesota.

All three go with a White House official to examine the fence. The Minnesota contractor takes out a tape measure and does some measuring, then works some figures with a pencil. "Well," he says, "I figure the job will run about \$900--\$400 for materials, \$400 for my crew and \$100 profit for me."

The Tennessee contractor also does some measuring and figuring, then says, "I can do this job for \$700: \$300 for materials, \$300 for my crew and \$100 profit for me."

The Chicago contractor doesn't measure or figure, but leans over to the White House official and whispers, "\$2,700."

The official, incredulous, says, "You didn't even measure like the other guys! How did you come up with such a high figure?"

The Chicago contractor whispers back, "\$1,000 for me, \$1,000 for you, and we hire the guy from Tennessee to fix the fence."

"Done!" replies the government official.

And that, my friends, is how the new stimulus plan will work.

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7. Websites

A. Here's a little food for thought:

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

It is based on work by Brian Tracy . . . methinks that if you pay attention to it, you'll be less likely to procrastinate--or at least not today!

B. "Jai Ho," the Best Song Oscar winner from SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE, has been Americanized . . . see for yourself by clicking:

<http://www.popeater.com/music/article/pussycat-dolls-get-on-the-millionaire/381661>

The video features Nicole Scherzinger of the Pussycat Dolls . . . she said in a recent interview, "I thought the movie was unbelievably powerful and life-changing. The story was unlike any other story I'd ever seen before. I felt it could touch and make an impact on anyone no matter who you are or where you are from. The characters and the heart and soul of the movie and the music truly inspired me. It was such a great honor to be able to re-write my own version of the lyrics to 'Jai Ho'--'You are my Destiny.' "

Does she succeed? I'd be curious as to your reaction.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

There are now 911 subscribers . . . my goal is to get that total up to 1,000 by the end of the year . . . you can help by mailing this entire issue to friends, inviting them to subscribe (feel free to include your recommendation) . . . subscription information is toward the bottom of my website's homepage where it says "Special Offer" . . . or you can also find similar information at the bottom of this week's issue.

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8. Computer tip

Is your Internet access going slower than you think it should? If so, try these simple steps:

Turn off your computer completely.

Unplug the connections to both your modem and router.

Wait 60 seconds.

Plug back your the above connections.

Turn your computer back on.

You'll be pleasantly surprised with the improved performance.

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9. Creative puns for "educated minds," Part 1 of 2

MY TWO CENTS:

If you laugh at these, consider yourself educated; if not, well I'll let you draw your own conclusion.

1. The roundest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.

2. I thought I saw an eye doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian .

3. She was only a whiskey maker, but he loved her still.

4. A rubber band pistol was confiscated from algebra class because it was a weapon of math disruption.

5. The butcher backed into the meat grinder and got a little behind in his work.

6. No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.

7. A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.

8. A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.

9. Two silk worms had a race. They ended up in a tie.

10. Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.

11. A hole has been found in the nudist camp wall. The police are looking into it.

12. Atheism is a non-prophet organization.

(to be concluded next week)

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10. A quote I like

I've also noticed that his [her medicine man's] estimation of his age changes by the day, based on how he feels. When he's really tired,

he'll sigh and say, "Maybe eighty-five today," but when he's feeling more upbeat he'll say, "I think I'm sixty today." Perhaps this is as good a way of estimating age as any--how old do you feel? What else matters, really?--Elizabeth Gilbert in EAT, PRAY, LOVE (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 if you see it cited four separate times in any one newsletter . . . that's certainly true about EAT, PRAY, LOVE (see also Sections 2, 4C and 11) by Elizabeth Gilbert . . . I loved her idea for dealing with something difficult in your life; i.e., write a petition to God:

Dear God,

Please intervene and help end this divorce. My husband and I have failed at our marriage and now we are failing at our divorce. This poisonous process is bringing suffering to us and to everyone who cares about us.

I recognize that you are busy with wars and tragedies and much larger conflicts than the ongoing dispute of one dysfunctional couple. But it is my understanding that the health of the planet is affected by the health of every individual on it. As long as even two souls are locked in conflict, the whole of the world is contaminated by it. Similarly, if even one or two souls can be free from discord, this will increase the general health of the whole world, the way a few healthy cells in a body can increase the general health of that body.

It is my most humble request, then, that you help us end this conflict, so that two more people can have the chance to become free and healthy, and so there will be just a little bit less animosity and bitterness in a world that is already far too troubled by suffering.

I thank you for your kind attention.

Respectfully,
Elizabeth M. Gilbert

I read it to Iva, and she nodded her approval.

"I would sign that," she said.

I handed the petition over to her with a pen, but she was too busy driving, so she said, "No, let's say that I did just sign it. I signed it in my heart."

"Thank you, Iva. I appreciate your support."

"Now, who else would sign it?" she asked.

"My family. My mother and father. My sister."

"OK," she said. "They just did. Consider their names added. I actually felt them sign it. They're on the list now. OK--who else would sign it? Start

naming names.

So I started naming names of all the people who I thought would sign this petition. I named all my close friends, then some family members and some people I worked with. After each name, Iva would say with assurance, "Yep. He just signed it," or "She just signed it." Sometimes she would pop in with her own signatories, like: "My parents just signed it. They raised their children during a war. They hate useless conflict. They'd be happy to see your divorce end."

I closed my eyes and waited for more names to come to me.

"I think Bill and Hillary Clinton just signed it," I said.

"I don't doubt it," she said. "Listen, Liz--anybody can sign this petition. Do you understand that? Call on anyone, living or dead, and start collecting signatures."

"Saint Francis of Assisi just signed it!"

"Of course he did!" Iva smacked her hand against the steering wheel with certainty.

Now I was cooking:

"Abraham Lincoln just signed it! And Gandhi, and Mandela and all the peacemakers. Eleanor Roosevelt, Mother Teresa, Bono, Jimmy Carter, Muhammad Ali, Jackie Robinson and the Dalai Lama . . . and my grandmother who died in 1984 and my grandmother who's still alive . . . and my Italian teacher, and my therapist, and my agent . . . and Martin Luther King Jr. and Katharine Hepburn . . . and Martin Scorsese (which you wouldn't necessarily expect, but it's still nice of him) . . . and my Guru, of course . . . and Joanne Woodward, and Joan of Arc, and Ms. Carpenter, my fourth-grade teacher, and Jim Henson--"

The names spilled from me. They didn't stop spilling for almost an hour, as we drove across Kansas and my petition for peace stretched into page after invisible page of supporters. Iva kept confirming yes, he signed it, yes, she signed it--and I became filled with a grand sense of protection, surrounded by the collective goodwill of so many mighty souls.

The list finally wound down, and my anxiety wound down with it. I was sleepy. Iva said, "Take a nap. I'll drive." I closed my eyes. One last name appeared. "Michael J. Fox just signed it," I murmured, then drifted into sleep. I don't know how long I slept, maybe only for ten minutes, but it was deep. When I woke up, Iva was still driving. She was humming a little song to herself. I yawned.

My cell phone rang.

I looked at that crazy little telefonino vibrating with excitement in the ashtray of the rental car. I felt disoriented, kind of stoned from my nap, suddenly unable to remember how a telephone works.

"Go ahead," Iva said, already knowing. "Answer the thing."

I picked up the phone, whispered hello.

"Great news!" my lawyer announced from distant New York City. "He just signed it!"

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12. Advance planning department

A. Worried about paying for your child's college education?

If you're the parents of a high school freshmen, sophomores and juniors, then attend "Financial Aid 101" . . . this is a FREE workshop being offered by Dr. Barry Sysler.

Location: Chandler Hall (Wright Meeting Room) in Newtown, PA

Date and time: March 18 at 7 p.m.

For more information or to register, call 215.579.8281 or click:

<http://www.academicdirections.com>

B. Friday night, March 20, come see Tom Orr (one of my favorite local actors) and others in a play reading of DOCTOR ANONYMOUS at the ActorsNET in Morrisville, PA . . . no formal admission charge; \$10 suggested donation . . . for more information, please click:

http://www.actorsnetbucks.org/Play_Readings/index.html

C. OUR TOWN is playing at Congregation Ohev Shalom in Richboro, PA on March 21, 22, 27 and 28 . . . tickets are available by clicking:

<http://www.ohev.org/events/ourtown.htm>

D. The next Louder Than Words story telling will be at Maxwell's in Hoboken, NJ on Tuesday, April 28 and thereafter [hopefully] the last Tuesday of each month.

For more information, please click:

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

PS. If you're Irish or if you're like me and you celebrate all holidays, Happy St. Patrick's Day on Tuesday . . . as you do, keep in mind the following Irish blessing (one of my favorites): May the best day in your past be the worst day in your future.

Also, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and that peace resumes in Israel . . . and make it a great week!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#649

3.9.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I keep discovering restaurants we like in Asheville . . . The Fiddlin' Pig was our latest find . . . we went there with some new North Carolina friends, Bob and Leslie, and had smoked chicken that was delicious . . . it's served naked, which enabled us to add whatever choice sauces we wanted.

Portions were plentiful and included hushpuppies, as well as two sides . . . we couldn't believe that most platters were under \$10 and with a restaurant.com coupon for \$25 off, the whole meal with tip worked out to \$10/person.

We went on a Sunday night, but when we return (and we will), we'll go some other night when they have live bluegrass music . . . or on a Saturday afternoon when they have live gospel music . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.thefiddlingpig.com>

I'll also remember the evening for a remark that Bob made . . . I forgot what exactly we were discussing (I think it had something to do with home repairs), he said that "was not in my skill set" . . . what a great response to use when somebody asks you to do something that you're just not good at . . . rather than attempt it, as I often do and then mess it up, just smile and proudly say that it's not in your skill set.

B. I do miss certain things from "up North," one of them being getting my hair styled by Dan Focarelli at his Headways Salon (609.588.4944) in Hamilton Township, NJ . . . I had been going there for some 20 years and always was amazed that he could make me look as good as he did.

But since I'm now en route to becoming a Southerner, it was time to find a place to get my hair cut near where I live . . . and I'm lucky to have found Courtesy Barber Shop (828.665.9450), which is located just down the road.

It's an old-fashioned barber shop, in the sense that they don't shampoo your hair . . . nor do they take appointments; you just walk in.

Bruce Morgan, the owner, is the person who has been cutting my hair . . . as he notes on his card, "If you look good, we look good."

I think that has been the case, so far . . . nobody, to date, has come up to me and laughed when they've seen me--a good sign.

Bruce is real friendly . . . when I asked him how long he has been there, he replied, "Since 7:30 a.m." . . . when pressed, he told me that he has had a shop in the area for 21 years.

He's proud of the fact that he has been able to not increase the price of his haircuts for the last several years, and he has no intention of raising them this year given the state of the economy . . . so if you're looking for a fine \$10 haircut (I kid you not!), this is the place to go.

It is also a place where I saw something the other day that still stuck me as being extraordinary . . . a family brought in their handicapped son for a haircut . . . they managed to get him out of his wheelchair and into the barber chair where one of the other barbers proceeded to cut his hair . . . as this was being done, another customer came up to Bruce and very subtly paid for both the child's haircut and a generous tip . . . you could see that the family was touched by this generosity when they went to pay . . . I know I was.

C. On my most recent trip to Pennsylvania, I did manage to catch two performances that I enjoyed:

* My friend Natalie Kaye runs amazing programs at Bucks County Community College . . . most of them are FREE, too (such as the one mentioned in Section 12D below) . . . so when she told me about a concert by Lauren Pelon, I was intrigued--especially when I heard that Pelon not only sang . . . but she played 25 ancient and modern instruments . . . it was quite an impressive show, as well as history lesson.

* I saw MID-LIFE! THE CRISIS MUSICAL at The Off-Broadstreet Theatre in Hopewell, NJ (609.466.2766) . . . this is the show for you if any and/or all of the following strike a bell: memory loss, high cholesterol, flabby arms, loss of hearing, talking to your kids like your parents spoke to you, side effects from prescription drugs, menopause, empty nesting, hair loss and . . . well, I think you get the idea . . . there's a lot more things that are covered, all presented in a series of musical skits that often had me nodding in acknowledgment . . . I laughed at many of the lines and genuinely had a good time . . . the cast of six is talented and Timothy Brown

on piano was an excellent accompanist . . . the show runs through April 4.

D. CONGRATULATIONS to Linda Kanner and Rick Pine, two longtime friends and BLAINESWORLD readers, on their recent engagement!

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

This week, it goes to Mary Alice Green, drive vacation and membership specialist for AAA in Asheville (828.253.5376, ext. 11501).

I've been a longtime and very satisfied AAA member . . . however, amidst all the details of our move to North Carolina, I had inexplicably let our membership lapse.

Mary Alice quickly and professionally got us reinstated . . . in addition, in doing so, we saved money because the rates were lower here than they were in New Jersey.

In helping us, Mary Alice pointed out that she could help us with our vacation planning too . . . imagine that; i.e., there are still folks who do that . . . so the next time I'm tired of doing all the work on the Internet (and dealing with the frustrations that often result), I just might take her up on that offer.

She is a real asset to the AAA organization, and I'm glad that she was the one who answered the phone when I called . . . I also loved her response to my question as to her job title . . . when I kidded her about the fact that she seemed to wear a lot of hats, she commented that she's also known as the "tap dancer."

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2. FYI

Kathy in Pennsylvania with an important reminder:

Lose an hour of sleep this past weekend, but don't lose your life. After you change all the settings on your clocks be sure to check the batteries on your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

FYI, part 2

* Jen in Pennsylvania:

I think everyone knows somebody with lung disease, whether it's asthma, emphysema, lung cancer or COPD. There are millions of people in the country who suffer every day. The American Lung Association's Stair Climb is my way of helping to raise money for various community programs and research. I'm climbing 50 floors in honor of my sister Becky. She was just 31 when she died 5 years ago. She was born with a very rare lung disease and unfortunately took her too early. Please donate if you would like to support me and my sister's memory by clicking:

http://www.mrsnv.com/evt/e01/part.jsp?acct=2309428264®ister_id=0&id=2154

Thanks for helping out!

* Deborah in New Jersey:

We're delighted to tell you New Jersey Life Magazine has included Princeton Center for Yoga & Health for consideration as your favorite Yoga, Pilates and Fitness Studio. It's part of their Readers' Choice A-List poll.

To support Princeton Center for Yoga & Health, please click:

<http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=l6raa&m=1cZrQeN5pNourH&b=.RinULfclTFqNv6dSCv2GA>

* Kathy in Florida:

Loved the liquidity joke; very funny. You know I work for a financial planning office. I sent that one to my boss.

And hey there mister . . . I was born and raised in St. Louis, MO . . . don't. be knocking us Missourians! It only takes me once to get a joke, LMAO!!!!

* Vicki in Florida:

Here's a tip for shipping: Go to "U.S. Postal Service" online and then "Tools for shipping packages." They will send you a case of boxes that are free. And it only costs 8 dollars shipping what you send, no matter what the weight is. Absolutely no cost to get them is the good thing .As always, love your mail and congrats on your move.

* Jason in Pennsylvania, commenting on Pat in Pennsylvania's remarks about FedEx:

They are much more focused on the sender than the recipient. Especially big senders (read spenders). I was just talking to a client yesterday who was singing many praises to FedEx, and said he would never go back to another shipping company. . . .

Personally as a recipient of packages, I prefer UPS. Things tend to show up sooner than FedEx. The UPS system isn't as good, since online it might say the package is in Ohio, when in fact is in my hand, but that's kind of where I prefer it to be anyway.

At any rate I'm glad your making your opinions known to FedEx. Hopefully, they will realize from a marketing perspective that every customer's satisfaction is important, not just their biggest customers.

MANY THANKS to all those who are spreading the word about the upcoming smoke cessation programs . . . I've also gotten these two emails that helped make my day:

* Jarod in Pennsylvania:

Good to hear that you are still doing this program. It has been over two years since we last saw each other at this seminar, and I am happy to report that I am still smoke free. Thank you so much for getting me involved! I forwarded the poster to my sister to see if she wanted to get involved. I'll let you know!

* Kandi in Arizona:

I am so delighted I don't have to even consider this anymore! It was a

shot in the arm of pride and self-confidence. March 1st will be my 2 year anniversary of not smoking!. Thank you Blaine!!

Keep on doing what you do in this regard! I will NEVER go back!
You do help people!

IN CASE YOU MISSED THE INFORMATION FOR THIS YEAR:

My sabbatical project is underway . . . as such, I'm looking for 100 people who want to quit smoking.

Please share the following information with any of your friends, relatives, students, etc. who could attend three one-hour sessions in Bucks County, PA:

Quit Smoking!

The Women's Center of Bucks County Community College, in conjunction with the Bucks County Courier Times & The Intelligencer, will be offering a series of FREE seminars to anybody who wishes to quit smoking.

Do sign-up if you plan to quit smoking. This is not something we want you to try. It is something we want you to do. And we are confident that you will!

There is only room for 25 participants at each of the seminars. So sign-up will be on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Each seminar involves three one-hour sessions. You're expected to attend each of these sessions.

Bucks County Comm. College, Newtown
6:30 p.m. each night . . . April 7, April 21, May 5
Sessions to feature a discussion of the book, THE EASY WAY TO QUIT SMOKING.

Bucks County Comm. College, Newtown
8 p.m. each night . . . April 7, April 21, May 5
Sessions to feature hypnotherapy.

The Bucks County Courier Times, Levittown
6:30 p.m. each night . . . April 9, April 23, May 7
Sessions to feature a discussion of the book, THE EASY WAY TO QUIT SMOKING.

The Bucks County Courier Times, Levittown
8 p.m. each night . . . April 9, April 23, May 7
Sessions to feature hypnotherapy.

To register or for more information: Call Bridget Hughes at 215.968.8254 or via email at Iplan2quit@aol.com.

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3. Which one?

Just before a boy enters the barbershop, the barber tells his customer, "This is the dumbest kid in the world. Watch." The barber puts a dollar in one open palm and two quarters in the other and asks

the kid, "Which one do you want?" The boy takes the quarters and leaves.

"See?" says the barber, laughing.

Later, the customer passes the boy, who is standing outside a candy store. "Why'd you take the quarters and not the dollar?" he asks.

"Because," says the boy, "the day I take the dollar, the game is over."

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4. Reviews

A. I hope that Joaquin Phoenix doesn't make good on his pledge to stop acting . . . he is excellent in TWO LOVERS, a romantic drama about a depressed bachelor who lives at home with his parents . . . his parents try to fix him up with the daughter (Vinessa Shaw) of a business associate, but he is more interested in a neighbor (Gwyneth Paltrow) . . . I was also moved by the acting of these two women . . . in addition, I liked the cinematography; it made Brooklyn come alive . . . this is a film that I'm still thinking about--several days after having seen it . . . rated R.

B. MILK is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #638 follows:

Sean Penn is outstanding in MILK, the true story about America's first elected gay politician . . . he makes you really feel for Harvey Milk, a businessman who lost many races before getting elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1977 . . . Josh Brolin, so fine in both W and NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN, again shines as Dan White--Milk's political colleague who eventually turns on him . . . make sure you stay for the ending credits to see how close the actors actually resembled their real characters . . . rated R.

C. I've long been admirer of Mother Teresa of Calcutta . . . her work always impressed me, and I would often be inspired when I heard one of her quotes.

So it was with that background that I read MOTHER TERESA'S SECRET FIRE by Father Joseph Langford, one of her longtime associates . . . and that said, I must admit that I was somewhat disappointed with the book.

It went into far too much detail about her encounter with God on her way to a retreat while taking the Darjeeling train on September 10, 1946 . . . Mother Teresa then received a singular message from God about "His thirst" for souls.

Father Langford used that "thirst" thread, far too often to my liking . . . I found SECRET FIRE to be very repetitive, and it placed too much emphasis on actual quotes from the Bible . . . I would have much preferred reading more about Mother Teresa's life.

However, I was able to find selected passages that did manage

to provide me with insight; among them:

* In observing Mother Teresa, it was obvious how keenly she felt the suffering of the poor and identified with their distress. She not only accepted as share in their deprivations, she sought it out. She took on voluntary fasting and other self-imposed penances so as to share more closely in the pain and lot of the poor. She slept on a hard prison bed, with no fan, her tiny room sweltering in Calcutta's oven like heat. Her little room was both sleeping space and office, with no more than a table and a stool for furnishing. If such was the lot of the poor, who had neither fans nor a fancy desk, it would be her lot as well. This kind of tenderness of heart, this chosen vulnerability before the sufferings of others, was another attribute of the thirst of God that Mother Teresa has discovered, and reflected, and whose deep roots fill the pages of Scripture.

* There are countless examples of the restorative power of love in Mother Teresa's work. In Calcutta, many children who began life literally thrown away, cast aside as infants on a rubbish heap by parents who could not afford, or did not want, to keep them, have been rescued by Mother Teresa and her Sisters. Loved back into life, smiled on and caressed, told and retold of their goodness, they were gradually prepared in body and spirit for adoption by a waiting and loving family. Today those same children are graduating from universities, having children of their own, and passing on the miracle of restorative love that had given them new life and dignity out of the ash heap of the slums.

* While most of us wake with thoughts of what we can get today, or where we might shop, or how we can advance our careers or personal goals, Mother Teresa's waking thought was always about how she could give. She invites us all to at least take baby steps to move in that direction; to examine why and for what we live. Why we live becomes how we live, and how we live determines all the rest: our happiness in this life and the next, and to a large extent, the happiness of those around us.

That last passage was what I wished that I had seen more of in MOTHER TERESA'S SECRET FIRE; i.e., how her life could be a model for mine--and countless others.

D. I remember reading in THE WALL STREET JOURNAL about the real story behind the homer that Bobby Thompson hit off Ralph Branca that won the National League pennant for the New York Giants in 1951 . . . it seems that the Giants had been stealing the scenes of opposing catchers and that Thompson had thus been alerted prior to his memorable hit.

The 2001 JOURNAL account stuck me until just recently when I came across THE ECHOING GREEN, written and read by Joshua Prager . . . he elaborates not only on "the shot heard round the world," but on both baseball history and the social climate of the time.

It is a masterful account that had me enthralled from beginning to end . . . Prager's retelling of that season's pennant race was as masterful a piece of writing that I've ever encountered.

It enabled me to feel that I really got to know both Thompson

and Branca, and I remained interested in what happened to them during the rest of their careers.

If you're a baseball fan or know of one, then THE ECHOING GREEN is the book for you . . . non-sports fans might find it enjoyable, too, especially if they were around in the 1950s.

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5. TV alert

A. Dying actress Jane (Leslie Ann Warren) returns to her hometown to spend her final days with her best friend, Ida Mae (Meredith Baxter). Their respite hits a snag, though . . . to see what it is, watch BOUND BY A SECRET on HALLMARK on Friday at 9 p.m.

B. If you were an ER fan, watch for a reunion of Eriq LaSalle, Michael Michele and Michael Beach on RELATIVE STRANGER . . . it's a dysfunctional family drama that also stars Cicely Tyson (the person I would watch) . . . Saturday at 9 p.m. on HALLMARK.

C. WILL FERRELL; YOU'RE WELCOME AMERICA, A FINAL NIGHT WITH GEORGE BUSH has the comedian performing live from New York City's Cort Theatre in the final performance of his one-man show . . Saturday at 9 p.m. on HBO.

D. Ferrell can be seen a second time this week . . . he plays a car dealer on EASTBOUND & DOWN (he's also an executive producer of the show), a weekly comedy series that I find funny . . . Sunday at 10:30 p.m. on HBO.

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6. Contractions

A man speaks frantically into the phone, "My wife is pregnant, and her contractions are only two minutes apart!"

"Is this her first child?" the doctor queries.

"No, you idiot!" the man shouts. "This is her husband!"

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7. Websites

A. Please watch the following video clip. It is a story of Johnny, the grocery store bagger. It is very short, but it will remind you of why and how we make an impact in what we do. It's amazing how one young bagger with Down's Syndrome made such a wonderful impact on those customers lucky enough to have Johnny bag their groceries. Click here to view:

<http://www.simpletruths.com/simpletruths/a.aspx?af=219&mo=stsr>

Though I don't ordinarily suggest that you forward stuff, this

is one website that you might want to share with others. . . just copy and paste it into a new email (rather than just forwarding it) . . . at the same time, feel free to invite them to subscribe to this newsletter.

B. If you're an amateur photographer or interested in the work of others, please click:

<http://www.earthshots.org/500/>

This website is full of hundreds of pictures that are posted on the very front page . . . people from all over the world are constantly submitting pictures so that others can view them.

Earthshots can also be used as an excellent screen savor. In addition, you can be picked to win the daily contest if your picture is picked in a drawing.

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

If you'd like to pick my brain to find a book to read, go to "Blaine's Best" on the left, click it and then click the second part of letter "O" . . . you'll be taken to the 787 reviews I've posted at the amazon.com website where I am currently 365 in their list of Top 500 reviewers.

To help me move up:

1. Go this website:

<http://www.amazon.com>

2. Find some book I've recently reviewed; e.g., COMEDY AT THE EDGE by Richard Zoglin.

3. Go to my review (it is on the right, second or third from the top).

4. If you find my review helpful, and I hope that you do, please click "Yes" when asked to give your opinion.

5. Thanks, in advance.

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8. Computer tip

Before you print something, click on Print Preview . . . you can see exactly what you are getting . . . doing so, you can then choose to not print certain pages (e.g., that contain little more than "Contact Us" information) . . . sometimes, you can also "Hide Margins" . . . check it out; you'll be pleasantly surprised.

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9. Top 10 indicators your employer has changed

to a cheaper health care plan

10. Your annual breast exam is done at Hooters.
9. Directions to your doctor's office include "Take a left when you enter the trailer park."
8. The tongue depressors taste faintly of Fudgesicles.
7. The only proctologist in the plan is "Gus" from Roto-Rooter.
6. The only item listed under Preventative Care Coverage is "an apple a day."
5. Your primary care physician is wearing the pants you gave to Goodwill last month.
4. "The patient is responsible for 200% of out-of-network charges" is not a typographical error.
3. The only expense covered 100% is "embalming."
2. Your Prozac comes in different colors with little M's on them.

And the number one sign you've joined a very cheap health care plan:

1. You ask for Viagra, and they give you a Popsicle stick and duct tape!

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10. A quote I like

There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up.--John Andrew Holmes (1874-?), American physician and author

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11. Thought for the day

The precious gift

Once upon a time, when God had finished making the world, he wanted to leave behind a piece of His own divinity, a spark of His essence, a promise to man of what he could become, with effort. He looked for a place to hide this precious gift because, He explained, what man could find too easily would never be valued by him.

"Then you must hide this gift on the highest mountain peak on earth," said one of his counselors.

God shook His head, "No, for man is an adventuresome creature, and he will soon enough learn to climb the highest mountain peaks."

"Hide it then, O Great One, in the depths of the earth."

"I think not," said God. "for man will one day discover that he can dig into the deepest parts of the earth."

"In the middle of the ocean then, Master?"

God shook His head. "I've given man a brain, you see, and one day he'll learn to build ships and cross the mightiest oceans."

"Where then, Master?" cried His counselors.

God smiled, "I'll hide it where every man and woman will be able to find it if they look sincerely and deeply enough. I'll hide it in their heart."

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. Upcoming NJSBDC (New Jersey Small Business Development Center) classes include the following:

Learning-Join our classes from your home or office!

March 12 **Communicating for Success** TELECLASS, 7:00-8:00 p.m.
REGISTER HERE

March 17 **The Rules of Networking** TELECLASS, 8:00-9:00 p.m.
REGISTER HERE

March 18 Doing Business with Mercer County-
Products and Services: Bidding Process,
6:00-8:00 p.m., Washington Twp. Library, Allentown-Robbinsville Rd.
REGISTER HERE

March 19 **Tax Issues for the Self-Employed**, 6:00-8:00 p.m., TCNJ,
Loser Hall 106. **REGISTER HERE**

March 19 Building a Marketing Plan TELECLASS, 8:00-9:00 a.m.
REGISTER HERE

March 24 **SBA's 504 Loan Program**, 9:30-11:00 a.m., Ewing Library, Scotch
Rd. **REGISTER HERE**

March 24 **E-mail Marketing** TELECLASS, 7:00-8:00 p.m. **REGISTER HERE**

March 25 Marketing/Advertising POWERHOUR Sign up now for a FREE
one-to-one counseling session. Limited Time Slots. First call first serve
registration. 609.771.2947 Sessions will be held at TCNJ.

March 26 **Writing Creative Copy That Sells** TELECLASS, 8:00-9:00 a.m.
REGISTER HERE

B. Are you living your authentic life?

Bring a Friend for FREE - SAVE \$40

SATURDAY, March 14, 1:30-3:30 p.m. at the Princeton Center
for Yoga & Health

Andrea Harvey will help you claim your authentic self and live life

to your fullest potential! There is another level of existence that is the real, true, genuine substance of who you are. It's what is defined as the authentic self. The authentic self is the "you" that can be found at your absolute core. Register by clicking:

http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=l6raa&m=1cZrQeN5pNourH&b=OGNSIOInP2_JHJC2U8618g

C. Compassionate Listening: Healing Our World from the Inside Out

March 20 to 22, 2009

Fri 6:30 Dinner thru Sun lunch

Leah Green

Kirkridge Green in eastern Pennsylvania

\$340

Every spiritual master--from Eckhart Tolle to the Dalai Lama--recognizes listening as one of the most precious gifts we can give to another human being, and compassion as necessary for human survival and evolution. In every human interaction, whether as mentor, friend, family member, co-worker, leader or social activist, the practice of Compassionate Listening builds trust, connection, compassion, respectful dialogue and sustainable solutions.

In this training, we learn how to reach through layers of defensiveness and reactivity to our essential core. From there, we can shift communication and relationships into heart-to-heart interaction, even in the heat of conflict. Participants in this highly experiential training learn the Five Core Practices of Compassionate Listening.

Participants put the skills to use immediately with real life challenges. Together, we create a trusting circle to explore this powerful model of peace-building and conflict transformation, and learn how each of us has the capacity to create a culture of peace in our daily lives.

To register online, please click here.

Leah Green is the founding director of The Compassionate Listening Project. She has led 23 training delegations throughout the Middle East, and co-founded the Jewish-German Compassionate Listening Project. Leah has produced 4 films, and her work has been profiled in numerous books and articles, including Gary Zukav's Soul Stories, and Peace, Justice and Jews: Reclaiming Our Tradition. She received the 2003 Yoga Journal Award for Selfless Service. Leah teaches world-wide.

D. Celebrate Women's History Month with eyewitnesses to historical events, sharing their experiences.

11 a.m., Tyler 142 at Bucks County Community College (Newtown, PA) for all events.

Mon., March 23: Vietnam

Wed., March 25: Civil Rights

All events are FREE. Call 215.968.8015 for more information.

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PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and that peace resumes in Israel . . . also, make it

a great week!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#648

3.2.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I were again apart for most of the week . . . but before I left for Pennsylvania, we got to see HIGH SOCIETY at the Tryon Fine Arts Center in Tryon, North Carolina.

The production was actually better than the movie of the same name (starring Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra and Grace Kelly) . . . I never liked the film; I loved what this community group did with it.

All the performers were perfectly cast . . . Whitney Moore was outstanding as Tracy Lord . . . Emily Kocher was adorable as her younger sister . . . and Dean Campbell as Uncle Willie nearly stole every scene he was in.

A week later, many of the Cole Porter songs are still going through my head: "Little One," "I Love Paris," "True Love," etc.

The good news is that the production still runs through this coming week . . . so if you're anywhere near the area, do what you can to catch it . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.tryonearts.org>

On another night, we also joined friends for dinner at Frankie Bones in Asheville . . . this was the first time we were there; it won't be the last.

Cynthia enjoyed her salmon . . . I ordered pot roast, a rarity for me, and was delighted with my choice . . . our friends both ordered roast beef and said it was excellent.

I also liked my salad, in large part because of a tasty bacon dressing that I never had before.

The restaurant has a reasonably-priced \$13.99 special menu if you get there before 5:45 p.m. . . . our \$25 restaurant.com coupon made the meal even more of a bargain.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.fbdining.com>

B. "Up North," I managed to join other friends for a production of THE LAST DAYS OF THE DINOSAURS--a comic drama written and directed by my friend Joe Doyle.

It is the tale of aging parents and how their family copes with them . . . parts had me laughing; others had me near tears.

Marco Newton, getting better and better in every show I see him in, gave a moving performance as the father . . . however, it was Virginia Barrie's work as the mother that really blew me away . . . she was superb . . . and lest I forget, Joe and Cheryl Doyle's cats were in the show toward the end . . . they did a great job, too.

On another night, I joined many of my College friends for a belated holiday party at the Brick Hotel in Newtown, PA . . . I liked my chicken marsala and others told me that they enjoyed their meals, too.

That's yours truly below, flanked on the left by Josh Rubinsky and on the right by Gloria Gilman:



Perhaps the highlight of the evening was our annual regift exchange . . . I did well, getting a Joni Mitchell CD in return for some Starbucks coffee and mugs that I never used.

For more information about the Brick, please click:

<http://www.brickhotel.com>

And, finally, I managed to check out Jake's Eatery--a restaurant that was mentioned in last week's newsletter.

My blueberry pancakes were oh-so-filling--and delicious, too . . . I especially enjoyed saying "hello" to the owner, Steve Jacobs, a former student that I hadn't seen for many years.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.jakeseatery.com>

C. THANKS to Lisa in Pennsylvania for a fantastic idea.

By now, you may have read that I'm trying to get my sabbatical project off the ground; i.e., running a series of smoke cessation programs . . . when I told Lisa about them, here's what she wrote back:

Thanks for the information, Blaine. I forwarded this to my company's HR manager, as they have tried to help their employees quit smoking over the past couple years (not by methods I'd necessarily recommend) and have strict policies about smoking anywhere on the premises. I've asked her to post for employees who would like some help.

THIS GOT ME THINKING:

Feel free to do the same, especially if you live or work in Bucks County, Pennsylvania (though others are also welcome to participate, of course) . . . methinks that HR managers, as well as those employed in Employee Relations offices, would want to share this information with their employees . . . I'm running it below and, also, trying to attach a copy of the actual flyer in case you can download it.

PLEASE HELP DEPARTMENT:

My sabbatical project is underway . . . as such, I'm looking for 100 people who want to quit smoking.

Please share the following information with any of your friends, relatives, students, etc. who could attend three one-hour sessions in Bucks County, PA:

Quit Smoking!

The Women's Center of Bucks County Community College, in conjunction with the Bucks County Courier Times & The Intelligencer, will be offering a series of FREE seminars to anybody who wishes to quit smoking.

Do sign-up if you plan to quit smoking. This is not something we want you to try. It is something we want you to do. And we are confident that you will!

There is only room for 25 participants at each of the seminars. So sign-up will be on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Each seminar involves three one-hour sessions. You're expected to attend each of these sessions.

Bucks County Comm. College, Newtown
6:30 p.m. each night . . . April 7, April 21, May 5
Sessions to feature a discussion of the book, THE EASY WAY TO QUIT SMOKING.

Bucks County Comm. College, Newtown
8 p.m. each night . . . April 7, April 21, May 5
Sessions to feature hypnotherapy.

The Bucks County Courier Times, Levittown
6:30 p.m. each night . . . April 9, April 23, May 7

Sessions to feature a discussion of the book, THE EASY WAY TO QUIT SMOKING.

The Bucks County Courier Times, Levittown
8 p.m. each night . . . April 9, April 23, May 7
Sessions to feature hypnotherapy.

To register or for more information: Call Bridget Hughes at 215.968.8254 or via email at lplan2quit@aol.com.

D. BELATED CONGRATULATIONS to two of my talented colleagues at Bucks County Community College for receiving the following two awards from the Lindback Foundation:

Denise May--Distinguished Teaching Award; and
Erangee Kumaraage--Minority Junior Faculty Award.

I recently attended a reception, at which both Denise and Erangee spoke of their work . . . I was quite impressed . . . in addition, I got a kick out of what Denise had to say about what happens whenever she teaches time management to her students . . . she thinks to herself that these are really good ideas that she should follow. (I can relate big time!)

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

This week, it goes to Tom O'Keefe--a professor in the Behavioral Studies Department a Bucks.

Tom has long been one of our College's outstanding teachers . . . he is well-respected by both students and colleagues . . . in fact, several years ago he was recognized by the Alumni Association when he was awarded that group's teaching award.

I have had the pleasure to get to know Tom in another capacity; i.e., as his role as treasurer for our faculty union . . . he has done an excellent job in that capacity . . . most amazingly, he often seems to get checks paid before they even come across his desk.

He has just announced that he will not be running for reelection after over seven years of decided service . . . he'll be missed.

Just one more thing about Tom O'Keefe . . . he is the kind of guy who would give you the shirt off his back . . . he never did that for me, yet . . . however, I recall being in his office a few weeks ago . . . I needed to borrow a pen and he gave me his, telling me that it wrote remarkably well . . . he said that was because he had inserted a Parker gel cartridge in it . . . when I went to return the pen to Tom, he told me to keep it . . . the gesture meant a lot to me.

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2. FYI

I utilize something I call a "master index" when I read a book (especially of the non-fiction variety) . . . it enables me to share my ideas with you, as well as with Cynthia and others.

Here's what I do: When I begin a book, I'll take a regular sheet of note paper and fold it into thirds . . . that becomes my bookmark.

Then as I'm reading, if I come across something of interest on a page, I'll put a small dot to the right of the material that I want to share . . . on my book, I'll put down the page number . . . that way, I can easily find the material again.

Sometimes, I might indicate to myself to review a definition so as to not slow down my reading . . . for example, in an excellent book I'm currently reading (EAT PRAY LOVE by Elizabeth Gilbert), I came across this term on page 23: nascent.

How it was used--And this experience was bringing a nascent interior shift--told me little . . . so that's the kind of thing I put down to look up at a later date--such as now . . . its definition follows:

Emerging; just coming into existence.

So now I know!

FYI, part 2

* Gloria in Pennsylvania, writing about her brother (running to be a judge in Bucks County, PA):

Please consider voting for Gary Gilman for Bucks County Common Pleas Court judge in the May primary. He has been endorsed by both the Democratic and Republican parties and he is expected to receive the highest recommendation from the Bucks County Bar Association. Gary is an extraordinarily compassionate, bright hard working attorney who will apply his high ethical sensibilities and desire for justice to any case that comes before him as a judge. He is a very well rounded, experienced, highly regarded trial attorney who has been a managing partner of his law firm in Newtown for the past 22 years. Gary's advocacy is tempered by his experience as a mediator where both sides of an issue have hired him to help them resolve cases without further litigation. He brings a history of involvement in community activities concerning children, victims, highway safety, the homeless and the needy. He is interested in education evidenced by the fact that he obtained a Masters in Education from the University of Pennsylvania and taught secondary school social studies. Please check him out further on his website: gilmanforjudge.com Particularly read the testimonials about him from some of his clients. You never know when or why you might wind up in court. We would all do well to have a judge of Gary's caliber to consider our dispute. Please vote on May 19, 2009.

* Jonathan in Pennsylvania:

Volunteers Needed at the Gateway Auditorium, Bucks County Community College, Newtown, PA

The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere presented by the Office of Cultural Programming: Friday, April 17 at 7 p.m.

We need (4) adult volunteers on Friday, April 17 to help with box office/ushering duties at the Gateway Auditorium stage.

Volunteers will need to arrive by 6:00 p.m. show day and will be finished with regular activity by about 8 p.m.

Volunteers are most certainly invited to stay and enjoy the performance after pre-show activities have been completed. This is a great opportunity to interact with our community and rub elbows with sketchy show-folk.

Please contact Jonathan Lee ASAP if you would like to help out.
leej@bucks.edu; 215.968.8087

* Pat in Pennsylvania:

As far as I am concerned FEDEX is the biggest rip off in the shipping business!!!! They are the worst!!!! Why?

I have had a number of packages shipped through them where I paid for quick shipment and it took days or weeks to finally get there. They never made good on the fact that I paid to quick ship these even though the seller paid them to ship them to me. I wanted a refund as I paid for quick delivery. Their response? If you read the fine print, they are not responsible to the person receiving the package. Basically, I was told to read the fine print. And it happened multiple times, and they did nothing even after I filed a claim.

I had large package shipped to me from Colorado. FEDEX LOST the package. Yes, can you believe it? They lost it. I had to write a letter filing a claim and they basically said too bad and did nothing. I was at a trade show in NYC at the Javitz center. And as the trade show was ending, we came out to the FED EX Kiosk booth inside the Javitz center with stuff we picked up at the show that we wanted shipped home. It was stuff that fit in a small shirt box. The "sales" reps could not have been more indifferent or non caring. They ignored us for a long time. Then they basically forced us into a larger box, which we did not need, and forced us to pay more. I think all they wanted was a tip. Horrible service!!!!

Around here, they have this spin off service. I think its called FED EX Home or something like that? Apparently FEDEX contracts out for these services. It looks like FED EX, but its run by low level contract delivery people. I had a delivery guy here that would wait till like 7 p.m. or later in the evenings to deliver packages. His game was to try to make people think he was going out of his way to deliver the package late at night so he could get a tip. He tried to make people think he was working hard. What a Joke!!!!

They are the WORST overnight shipping company out there. I go out of my way to NOT use them!! Horrible!!!!!!!!!!!!

I was in the Parcel Place in Newtown and their rates were outrageous. The DHL guy explained to me that from time to time, they act like they have a lock on the rates. He said that I needed to ask to see other shipping company rates. Horrible shipping!!!!!!!!!!!! I am shocked that you make a positive comment about them.

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3. Vocabulary word for the day

Liquidity

Definition: Liquidity is when you look at your retirement funds and wet your pants.

4. Reviews

A. Kate Winslet won an Oscar for her work in *THE READER*, but if anything, I actually think she was better in *REVOLUTIONARY ROAD* . . . it marks her first screen appearance with Leonardo DiCaprio since *TITANIC*, but don't go expecting a similar romantic tale . . . rather, this is a somber tale about what seems to be the "perfect" couple in the America of the 1950s . . . the reality is quite different . . . the dialogue was excellent, as was the cinematography . . . DiCaprio was also outstanding . . . and Michael Shannon (who received an Oscar nomination for his work) made his few scenes come alive . . . rated R.

B. *CHANGELING* is now out in DVD format . . . my review from *BLAINESWORLD* #631 follows:

Clint Eastwood's *CHANGELING* is the best film I've seen in quite some time and right now is my choice for an Oscar for Best Picture . . . this is the true story about a single woman whose young son vanishes . . . when the child returns months later, she insists that the boy isn't her son . . . but the corrupt L.A.P.D. disagrees and even puts the woman (Angelina Jolie) in a mental hospital . . . Jolie also deserves an Oscar nod, as does Eastwood . . . he did the soundtrack, too, and his depiction of the 1920s seemed very realistic . . . rated R.

By the way, in case you were wondering . . . the title, *CHANGELING*, derives from fable lore . . . it refers to an ugly or craft little creature left behind by fairies, in place of a child stolen from its mother's cradle.

C. I reviewed Jim Donovan's excellent *STOP LIVING PAYCHECK TO PAYCHECK* in *BLAINESWORLD* #640 . . . in doing so, I recalled an earlier book he had written: *HANDBOOK TO A HAPPIER LIFE* (see also Section 11).

So I went back to revisit what I had written about it and found out that for some inexplicable reason, I had never published a review on *HANDBOOK*--until now.

In a way I'm glad that happened because it gave me the opportunity to read this fine book a second time, and I'm glad that I did . . . it is full of many ideas that can be applicable to anybody's life, regardless of age or profession.

Right from the first page, you'll get the feeling that Donovan is talking directly to you as he notes:

* This is not a self-improvement book. You are already perfect, right where you are, doing just what you're doing. You can, however, grow and develop further. This book is intended as a handbook for your personal development and growth.

I was again hooked right then and there . . . Donovan then proceeds to offer sound, practical advice, weaving in his own personal background . . . when he suggests something, you feel like it will be right for you; for instance:

* Write down all the things in your life you are grateful for and when you are feeling down take the list out and read it. When you feel great,

add to the list. If you can't find anything to be grateful about, go visit someone in a hospital or homeless shelter and compare your problems with theirs.

I also liked how he related things that others do (both car racing and sky diving) to situations that were meaningful for me:

* If you ask race car drivers how they are able to get through those tight places without hitting anything, what you will hear is-- "look where you want to go, not where you don't want to go." If you look at the wall, chances are you will hit it. We can use this metaphor in our lives as well. Focus on what you want in your life rather than what you don't want. All too often people spend most of their time and energy thinking about what they want to get rid of--I want to lose 10 pounds, or what they don't want--I wish I didn't have these bills. Try instead to focus on what you do want. I was talking about this with a friend recently and learned that the way sky divers are able to "link up" in mid air is that they look into the eyes of the person they want to connect with. Their bodies then follow and automatically move toward each other!

Lastly, Donovan's use of insightful questions got me thinking how I would answer them:

* Why, for instance, do people age differently? What keeps some people going strong well into their old age, while others seem to have given up on life and are just waiting for it to be over? I am convinced the difference is having a purpose. We need a reason to get out of bed in the morning. We need something outside of ourselves to keep us going.

So thanks to Jim Donovan's encouragement, I will finish this review . . . and see about getting it published at the amazon.com website!

FOR YOUR OWN COPY:

You can buy it wherever books are sold . . . in the unlikely event the store doesn't have a copy, ask for it to be ordered . . . or even easier, please click:

<http://tinyurl.com/dn8jwt>

D. Many readers may only know Bob Newhart as a funny guy who starred in some classic TV shows . . . yet before then, he was a stand-up comedian who had several top-selling records.

Now if you have no idea what I'm talking about when I use that latter term, then do what you can to get the CD version of SOMETHING LIKE THIS . . . THE BOB NEWHART ANTHOLOGY.

You'll instantly become hooked by his classic monologues that gave only one side of a telephone conversation, such as when Abe Lincoln was speaking to history's first spin doctor. ("Lose the beard, Abe.") .

Other routines included bus drivers school, retirement party, ledge psychology, rocket scientist, the man who loved Hitler and Ben Franklin in analysis . . . my only disappointment was the one of my favorites, a discussion with Abner Doubleday on trying to sell this new game called baseball, wasn't included.

I'm sorry that I was driving when I was listening to the CD, so

I wasn't able to write down many bits that I would have liked have shared . . . that said, I was able to recall the following few lines:

* I worked for a number of years an accountant in Chicago. I have a strange theory of accounting. I thought if you got within two or three . . . bucks of it . . . but this never really caught on.

* Realtors are people who did not make it as used couple salespeople.

And here was him as a security guard on the Empire State Building, speaking to his supervisor:

* See, there are these planes and they are flying around him . . . and they are shooting at him and they only seem to be bothering him a little bit, so I figured I wasn't doing too much good with a broom. Did I try swatting him in the face with it? Well, I was going to take the elevator up to his head, but my jurisdiction only extends to his navel. You don't care what I do . . . just get the ape off the building. This may complicate things a little—he's carrying a woman in his hand, sir. . . . No, I don't think she works in the building, no, sir. . . . As he passed by my floor . . . she has a kind of negligee on, so I doubt very much she's one of the cleaning women.

Even typing that has me laughing out loud!

SPECIAL BONUS FOR BLAINESWORLD READERS:

You can listen to Newhart's Lincoln routine by clicking:

<http://www.vgg.com/VGGBlog/2007/02/>

Find it about halfway down the page, then click "download" . . . the quality isn't that great . . . however, you'll still get a big kick out of it.

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5. TV alert

A. LATE NIGHT WITH JIMMY FALLON debuts on Tuesday at 12:35 a.m. on NBC . . . the former SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE star takes over Conan O'Brien's old slot in what promises to be an interesting experiment to see if the station can keep viewers watching from when Leno takes over the 10 p.m. through O'Brien's new show and then Fallon.

B. 20/20 features Siegfried & Roy preparing for their first--and supposedly last --performance since Roy Horn was mauled by one of the duo's tigers in 2003 . . . Friday at 9 p.m. on ABC.

C. ASHES TO ASHES premieres on Saturday at 9 p.m. on BBC AMERICA . . . it is an offbeat police drama that adds a feminist bent to LIFE ON MARS . . . according to TV GUIDE, it "is a winner for being so fabulously surreal."

D. CELEBRITY APPRENTICE is sometimes interesting . . . the show this Sunday promises to be as the celebs must design and

costume a comic-book character . . . I'll be curious how long Dennis Rodman lasts . . . 9 p.m. on NBC.

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6. Missouri folks

A man from St. Louis walks into a bar and asks, "Wanna hear a joke about people from Kansas?"

The bartender says, "Listen, pal, I'm from Kansas, and I won't appreciate it. The man sitting next to you is 265 pounds, and he's from Kansas too. And the bouncer, that huge guy there, is also from Kansas. So do you still want to tell that joke?"

"No," says the guy from St. Louis. "Not if I have to explain it three times."

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7. Websites

A. 100 top news sites can be reached by clicking:

<http://directory.100.com/?cat=News>

At this one website, you can gain access to CNN.com, THE NEW YORK TIMES, USA TODAY, BARRON'S, etc.. . . be prepared to stop even more of the few remaining subscriptions that you still have.

B. if you want something less serious, please click:

<http://directory.100.com/?cat=Cards>

You'll find a wide variety of websites for greeting cards, many of them free . . . unfortunately, some of the links no longer work . . . so you'll have to do some checking to find one that you like.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

If you've ever wondered how many other folks read this newsletter, look to bottom left of the homepage . . . the counter will give you up-to-date information.

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8. Computer tip

For a listing of some common shortcut keys in different versions Microsoft Windows, please click:

<http://thecomputertricks.com/tricks/000002/index.html>

For instance, did you know that F3 starts Find in most programs?

If you are looking for shortcut keys for a specific application (e.g., Excel, Word, etc..) please see the links at the bottom of the above page.

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9. Revenge

"Cash, check or charge?" I asked, after folding items the woman wished to purchase. As she fumbled for her wallet, I noticed a remote control for a television set in her purse. "So, do you always carry your TV remote?" I asked.

"No," she replied, "but my husband refused to come shopping with me, and I figured this was the most evil thing I could do to him legally."

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10. A quote I like

He is a man of sense who does not grieve for what he has not, but rejoices in what he has.--Epictetus (55-135 AD), Greek philosopher

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11. Thought for the day

Questions to start your day off right
by Jim Donovan*

There is a very powerful technique called Morning Questions.

When you first awaken in the morning, or in the shower, ask yourself the following questions and, in your mind, answer them:

1. What am I grateful for today? What about that makes me grateful?
2. What am I excited about today? What about that excites me?
3. What am I happy about today? What about that makes me happy?
4. What am I committed to right now? What about that makes me committed?

By answering these simple questions, you will automatically direct your mind to positive thoughts. The obvious result is that you will feel better and begin your day in a better frame of mind.

An added benefit of doing this simple exercise is that you will begin to look forward to waking up in the morning. You will have conditioned your mind to expect pleasant thoughts in the morning. Many people who claim to be grumpy in the morning are actually that way as a result of asking "stupid" questions like: "Why do I have to get up so early?" This cannot help but put you in a bad space.

Morning questions will, on the other hand, increase your chance of having

a good day by putting you in good mood first thing in the morning.

By using these and other questions you develop yourself, you will experience major shifts in the way you feel and see positive changes occur in your life. I challenge you to do this for 30 days and see for yourself the difference it can make.

* Reprinted with permission from my friend Jim Donovan, author and motivational speaker, whose website can be reached by clicking:

<http://www.JimDonovan.com>

The above was taken from Jim's book, HANDBOOK TO A HAPPER LIFE (see also Section 4C), which can be obtained by clicking:

<http://tinyurl.com/dn8jwt>

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12. Advance planning department

A. Be The Medicine

Date: Thursday March 5, 2009

Time: 7-9 p.m.

Repeats: This event repeats every month on the first Thursday.

Location: 18 Bank Street, Suite 300, Morristown, NJ

Cost: \$35

For all who are ready to tap into their best resource-themselves. A progressive process in reclaiming your ability to become the healer of yourself. Release pain, anxiety, fear, depression and disease through awareness and tools. Know who and when to call in to assist you in your healing, and how to have fun and enjoy a better life. First of a series.

Would you like to know how you can heal yourself and have a healthy, happy life--Simply, Clearly and Easily?

Are you ready to eliminate pain, illness, depression, stress and get into the natural flow of your original blueprint?

Are you ready to begin taking control of your own body?

Are you ready to create a better life for yourself?

Janet StraightArrow has studied healing solutions for thirty nine years. She has taught and practiced many successful methods of healing for twenty four years. Janet brings all of this knowledge and focus together in her work Be the Medicine.

Learn how to navigate your own challenges and live the solutions today!

Call Janet at 973-647-2500 or janetoasis@aol.com.

B. The Bucks County Community College Book Discussion Group meets Thursday, March 12, to discuss *The Soloist: A Lost Dream, an Unlikely Friendship, and the Redemptive Power of Music* by Steve Lopez.

It's the story of how Lopez, a columnist for the L.A. Times, discovers a homeless man coaxing beautiful sounds from a battered two-string violin. Lopez discovers that the man was

once a promising classical student at Juilliard, but various pressures—including mounting schizophrenia—caused him to drop out. “With self-effacing humor, fast-paced yet elegant prose and unsparing honesty, Lopez tells an inspiring story of heartbreak and hope,” noted Publishers Weekly.

The discussion gets underway at 7:30 p.m. in the Quiet Study Room near the Fireside Lounge in the Rollins Center. For information, contact Michael Hennessey at hennesse@bucks.edu

C. Times are tough. Here's some cheap good news:

On Friday, March 13, there will be a fund raiser for the Morrisville Senior Center. It's a comedy night.

The Piece Improv Troupe will be performing. If you haven't seen them yet, you're missing a really good time.

Here's what's cool about this event:
It's only \$5 with reservations, or show up and pay just \$7 at the door.

It's BYOB. Bring beer, wine, whatever. They will be selling food, probably burgers and hot dogs and other snack stuff.

There will be a lot of single seniors . . . you could get lucky (on Friday the 13th).

It's for 21 and over. No kids.

You're helping raise money for a senior center.

Morrisville Senior Service Center
31 E Cleveland Ave.
Morrisville PA
Reservations: 215-295-0567
Time: 7 p.m., food and beverage; 7:30 p.m., show time.

D. March 19, 2009:
Another year of the Iraq war begins!

Bring the Troops Home
Choose Diplomacy, not Escalation, in Afghanistan!

7:30-9:30 a.m.. Bridge Vigil on the "Trenton Makes" Bridge on Bridge Street in Morrisville.

12:00 Noon Rally on the steps of the State House in Trenton, NJ.

3:00-4:00 p.m. Symposium at Bucks County Community College on the Cost of the Wars- (Located in the Fireside Lounge)

Speakers to include:

Ward Wilson-Associate Director for Coalition for Peace Action

Rob Kall-Executive Editor and Publisher of pEdNews.com

Robin Stelly-Field Coordinator of Penn Action

Bill Deckhart-BuxMont Coordinator for Coalition for Peace Action

4:30-5:30 p.m. Vigil at Lockheed Martin on the 413 bypass in Newtown

Contact: Bill Deckhart 215-380-6804

Email: billdeckhart@verizon.net

Co-sponsored by Coalition for Peace Action and Penn Action

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and that peace resumes in Israel . . . also, make it a great week!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#647

2.23.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I continue to explore the Asheville area and its many fine restaurants . . . it's almost too bad that we weren't able to buy our home the way we kiddingly told our realtor we wanted it; i.e., with no kitchen.

One place we just tried and liked is just down the road from us: Fatz Cafe, 5 Spartan Ave., Asheville; 828.665.9550 . . . though it's part of a chain that is popular in the South, you don't feel like you are eating in still another cookie cutter establishment.

Daron Clayton, operating partner, made us feel special when he came over to greet us (he had apparently been tipped-off by the greeter that we were there for the first time) . . . he welcomed us to his establishment and brought over some samples of Fatz' signature dish--its Calabash chicken . . . he then stopped by to see how we were doing . . . but unlike what happens at too many other places, Daron made us feel like he cared how we were doing . . . and I saw he did this with everybody else, including a little girl who he asked, "Did you eat all your meal?"

Our food was quite good . . . I enjoyed my chicken--make that Calabash--wrap, and Cynthia said her Tuscan tomato soup was excellent . . . she also said the same thing about a grilled vegetable skewer.

B. Cynthia taught me a useful technique for getting folks to become even friendlier toward you . . . we were shopping at a Harris Teeter supermarket (a store I REALLY like, by the way) and when we were getting checked out, she asked the person at the register what her favorite food was . . . I wasn't quite sure where this was going, but when the response was "spaghetti," Cynthia immediately followed-up with another question about where was the best place

to order this item.

It got the cashier to smile, plus we got some good information for another restaurant to visit.

C. CONGRATULATIONS to Todd Siben, Senior Program Advisor, Liberal Arts and Sciences Programs, at Thomas Edison State College . . . he was recently selected as the New Jersey statewide representative to the National Board of NACADA (National Academic Advising Association), and he has also been chosen to present at the regional NACADA meeting in DOVER, DE in a few weeks.

I love sharing such good news about friends with readers, so please continue to share such information . . . in addition, kindly continue to keep me informed when the news isn't as good . . . that way, I can keep you in my thoughts and prayers--and others can do the same too.

D. Toward that end . . . CONDOLENCES to Milton Rubin and family on the loss of Irene Rubin (Milton's wife and Cynthia's aunt), as well as to Peter Hughes and family on the loss of Sandra Miller (Peter's sister).

CONDOLENCES, also, to Hilary and Madeline Levine and family on the loss of Selma Levine (their mother and my ex-mother-in-law) . . . she was a hard-working, spunky woman who was always good to me . . . I will always be appreciative of the grandmotherly love she showered on my daughter Risa.

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

This week, it goes to Andy Wargo--my longtime friend who taught in the Math Department at Bucks County Community College.



(Photo courtesy of Steve Taylor, another of Andy's many friends.)

Andy died on February 17 after courageously battling multiple myeloma for several years.

I got to know Andy well because we often ate dinner together on Tuesday nights . . . he was the kindest, most unassuming guy I've ever known . . . I also admired

him for the fact that he never spoke badly about anybody else.

One thing another friend said about him at his funeral really struck home: He was always glad to see you . . . that's how he made you feel, too, even when he wasn't feeling well himself.

I miss Andy and already find myself thinking about him often . . . he was a good friend, not only to me but to countless others.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO HONOR ANDY:

My sympathy goes out to Andy's children on the loss of their father . . . they have indicated to me that you can make donations in his memory to fund cancer research. Contributions may be sent to:

Massachusetts General Hospital Surgical Oncology Research Fund
c/o Jennifer Wargo, M.D.
Yawkey 7B, 55 Fruit St.
Boston, MA 02114

All donations will go specifically to cancer research.

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2. FYI

When booking reservations, as I've previously mentioned, make sure you ask about all available discounts; e.g., AARP, AAA, AFT (or NEA), etc. . . . even membership in Sam's Club once got me a discount.

Yet just recently, a friend--Julia in North Carolina--suggested I revisit priceline.com . . . I've used the service in the past, but for some reason, hadn't been checking it lately . . . my mistake!

Bidding on a car for an upcoming trip to Pennsylvania, I got a price of \$257.31 . . . this was some \$75 less than I saw anywhere else online, even with the discounts.

So before you finalize your travel plans, do at least visit:

<http://www.priceline.com>

That said, there is one word of caution: You have no flexibility with respect to changing your mind . . . so make sure you are definite as to your arrangements before you make them.

Also, bid even lower than you think you can get would be a winning bid . . . so in the above situation, price-out the car rental with a few other companies . . . then offer 1/2 of what those companies charge . . . the worst that can happen is that Priceline will tell you that your bid is too low and that you need to increase it.

FYI, part 2

* Julia in North Carolina (see above) with a recipe that I requested and OK if you must know, also tried and loved:

Nanaimo Bars--originated in Nanaimo BC Canada

Melt 2 squares BAKER'S Semi-sweet Chocolate over hot water. Combine with 1/2 cup softened butter, 2 tablespoons sugar, 1 teaspoon vanilla and 1 egg. Mix well. Add 2 cups graham wafer crumbs, 1 cup BAKER'S ANGEL FLAKE Coconut and 1/2 cup chopped walnuts (optional); mix well. Press into a 9-inch pan. Chill.

Combine 2 tablespoons BIRD'S Custard powder (in the NC I haven't found this, so I've substituted with Vanilla pudding powder) with 3 tablespoons milk. Add to 1/4 cup softened butter. Beat in 2 cups icing sugar until smooth. Spread over base; chill 15 minutes.

Melt 4 squares BAKER'S semi-sweet chocolate with 1 tablespoon butter over hot water. Spread over custard layer. Chill. Cut into bars. Store in refrigerator. Makes about 2 dozen.

The trick to this is to press the bottom layer hard into the pan. Stick it in the freezer. Make the icing while it's getting hard. The icing needs to be dryer than sticky to stay properly on the bottom layer. More like a dough than an icing on a muffin.

Stick it into the freezer, harden as you melt the chocolate for the top layer. I always do 1 and 1/2 times the recipe for this part or you may end up short. Spread on the hard bar.

You may double or triple this recipe, and it will still work. Don't go beyond that without doing it separately.

Enjoy and be prepared to get to the gym because you won't be eating just one.

MY TWO CENTS:

She is sooooo right. These are the BEST. I'm getting hungry just writing about them.

* Carol and Steve in Pennsylvania about Jake's Eatery in Richboro, PA:

Great food, great portions, great service and great prices in a comfortable, friendly environment!

Richboro's favorite restaurant for almost 18 years! We're the second longest running restaurant in Richboro. The comfortable atmosphere of Jake's welcomes diners from all walks. We're a family restaurant serving up the most varied menu selection in town. Everything from juicy burgers, salads and fresh seafood to hearty breakfasts to start your day right. Our varied menus will keep you coming back for more. You'll feel like you never left the comfort of home at Jake's. Everything is made fresh to order—soups, sauces, gravies, and more—using only top-quality ingredients. So bring your family, your friends, your colleagues or just stop by alone there is something for everyone at Jake's.

For more information, please click:

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

* Monica in North Carolina with an idea to check out, regardless of your

cable provider:

We have a package through Charter Communication for our cable, Internet and telephone services. I felt as though our bill kept getting more and more expensive. We were discussing the idea of changing over to satellite because it seemed it may be less expensive. I decided before switching that I would call Charter and see if they had any special promotions to offer me. To my surprise, they had a special that reduced my payment by about \$50 per month and even added a few television channels that I currently did not receive (including Showtime and some children's channels). We decided to keep our service with Charter as a result. Sometimes just making a phone call is worth it!

* Terry in Texas with a coupon for a FREE ENTREE at T.G.I. Friday's:

http://www.tgifridays.com/promos/bogo_2009_02.aspx?fromhome

* Cathy in Pennsylvania:

We want and need your input. The steering committee for the PA chapters of the Coalition for Peace Action is currently strategizing on ideas and events we would like to concentrate on this year. What would you like to participate in? What are you passionate about? What would make you stand up and say, I want to be a part of this event! Please respond to this e-mail with your thoughts on this matter so that we know what you want to see happen this year with CFPA. We would like to re-energize the peace movement and want to know what is important to our members.

Please respond to: cfpabuxmont1@aol.com

* Bob in North Carolina:

I had cause today in writing to another friend to reference a site that I use frequently. As an information junkie, you may find the site interesting and useful. Being a former English teacher and literature major, I am often there.

To view, please click:

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

* I am "a Barbara in Pennsylvania." Therefore, when another Barbara in Pennsylvania complains about an obscene joke (in her mind), please be more specific about "whom" the Barbara is.

My son and friend wanted to know if I was getting prudish in my old age!

You know I'm not by the humor I email to you pretty daily.

* Watch2203, commenting on the same joke:

The lawyer joke was funny!

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3. Coffee

A man and his wife were having an argument about who should brew the coffee each morning.

The wife said, "You should do it, because you get up first, and then we don't have to wait as long to get our coffee."

The husband said, "You are in charge of cooking around here, and you should do it because that is your job, and I can just wait for my coffee."

Wife replies, "No, you should do it, and besides, it is in the Bible that the man should do the coffee."

Husband replies, "I can't believe that. Show me."

So she fetched the Bible and opened the New Testament and showed him at the top of several pages that it indeed says:

HEBREWS.

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4. Reviews

A. *CONFESSIONS OF A SHOPAHOLIC*, a romantic comedy about a shopaholic who accidentally gets a job writing a column for a finance magazine, surprised me. . . . I went into it not expecting much; by the end, I appreciated the fact that it made me laugh . . . and, also, it had me caring for the main character--a very funny Isla Fisher (who first caught my attention in *WEDDING CRASHERS*) . . . my only disappointment was that Joan Cusack, one of my favorite actresses, was wasted in a role that had too few lines . . . rated PG.

B. *THE SECRET LIFE OF BEES* is now out in DVD format . . . my review from *BLAINESWORLD #629* follows:

I first noticed Dakota Fanning when she was 8, and she starred in *I AM SAM* (a film you **MUST** rent if you've never seen it) . . . since then, I've seen just about everything she has been in--including her most recent film, *THE SECRET LIFE OF BEES* . . . this is the tale of a young girl, haunted by the memory of her late mother . . . she escapes the troubled life she has with her father to live with three sisters in a small South Carolina town . . . Fanning is fine in her role, as is the rest of the talented cast . . . I particularly liked the work of Paul Bettany (so fine in *A KNIGHT'S TALE*, another movie to rent) . . . yet overall, *BEES* left me flat . . . it was too maudlin for my taste and at the end, I just didn't feel the sort of attachment to any of the characters that I thought I should . . . rated PG-13.

You'll do better if you rent *MAN ON WIRE*, the documentary that won the Oscar for 2008's best film in that category . . . it's the true story of a 24-year-old French high-wire artist who walked between the two towers of the World Trade Center in 1974 . . . Philippe Petit, the guy who accomplished the task, came across as charming . . . but that's no surprise, given that he was the same way when he appeared at the Oscars . . . rated PG-13.

C. Sam Wyly is certainly an entrepreneur . . . he took \$1,000 of his savings and founded University Computing in 1963 . . . he took it public two years later, becoming

a millionaire in the process by the time he was 30.

That would be enough for most folks, but he then expanded the small chains of Michaels Stores and Bonanza Steakhouses to over a thousand locations nationwide, co-founded the Maverick Capital and Ranger Capital hedge funds, and founded Green Mountain Energy (which has become the largest provider of cleaner energy in America today).

In doing so, he became one of the 1,000 wealthiest people in the world . . . he tells all in 1,000 DOLLARS & AN IDEA, his engaging autobiography that also contains a lot of useful recommendations for anybody wishing to follow in his footsteps.

For example, he notes:

* Reading is one of the keys to success, because if you won't admit what you don't know, you'll never discover what you need to know. I read to conceptualize challenges. I read to know what I'm getting into. I read for ideas. I wanted to know how Sam Walton kept prices so low. Ray Kroc insisted that every McDonald's keep the restrooms clean and drove that message home by first inspecting the restrooms each time he visited a McDonald's. And what led Kmart into bankruptcy? And how did JC Penney and Sears become dinosaurs? When I was a kid, Sears & Roebuck had the market position that Wal-Mart has today. Mamas wanted their girls and boys to grow up to be Sears people. I wanted to find out what changed. I read thousands of pages on retailing, like a gold miner panning every inch of his claim, searching for just a few precious nuggets that would give me real insight into what is vital.

I also liked his advice on how to think like an entrepreneur . . . the key is to:

* . . . focus on the positive: When you do, you start seeing opportunities. Sometimes they come knocking on the door. But you have to open the door and then respond quickly and effectively. Sometimes they're disguised. Rather than carrying a big sign on their backs that says, "Here I am," they form a hidden pattern in a long series of seemingly unrelated events. You have to be able to connect the dots and discern the pattern.

Wyly also mentions his love for a win-win situation:

* Because if you figure out a way for everybody to win you get the results with the least amount of struggle. It doesn't always work out. But it's a great starting place.

What I especially liked about the book was the author's many examples . . . he not only mentioned an idea or concept, but he then proceeded to show how it applied to his experiences.

I'm not sure that everybody will become successful as a result of reading 1,000 DOLLARS . . . and some might find it a bit too technical in spots (e.g., when Wyly goes into a lot of detail about how he financed many of his ventures) . . . yet reading the book will give you a better appreciation of all that becoming an entrepreneur entails, and for that reason, I'd recommend it to anybody

interested in that subject.

D. Heard THE MEASURE OF A MAN, written and read by Sidney Poitier . . . subtitled A SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY, it is just that . . . you get to know not only the facts about this actor's life, but also what made him tick.

For example, in talking about his father's influence, he commented:

* Everything I do has been done to never bring disgrace to my father.

In addition, I enjoyed hearing the many stories about both his parents . . . this one had me laughing out loud:

* [when his parents saw their first movie, in which he was getting beaten-up by Richard Widmark] My mother cried-out, "Hit him back Sidney."

Listening to Poitier's laughter as he told that story made me feel almost as if he was talking directly to me.

Naturally, there's a lot of "inside" and very interesting information about the making of many of his films . . . I actually felt compelled to write several of them down, including A PATCH OF BLUE, so that I can revisit them via DVD rentals.

I'm still amazed, too, at the one year in his career: 1967 . . . just imagine that he starred in all three of the following classics: GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER, IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT and TO SIR, WITH LOVE.

It was no surprise to me to learn that THE MEASURE OF A MAN won a 2000 Grammy Award for Best Spoken Word Album . . . because you get to hear Poitier's magnificent voice, this is one book that's definitely better listened to than read.

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5. TV alert

A. LOOK AROUND YOU is a nutty British spoof of 1970s education programs that offer inane "facts" and absurd exercises . . . PHILADELPHIA WEEKLY says that it is "so well produced it's a joy to watch" . . . Mondays at 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. on CARTOON NETWORK.

B. THE BLACK LIST: VOLUME TWO winds down Black History Month with portraits of African-American achievers Laurence Fishburne, Tyler Perry (am amazing talent in my opinion) and the RZA . . . Thursday at 8 p.m. on HBO.

C. THE CHRIS ISAAK HOUR will feature the songsmith with different performers each week (much like SUNDANCE CHANNEL's Elvis Costello-hosted SPECTACLE) . . . on Thursday, he chats and performs with Trisha Yearwood . . . at 10 p.m. on BIO.

D. CONFESSIONS OF A TEEN IDOL has its season finale on Sunday at 8 p.m. on VH1 . . . all the idols have a send-off sit-down before embarking on a career relaunch.

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6. Dilemma

A man, returning home a day early from a business trip, got into a taxi at the airport. It was after midnight.

While enroute to his home, he asked the cabby if he would be a witness as he suspected his wife was having an affair and he intended to catch her in the act. For \$100, the cabby agreed.

Quietly arriving at the house, the husband and cabby tiptoed into the bedroom. The husband switched on the lights, yanked the blanket back and there was his wife in bed with another man.

The husband put a gun to the naked man's head.

The wife shouted, "Don't do it! This man has been very generous! I lied when I told you I inherited money. This man paid for the new golf clubs I bought you. He paid for the Corvette I bought for you. He paid for our new cabin cruiser. He paid for our house at the lake. He paid for our country club membership, and he even pays the monthly dues!"

Shaking his head from side-to-side, the husband slowly lowered the gun. He looked over at the cab driver and said, "What would you do?"

The cabby said, "I'd cover his butt up with that blanket before he catches a cold."

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7. Websites

A. Leonard Cohen's Beacon Theater concert last Thursday can be heard by clicking:

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=101034642&ft=1&f=15681603>

Look to the right about halfway down to find Subscribe option, then choose Podcast or RSS (depending on your familiarity with either term) . . . this is a MUST for Leonard Cohen fans . . . even if you're not familiar with his music, please do check him out . . . methinks you'll enjoy.

And for still more information about Leonard Cohen, please click:

<http://leonardcohen.com/>

B. If you're a woman and ever had to call a gynecologist's office, get a laugh by clicking:

http://www.geekoffice.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=643&Ite

Methinks that guys will like it, too.

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

If you're new to this newsletter and have never seen pictures of yours truly (or the other inhabitants in my world), click "Blaine's Best" to the left and then "Pictures" . . . make sure you have your sound on, when you do, so that you can hear what is arguably the greatest rock song of all time!

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8. Computer tip

Last week, I mentioned a product called Optimize that can be used to help identify computer problems . . . to fix them, you probably would need a version that wasn't free.

There are some similar products that can be found online that won't cost you anything to both identify and then fix any problems you might come across . . . I've heard that a good one is called Cleaner; for more information, please click:

<http://c-cleaner.advancedpccleaner.com/?gclid=CN-qxq6v9ZgCFRwpawodQQe50g>

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9. NASCAR news (you heard it first here)

NASCAR driver Jeff Gordon has announced he has taken advantage of a new "Stimulus Package" program to employ inner-city youth by firing his professional pit crew and replacing them with ex-gangbangers.

The decision to hire the boys was inspired by a recent documentary on how unemployed youths from street gangs were able to remove a set of wheels from a car in less than 6 seconds--even without proper equipment. Gordon's existing pit crew could only do it in 8 seconds, even with the benefit of hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of high tech machinery.

The scheme was hailed as an "excellent and bold move" by Gordon's management team, as most races are won or lost in the pits.

At the crew's first practice session, not only was the inexperienced crew able to change all 4 wheels in under 6 seconds, but within 12 seconds they had changed the paint scheme, altered the VIN number and sold the car to Dale Earnhardt Jr. for 10 cases of Bud, a bag of weed and photos of Jeff Gordon's wife in the shower.

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10. A quote I like

The people with whom you work reflect your own attitude.

If you are suspicious, unfriendly and condescending, you will find these unlovely traits echoed all about you. But if you are on your best behavior, you will bring out the best in the persons with whom you are going to spend most of your waking hours.--Beatrice Vincent, author

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11. Thought for the day

Black & white

In life, a lesson learned in your past that you will never forget completely. When I was in elementary school, I got into a major argument with a boy in my class. I have forgotten what the argument was about, but I have never forgotten the lesson learned that day.

I was convinced that "I" was right and "he" was wrong - and he was just as convinced that "I" was wrong and "he" was right.

The teacher decided to teach us a very important lesson. She brought us up to the front of the class and placed him on one side of her desk and me on the other. In the middle of her desk was a large, round object. I could clearly see that it was black. She asked the boy what color the object was.

"White," he answered.

I couldn't believe he said the object was white, when it was obviously black! Another argument started between my classmate and me, this time about the color of the object.

The teacher told me to go stand where the boy was standing and told him to come stand where I had been. We changed places, and now she asked me what the color of the object was. I had to answer,

"White."

It was an object with two differently colored sides, and from his viewpoint it was white. Only from my side was it black.

My teacher taught me a very important lesson learned that day: You must stand in the other person's shoes and look at the situation through their eyes in order to truly understand their perspective.

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. Broadway show tickets at greatly reduced prices:

* As low as \$45 for Geoffrey Rush and Susan Sarandon in Exit the King

Order Now and Get Tickets for Just:

\$45 (Rear Mezz F-G, Reg. \$66.50)

\$55 (Rear Mezz A-E, Reg. \$81.50)

\$59.50 (Wed. Mats, Reg. \$111.50)

\$66.50 (Tues-Thurs Eves, Reg. \$111.50 and Fri. Eves and Sat Mats,
Reg. \$116.50)

\$69.50 (Sat Eves, Reg. \$116.50)

Online: Visit broadwayoffers.com and enter code EKP216

By Phone: Call 212.947.8844 and mention code EKP216
Barrymore Theatre, 243 West 47th Street., NYC.

* As low as \$41.50 for In The Heights, Broadway's Tony-winning
Best Musical

SPECIAL OFFER! For performances now through March 15!

\$41.50: Rear Mezzanine G-H : All Performances

\$50.50 : Rear Mezzanine A-F: All Performances except Sat. eves.

\$73.50: Orchestra/Front Mezz. Tues.-Thurs. 8 p.m., Wed. 2 p.m.
and Sun. 7 p.m.

\$85.00: Orchestra/Front Mess. Fri. 8 p.m., Sat. and Sun. 2 p.m.

Save Almost 40%

TO GET TICKETS NOW:

Visit ticketmaster.com or call 800.982.2787 and use code PLAY33
Richard Rodgers Theatre box office, 226 West 46th St. (between
Broadway and 8th Ave), NYC.

* Tovah Feldshuh in "Irena's Vow," another opportunity for
as low as \$49

LIMITED-TIME OFFER!

Previews begin March 10; Order by April 12 to Save!

\$49 (March 10-28 Perfs)

\$69 (March 31- May 31 Perfs)

Two easy ways to order:

Online. Visit www.broadwayoffers.com and enter code IVPBX26

Phone. Call 212.947.8844 and mention code IVPBX26

Walter Kerr Theatre Box Office, 219 West. 48th Street, NYC.

* See "9 to 5: The Musical" and save 45%, plus benefits

WITH THIS OFFER, PAY ONLY:

\$66.50 Orch/Front Mezz (reg. \$121.50-/126.50 - save over 45%

\$56.50 Mid Mezz G-K (reg. \$81.50/\$91.50 - save over 35%

PLUS, SAVE ON DINNER AT T.G.I. FRIDAY'S!

For details, visit 9to5TheMusical.com/TGIF

To order, visit Ticketmaster.com or call 800.982.2787

Use Code 1PBILL

Marquis Theatre, Broadway at 46th Street, NYC.

B. Two events at Bucks County Community College in Newtown, PA:

* Thursday, March 12:

Michael Hennessey leads a discussion of *THE SOLOIST: A LOST DREAM, AN UNLIKELY FRIENDSHIP AND THE REDEMPTIVE POWER OF MUSIC* by Steve Lopez.

From Publishers Weekly:

Starred Review. Scurrying back to his office one day, Lopez, a columnist for the L.A. Times, is stopped short by the ethereal strains of a violin. Searching for the sound, he spots a homeless man coaxing those beautiful sounds from a battered two-string violin. When the man finishes, Lopez compliments him briefly and rushes off to write about his newfound subject, Nathaniel Ayers, the homeless violinist. Over the next few days, Lopez discovers that Nathaniel was once a promising classical bass student at Julliard, but that various pressures—including being one of a few African-American students and mounting schizophrenia—caused him to drop out.

The group meets in the Quiet Study Room of the Rollins Center, Bucks County Community College from 7:30-9 p.m.
For more information, call 215.968.8164 or send email to: hennessee@bucks.edu.

* Friday, March 13:

The Bucks County Commissioners' Advisory Council for Women and the BCCC Women's Center Celebrate Women's History Month by presenting a screening of:

"A Sense of Wonder:
An Evening With Rachel Carson"

7:00 p.m.

Bucks County Community College
Library Auditorium
275 Swamp Road, Newtown, PA

Leading a discussion prior to the film will be biologist and artist Caryn Babaian and librarian and BCCC faculty member Brian Johnstone.

For further information contact Natalie Kaye at 215.968.8015 or: kayen@bucks.edu

C. PLEASE HELP DEPARTMENT:

My sabbatical project is underway . . . as such, I'm looking for 100 people who want to quit smoking.

Please share the following information with any of your friends, relatives, students, etc. who could attend three one-hour sessions in Bucks County, PA:

Quit Smoking!

The Women's Center of Bucks County Community College, in conjunction with the Bucks County Courier Times & The Intelligencer, will be offering a series of FREE seminars to anybody who wishes to quit smoking.

Do sign-up if you plan to quit smoking. This is not something we want you to try. It is something we want you to do. And we are confident that you will!

There is only room for 25 participants at each of the seminars. So sign-up will be on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Each seminar involves three one-hour sessions. You're expected to attend each of these sessions.

Bucks County Comm. College, Newtown
6:30 p.m. each night . . . April 7, April 21, May 5
Sessions to feature a discussion of the book, THE EASY WAY TO QUIT SMOKING.

Bucks County Comm. College, Newtown
8 p.m. each night . . . April 7, April 21, May 5
Sessions to feature hypnotherapy.

The Bucks County Courier Times, Levittown
6:30 p.m. each night . . . April 9, April 23, May 7
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Sessions to feature hypnotherapy.

To register or for more information: Call Bridget Hughes at 215.968.8254 or via email at Iplan2quit@aol.com.

D. ADVANCE PLANNING DEPARTMENT:

Chic and Joni [Dowburd] are both in the Neshaminy Valley Music Theatre's production of 42nd STREET . . . to quote from a recent email from Joni:

Even though we are only in the background of the full company scenes, the leads are excellent. I think that you would enjoy seeing this show.

All 6 shows will be at the Bucks County Playhouse in New Hope the last 2 weekends in April (April 17, 18 and 19 and April 24, 25 and 26).

Tickets can be purchased at the box office . . .or call 267.733. 8876 . . . in addition, you can email NVMTtkts@aol.com or even go online by clicking:

<http://www.ticketleap.com>

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and that peace resumes in Israel . . . also, make it a great week!

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Blaine Greenfield
19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
Phone : 828.633.1049

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#646

2.16.2009

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-

1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I spent some more time apart . . . but this time, it was not me who was traveling . . . rather, Cynthia went to New Jersey to see friends . . . and to surprise her sister Joyce on her birthday . . . see below for a picture of (l-r) her niece Rachel, Joyce, Joyce's husband Marty and as you can see for yourself, my beautiful bride:



It also marked the first time that we were apart on Valentine's Day since we met over five years ago . . . hopefully, it will be the last!

B. By myself, I did get to see an excellent play: THE LITTLE DOG LAUGHED . . . it's the story about an actor, his agent, a hustler and the hustler's girlfriend . . . when the actor and hustler become involved in a physical relationship, the agent is concerned that what she describes as a "slight recurring case of homosexuality" will hurt her client's career . . . Joan Atwood, David Ely, Adam Kampouris and Jamie Shell all shined in their roles.

THE LITTLE DOG LAUGHED runs until February 28 . . . it can be seen at 35below in Asheville, NC . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.ashevilletheatre.org/>

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D. Barbara in Pennsylvania emailed me about a joke that ran in last week's issue:

". . . and I want to have sex with your 14-year-old daughter."

Blaine, is this supposed to be funny? With the escalation of sex offenders in our country, children abductions and abuse, sex among teens, and teen pregnancies, this is really inappropriate and not funny. Is it because you are

male or just insensitive? Please be conscientious and aware of what you are sending out there. Examine your motives. There is absolutely no excuse.

MY TWO CENTS:

Barbara's insightful comments got me thinking about a movie that Cynthia and I once saw, THE ARISTOCRATS . . . it is a documentary about the world's dirtiest joke as told by many comedians . . . at the time, Cynthia found it very offensive (and was even upset with me for liking the film) . . . she has since modified her thinking to the point where we even get a laugh out of thinking about it.

Humor can be tough; i.e., in trying to determine what is and isn't offensive . . . the joke that Barbara refers to had to do with a lawyer being visited by the Devil.

I was not trying to offend, but that said, if I offended Barbara or anybody else, please accept my apologies.

I will also tell you what I told her: My motives are to entertain, inform and even get people to think at times.

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

This week, it goes to Charessa Scott--shipping coordinator with FedEx Kinko's in Princeton, NJ.

I recently went to her store to get some stuff shipped to North Carolina . . . she helped me choose the best way to ship it and then sold me the materials to do the packaging myself (thus saving me money).

Now I don't consider myself as one of the world's greatest packers, but with Charessa's encouragement, I was able to get the job done . . . I also appreciated her pleasant way of being.

FURTHERMORE:

FedEx Kinko's provides a great service to folks, especially those who are moving . . . we used the firm when we moved and doing so gave us a lot more flexibility with respect to using things until our very last day in New Jersey . . . I'll also be doing the same thing when I pack up to move from my temporary location in Pennsylvania . . . it's a lot easier than lugging and paying for extra suitcases.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.fedexkinkos.com>

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2. FYI

In last week's issue, I mentioned how Cynthia and I are starting to

find new doctors, dentists, etc. in the area . . . something else we do to find them takes place after we find a professional we like . . . we then ask that individual for somebody that he or she uses . . . our thinking is that if our doctor uses somebody, we can't go too far wrong with that recommendation.

FYI, part 2

The responses still keep coming on how to best deal with canker sores . . . though I probably won't run any more after this week, I thought you'd like to see the following:

* Ken in New York:

Some of your readers may be confusing canker sores with cold sores. A canker sore is an ulcer of the mouth best treated topically. (I suggested Glyoxide). A cold sore, which seemed to be described by many, is Herpes Simplex and Abreva is as good as any of the products over the counter (but costly as stated--about \$18 for a tiny tube). Famvir is a great Rx. It will help with the discomfort and speed the healing. Lysine is a good amino acid to take for cold sore prevention as well, but should be taken on a daily basis--not when the outbreak arrives and is probably useful in preventing canker sores as well.

* Jeanne in Pennsylvania:

I followed the link that Bob in NJ gave you and found this [additional information about the difference between cold sores and canker sores]:

http://www.herpescoldsores.com/cold_sores.htm#What_is_the_difference_between_Canker_sores_and_Coldsores

* John in Pennsylvania [with an informative link, extolling the virtues of Vitamin B12]:

http://www.lef.org/newsletter/2009/0213_Vitamin-B12-Helps-Prevent-Canker-Sores.htm?source=eNewsLetter2009Wk7-2&key=Article&l=0#article

* Jerry in North Carolina:

Canker sores getting you down? Seeing stars when citric juice hit that darn canker? I've been there. Here's a remedy that I think really works wonders:

There are two parts. First of all, a canker sore means that there is an internal imbalance.

Part 1. I use Lysine, no, not Listerine. Lysine, it's a free form amino acid. You can get it at any health food store. I usually use the Solgar 1000 mg. Take two at least three times a day. Symptoms should go away in about two days or so.

The second part. Also, in addition to the internal remedy (a must-do), you should do this awesome mouth wash:

Forget those over-the-counter remedies, they suck. Get some Tea Tree Oil (the Australian branded one, I just can't think of the name right now). Use about 10 to 12 drops in a 1/4 glass of water. (Tea Tree oil is a natural antiseptic. It can sting, so make sure you don't get any in your eyes.). Also, get Lavender essential oil (organic if possible), and mix in about 10 or so

drops with the Tea Tree oil in that 1/4 glass of water.

Take your new antiseptic mouthwash and swish it around your mouth and spit it out. It may not have the best taste because of Tea Tree oil. Do that a few times a day.

This mouthwash will help kill the bacteria that is helping to foster an environment for the canker to survive in. In a sense, it helps create a more alkaline environment in your mouth.

Personal case study: Some years ago, Julie was very ill and was hospitalized. During her illness, her immune system was quite compromised and she had about a dozen or more canker sores in her mouth. She used this remedy, and the canker sores literally fell out of her mouth when she rinsed with this specific mouthwash. Within ONE DAY her mouth improved by about 80 percent. By the end of the week, they were all gone.

I think those two remedies will really help. And, when you ever get the nearest inkling of onset of a canker sore onset, start with the Lysine. It will shut it down immediately.

* Cathy in Pennsylvania:

The best product that I have found to take the pain away from canker sores and to get them to end quickly is Peroxyl. It is a peroxide mouth wash. I think Colgate makes it. You swish it around in your mouth, and it takes the soreness away and shortens the duration of the sore.

* Joyce in California:

I must have missed reading last week's edition. I did not read your section on canker sores. I used to get them. The doctor I was working for told me that at the first sign of tingling, I should take Ibuprofen 200 mg, Take one every four hours. He said it will suppress the virus, and you won't get any sores. It worked for me.

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3. Gone fishing

Two guys are fishing in a boat under a bridge. One looks up and sees a funeral procession starting across the bridge. He stands up, takes off his cap and bows his head. The procession crosses the bridge and the man puts on his cap, picks up his rod and reel, and continues fishing.

The other guy says, "That was touching. I didn't know you had it in you."

The first guy responds, "Well, I guess it was the thing to do . . . after all, I was married to her for 40 years."

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4. Reviews

A. I saw FROST/NIXON, in part, because I wanted to have seen all the top picture nominations before Sunday's Academy Awards show . . . I left with the feeling that the film was well-deserving of much of the critical praise it has received.

Frank Langella, who won a Tony for his portrayal of Nixon on stage, was magnificent as the disgraced president who tries to save his legacy via series of interviews with British journalist Frost (portrayed by Michael Sheen in an equally impressive performance) . . . director Ron Howard also deserves kudos for making sure the film never dragged . . . I also liked the fact that it was surprisingly funny in spots.

Rated R, though I'm not really quite sure why . . . it would certainly be appropriate for any mature teenager.

B. FLASH OF GENIUS is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #627 follows:

Imagine watching a movie about the inventor of the intermittent windshield wiper . . . if you can, give FLASH OF GENIUS a shot . . . it is the true-life story of Robert Kearns, a man whose 1960s invention became the standard for every car . . . yet Ford tried to steal it from him . . . production values aren't the best (it appears to have been shot on a very low budget), but the David vs. Goliath story is an inspiring one . . . Greg Kinnear is excellent, as he almost always is, in the leading role . . . I also liked Alan Alda's work as one of his lawyers . . . rated PG-13.

C. As a kid, I was never a big science fan . . . I've now become more interested in the subject and you will, too, if you read WHY A CURVEBALL CURVES--edited by Frank Vizard.

This book is a collection of articles from POPULAR MECHANICS by such contributors as Chicago Cubs manager Lou Piniella, Olympic swimming coach Bob Bowman and Buzz "The Shot Doctor" Graman . . . you'll learn how certain hockey players achieve greater speed on the ice, why swimming is all about reducing drag and even what Babe Ruth had to say about the mechanics of his home-run swing:

* Coordination, that is perfect timing and harmony of action, is a great essential. You have got to develop rhythm and full utility of every muscle. My whole body goes with every swing. I swing right from the hips. And those who have seen me take a healthy sock at the ball know what I mean. With that coordination there is the fact that I assume that strength is behind it.

Whatever your favorite sport is, you'll probably find it covered in this book . . . baseball, basketball, bowling, boxing, cycling, football, golf, hockey, running, skiing, soccer, swimming and diving, and tennis all get covered in separate chapters, often accompanied by memorable photos.

I often found out some surprising information; e.g., about the importance of the follow-through in golf:

* Irrelevant. In truth, a golfer could release the club from his hands the moment after impact and it would make no difference—except, of course, to your playing partners, who might not appreciate having your eight-iron embedded between their shoulder blades. Still, a full release of your arms and torso, leading to a classic pose, with your belly button pointed to the target and your hands high above your front ear? Well, that always looks nice for the cameras.

And then there was this passage about hockey's Wayne Gretzky that ended with one of my all-time favorite sports quotations:

* By his own admission, Gretzky, who played most famously with the Edmonton Oilers as well as several other teams during the 1980s and 1990s, was not the strongest or fastest or most agile player on the ice even though he was named MVP of the National Hockey League nine times. What Gretzky did have was an ability that amounted to being able to see into the future and visualize what was going to happen in the next few seconds. In an article appearing in WIRED magazine, scientists working for the U. S. Olympic team and the Australian Institute of Sport concluded that skills like Gretzky's come from an innate ability to intuitively translate physical cues dropped by opponents that are not apparent to most other athletes. Scientists are at work figuring out how this skill can be taught, but this type of perceptual training is still in its infancy. On the other hand, Gretzky may have just been following his father's advice, given to him when he was a youngster: "Skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been."

Methinks that's great advice for any sport . . . unfortunately, putting it into practice was never quite that simple--or at least not for me.

D. You have to pay attention to a book dedicated to Wilbur and Orville Wright, "without whom air sickness would still be just a dream" . . . that certainly aught my attention, as did just about everything else in DAVE BARRY'S ONLY TRAVEL GUIDE YOU'LL EVER NEED.

I particularly liked this guide's candor . . . as the author notes, "If I think a country is awful, I'm going to say so, even if I've never been to this country and know virtually nothing about it."

Every time I read something else by Barry, I wonder if he can get any funnier . . . yet he somehow manages to keep me laughing with such observations as the following:

The type of luggage you carry says a lot about you. For example, if you're carrying somebody else's luggage, it says you're a thief.

If the security personnel do their job properly, they just might cause you to miss your plane, thereby possibly saving your life.

As you parents know, a small child can go for weeks without going to the bathroom at home, but once you hit the road it becomes pretty much a full-time occupation.

We have taken Robert's friends with us on numerous trips, and we have noted a phenomenon familiar to all parents, namely that you would have less conflict if you put the entire North and South Korean arms forces in your backseat, then you get with just two children.

The official state motto of Alaska is "Brrrrrr!"

We eat a lot on long trips because we feel our bodies are less likely to become bored if they can pass the time converting food into fat.

I listened to a taped version of ONLY TRAVEL GUIDE, which was made even more enjoyable by the fact that Barry also served as the narrator . . . his wry sense of humor came through even more vividly than had I just read the book.

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5. TV alert

A. RIGHT AMERICA, FEELING WRONG: SOME VOICES FROM THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL, a documentary, airs on Thursday at 3 p.m. and repeats at 10 p.m. on HBO . . . it is journalist/filmmaker's Alexandra Pelosi first-person, cross-country snapshot of a group of conservative Americans who saw their hopes and dreams evaporate in the wake of the decisive Democratic victory in the 2008 Presidential election . . . for other dates and times, please click:

http://www.hbo.com/apps/schedule/ScheduleServlet?ACTION_DETAIL=DETAIL&FOCUS_ID=680932

B. MISTRESS, a British soap about four fetching females who bond and gossip and support each other, premieres on BBC AMERICA on Friday at 8 p.m. . . . the show is a "fun blend of the erotic and neurotic," according to TV GUIDE, "loopy with sexual tension and never so highbrow it can't indulge in a little low comedy.:

C. Kevin Bacon stars in TAKING CHANCES on Saturday at 8 p.m.. on HBO . . . he plays a Marine who escorts home the body of a young hero killed in action in Iraq.

D. Don't try to reach me Sunday night from 7 p.m. on to first watch THE BARBARA WALTERS SPECIAL on ABC . . . she'll be interviewing the Jonas Brothers, Academy Awards host Hugh Jackman, and nominees Anne Hathaway and Mickey Rourke . . . I'll then stay tuned to the same channel to watch the actual Awards.

My hope is that Rourke takes the coveted statue for THE WRESTLER, and I'd like to see SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE win Best Picture.

For information on all of the nominated films and performers, please click:

<http://www.oscar.com/nominees/index?pn=nominees#BestPictureNominationCategory>

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6. Childbirth at 65 (Yes, you heard about it first here!)

With all the new technology regarding fertility recently, a 65-year-old friend of mine was able to give birth. When she was discharged from the hospital and went home, I went to visit.

"May I see the new baby?" I asked

"Not yet," she said. "I'll make coffee and we can visit for a while first."

Thirty minutes had passed, and I asked, "May I see the new baby now?"

"No, not yet," she said.

After another few minutes had elapsed, I asked again, "May I see the

baby now?"

"No, not yet," replied my friend.

Growing very impatient, I asked, "Well, when can I see the baby?"

"When he cries," she told me.

"WHEN HE CRIES?" I demanded. "Why do I have to wait until he cries?"

"BECAUSE I FORGOT WHERE I PUT HIM, Ok?"

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7. Websites

A. TISSUE ALERT:

Have a tissue--or a bunch--available when you click on this website:

<http://parentswish.com/site01/big.html>

Make sure your speakers are on!

B. Have too much stress in your life? If so, please click:

<http://www.riversongs.com/greetings/stress.html>

It even comes with sound effects . . . and if you like, you have the option of emailing it for free to others.

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

THANKS to the efforts of Lori, my talented webmistress, several past issues of this newsletter have recently been posted . . . to view them, click "Newsletter" to the left and then "Past Issues."

The fun part is to use the Search option at the top; e.g., to find a joke or quote on some random topic--such as inspiration . . . I did so and was able to revisit this oh-so-touching true from BLAINESWORLD #594:

Insight

At Saint Mary's Catholic Church they have a weekly husband's marriage seminar. At the session last week, the Priest asked Luigi, who was approaching his 50th wedding anniversary, to take a few minutes and share some insight into how he had managed to stay married to the same woman all these years.

Luigi replied to the assembled husbands, "Well, I've a-ried to treat-a her nice, spend the money on her, but best is that I took-a her to Italy for the 20th anniversary!"

The Priest responded, "Luigi, you are an amazing inspiration to all the husbands here! Please tell us what you are planning for your wife for

your 50th anniversary."

Luigi proudly replied, "I'm a-gonna go and get her."

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8. Computer tip

To analyze and improve the performance of your Windows-based PC, please click:

<http://www.PCPitStop.com>

For FREE, you can try out a product called Optimize . . . it identifies junk files, analyzes your Internet performance and browser settings, and recommends changes to speed up your Internet browsing.

One downside: You'll probably have to view the site with an IE browser; it doesn't seem to work as well--if at all--if you use Firefox . . . in addition, you'll then be encouraged to buy products from the company that will help you correct any of the problems that are identified . . . there's nothing wrong with that, though there may be other products that do the job just as well for you at lesser or no cost.

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9. New job

The drunk announced to the bartender, "It seems I've been informally named adviser on 'Sexual Matters' at my company."

"That sounds interesting. Does this mean you'll be counseling management on matters involving sexual harassment of secretaries?"

"I'm not sure yet," he answered. "During a staff meeting, I popped up to suggest a reduction in executive expense accounts, and it was after that I was told if they ever wanted my f*ing advice, they'd let me know."

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10. A quote I like

It takes 20 years to build a reputation and 5 minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently.--Warren Buffett, American investor, business executive and philanthropist

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11. Thought for the day

When You Bury Me

When you bury me, and bury me you must

Bury my body but not my life

Bury my feet, but not the road I traveled

Bury my hands, but not the work I did with them

Bury my eyes, but not my vision

Bury my mouth, but not the truth I spoke

Bury my heart, but not my love

Bury my faults, my mistakes, my sins

But don't bury my life

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. Women's History Month

Eyewitness Series at Bucks County Community College (Tyler 142),
Newtown, PA

Events are FREE and open to all. Call 215.968.8015 or email
kayen@bucks.edu to register.

Mon, March 2: Women's Liberation Movement

Mon, March 9: Holocaust

Wed, March 11: World War II – author Margaret George speaking and
selling her book, WHEN WE WERE AT WAR

Mon, March 23: Vietnam

Wed, March 25: Civil Rights

B. Thursday, March 5 at 7:00 p.m.

Michael Davis: Author of STREET GANG: THE COMPLETE HISTORY
OF SESAME STREET

Discussion/Signing:

Join us for a discussion and look back at the 40 years of Sesame Street
with former TV Guide editor and local author Michael Davis. The development,
rise, and enduring success of television's most influential children's show is
a phenomenon that has not been equaled. Join us for this entertaining evening
for all ages!

Princeton MarketFair Mall, 3535 US Route 1 South, Princeton, NJ

Email CRM 2646@bn.com for details and registration.

C. Cathy in Pennsylvania:

We are discussing going to Washington on Saturday, March 21 for the March on the Pentagon. You can find more details about the event here:

http://www.pephost.org/site/PageServer?pagename=M21_homepage

We need to know how many people are considering going on the day long trip. We want to decide whether to rent a bus or vans. The cost if we rented a van should be around \$15.00 \$20 a person. If we need to rent a bus, it might be a bit more.

If you think you might like to be a part of this event, please RSVP to: cfpabuxmont@aol.com so that we can get an approximate count of how many people we need to arrange transportation for.

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and that peace resumes in Israel . . . also, make it a great week!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#645

2.9.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I have been busy finding local doctors . . . to date, we've been lucky--having found an excellent dentist and, also, an equally fine eye doctor.

The former is Dr. Joseph Younger (828.277.9907) . . . so far, we have been very impressed by his practice . . . and personally, I liked the dental chair he uses . . . it was the most comfortable I've ever been in . . . padding at the head/neck area helped make it so . . . we both liked his use of a dental camera for close-ups of what he was telling us . . . we also appreciated how he took time for an individual consultation in a separate room, wherein he reviewed what exactly needed to be done.

The latter is Dr. Thomas Brosnan (828.254.9693) . . . his examination was both thorough and professional . . . in addition, we liked the other staffers in his office.

B. We continue to be blown away by the friendliness of folks in the area . . . when we walk around the lake that surrounds our development, we're always greeted by neighbors who extend a greeting . . . many will often stop to chat.

That's how we recently made a dinner date . . . Cynthia just struck up a conversation with another couple, Bob and Leslie, and they invited us to get together for dinner a few nights later at a local restaurant: The Corner Kitchen in Asheville (828.274.2439).

Our food was excellent . . . Cynthia and I split two main courses, as we often do . . . we had the meatloaf and for a first time, tried redfish . . . both dishes led us to the conclusion that this is a place that we'll probably revisit--often.

We then went back to the home of our new friends for

dessert . . . it's always fun to see what other places look like, and in this instance, we got a particular kick out of seeing the living room . . . Bob uses it to practice his guitar and since we were all standing there, he gave us a mini-concert (including his latest song, the Fleetwoods' "Mr. Blue") . . . our only regret is that he doesn't yet have any gigs in the area because we'd love to see him in concert.

C. Cynthia's business cards finally came in . . . I thought you'd like to see her new title:



Please excuse the poor quality of the graphic; that's the best my scanner was able to produce . . . the actual card looks much better, as you'll see for yourself if you ask Cynthia for one when you see her next.

She got them printed for free using this service:

<http://www.vistaprint.com>

If you use the above, all you need to do is pay for shipping!

D. I spent part of my week in Bucks County . . . much of the time was spent preparing for and then testifying in an arbitration case involving our teacher's union . . . we contend that the administration has not lived up to the contract with respect to dealing with salary inequities . . . the administration, as might be expected, disagrees . . . so after a full day of back and forth, we adjourned until a second hearing date in March.

We also got some good news with respect to the second major arbitration case (on ratios) we have pending; i.e., there is finally a hearing date set for April . . . we believe this one is a slam dunk . . . our contract clearly calls for a 60-40 ratio with respect to full-time to part-time hires . . . presently, the figure is in the 51-49 range . . . furthermore, we have recently uncovered documents that show that many budgeted full-time slots have simply not been filled for some reason that escapes us.

I even managed to get together with a friend to catch a play: ORSON'S SHADOW at The Actors' Net of Bucks County in Morrisville . . . it's the story of a time when Orson Welles directed Laurence Olivier . . . everything about the production

was top notch . . . George Hartpence, one of my favorite local actors--cancel that, favorite New Jersey/Pennsylvania actors--seemed to capture Olivier as he must have been, and P.A. Dake was just right as the critic Kenneth Tynan . . . I got a chuckle out of his wry delivery of this one bit of dialogue: "I'm legitimate, which comes in handy as a critic for when you write a bad review and they call you a bas*ard."

Cheryl Doyle produced and directed the show with distinction . . . she has come up with another winner that unfortunately you won't be able to see because its limited run will have ended by the time you get this missive . . . however, don't despair . . . next up is husband Joe Doyle's popular comic drama about adult children and their aged parents, THE LAST DAYS OF THE DINOSAURS, which runs from Feb. 27 through March 15 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.actorsnetbucks.org>

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

This week, it goes to Eddie Vargas--manager of the Payless Car Rental operation in Newark (973.824.5800).

That's where I've been renting my car each time I come North. In general, I have found the Payless prices to be the best around . . . and if you become a Payless Perk member, you get still an additional discount.

Eddie makes things go smoothly . . . he gets you in and out of the office as quickly as possible, and the other day to help me get to the airport quicker, he did the paperwork without me and emailed me my copy.

He also has a great smile that helps brighten up the day.

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2. FYI

Being new to the area, we are in the process of finding doctors, dentists, etc. (see also Section 1A) . . . one thing we did was to make appointments, typically one or two weeks apart from each other . . . that way, we get to check the doctor out . . . if we have a positive experience, we then keep the second appointment that has been made for the other person . . . however, if we had a negative experience, this gives the option to cancel the second appointment--and make an appointment with a different health care professional.

FYI, part 2

Last week, I asked readers a question about how to deal with canker sores . . . it seemed to elicit the greatest response I've ever received . . . here's just a sampling of some of the emails I received on the topic:

* Joanne in Pennsylvania:

My husband would suffer from them, and I found out that they are a sign/symptom that your amino acids are out of balance in the body. Stress does bring them out . . . so what's the remedy?

L-lysine is a simple capsule that helps bring those aminos back into balance. Found at any health food store, you could ask more questions from the professionals. You can also Google L-lysine and read for yourself. It's an inexpensive and effective treatment.

At the first sign, usually throbbing or itching, my husband would take at least two four 500 mil. capsules and continue taking a couple capsules a day until the outbreak subsided. If ingested in time, the outbreak would have no visible signs.

In the beginning he was not a believer, but as time went on and he suffered less and less. I was a hero wife.

For what it's worth . . . and you may not feel stressed, but moving and all that it has encompassed does take a toll on the body.

* Penny in Mississippi:

There is an antiseptic called Sia Smith that we can get around here that works well for many things. Now I never said that it was a pleasant dose, but it has been proven to take care of sore throat and sinus problems and when I was having problems with my mouth, I would take a small amount and rinse with it. Believe you me, if you survive from using it, everything else will not.

* Tricia in Texas:

I use Listerine and try to hold it on the canker sore till I nearly cry. I do it 2 or 3 times a day and in 24 hours its greatly reduced and totally gone in 48 or less. Its the only thing I found that works.

* Bob in New Jersey:

Lysine has been a godsend to many friends of mine. Buy it anywhere. It was suggested by a nutritionist for a friend. It worked.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.herpescoldsores.com/amino-acid-lysine-for-herpes.html>

Don't let the word herpes throw you off.

* Rob in New Jersey:

For canker sores, use Ambisol.

* Marty in New Jersey:

Democrats usually get them. If you change your affiliation to Republican or, better yet, Libertarian, they'll go away.

* Donna in New Jersey:

I get canker sores once in a while, too. I usually get them when I'm stressed, over-tired/run down or have a virus. It always appears on the same spot on my lip. As soon as I start to feel that tingle in my lip prior to

an outbreak, I use prescription medication called Denivir. It usually prevents a severe, swollen, painful sore from occurring. It's important to apply often as soon as the onset occurs. If I'm too late with an application, then it's full blown.

* Pat in Pennsylvania:

For more information on the topic, please click:

http://www.dentaljobservice.com/sore_inside_the_mouth.html

* Ken in New York:

Glyoxide for sores in your mouth.

* Bill in Connecticut:

I get canker sores also. They are much more infrequent now than when I was say in my early thirties.

My usual treatment is to swab the sore with iodine on a Q-tip. It only stings for a moment. Iodine in larger doses is poisonous, but the small amount I use is not.

The canker sore usually clears about 12 hours after an iodine treatment.

No one knows the cause of canker sores. I think my treatment cuts down on the secondary infection the open sore in your mouth would develop if left untreated.

* Elaine in Pennsylvania:

Canker sores . . . once you get them, you are prone to them. Try Abreva, a little costly or Herpacin. It looks like a tube of lipstick. It tastes weird, but works. My brother is a Dentist and this is what I have used.

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3. Exchange

An attorney was sitting in his office late one night when the Devil appeared before him.

The Devil said to the lawyer: "I have a proposition for you. You can win every case you try, for the rest of your life. Your clients will adore you, your colleagues will stand in awe of you, and you will make embarrassing sums of money.

"All I want in exchange is your soul, your wife's soul, your children's souls, the souls of your parents, grandparents, and parents-in-law, and the souls of all of your friends and I want to have sex with your 14-year-old daughter."

The lawyer thought about this for a moment, then asked, "So . . . what's the catch?"

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4. Reviews

A. Saw PAUL BLART: MALL COP for two reasons: 1) A friend had recommended it; and 2) Cynthia found out that the movie we were going to see (HE'S JUST NOT THAT INTO YOU) was the one she was slated to see with a friend . . . so we settled on this Kevin James comedy at the last minute . . . the premise was cute . . . it's the story about a would-be state trooper who can't pass the physical, so he instead gets a job working in security at a New Jersey mall . . .the first half was funny, too, but it tailed way off in the second half when it stopped being a comedy and instead became a rather ordinary tale about a group of bandits . . . yet I realize that we weren't the ideal audience for the film . . . we were accompanied by a teenager who had a good time . . . I thought James was OK in the lead role; however, it was the work of Jayma Mays (a frequent guest on the TV show UGLY BETTY) that caught my attention . . . she was endearingly charming . . . rated PG.

B. FROZEN RIVER is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #622 follows:

You'll have to look around to find FROZEN RIVER, a grim but powerful indie film . . . yet your effort will be rewarded when you catch this tale of two women who join forces to smuggle illegal immigrants across the Canadian border . . . veteran character actress Melissa Leo delivers a stunning performance that is worthy of an Oscar nomination . . . Misty Upham is equally outstanding in the other leading role . . . rated R.

C. I was thoroughly enjoying THE GEORGRAPHY OF BLISS by Eric Weiner, a self-proclaimed grump, until I got toward the end of the book . . . that's when I came across the following passage:

* Andy did his research and fixed his sights on North Carolina. The mountainous western part of the state. Asheville in particular. The small city, population about seventy thousand, fits a lot of his criteria; it has mountains, which he loves. And seasons.

* He visited and instantly felt at peace there. It's not quite a spiritual feeling--that's not a word that Andy would use--but Asheville does have a calming, narcotic effect on him. He also likes the scale. Asheville is big enough to have a thriving arts scene and a choice of restaurants yet not so big that it is burdened with big-city problems, such as traffic jams and high crime rates. Andy concedes he probably won't go to many art shows or theater performances but he likes to know they are there, just in case.

Andy' biggest fear: that he's discovered Asheville too late. "I don't want to get up there and find that the rest of Florida has already moved there."

And after reading the above, it was when I decided that this was a fantastic book because that's exactly how I feel about Asheville (my new home) . . . as I was reading what Weiner had to say about many of the other countries he visited (Switzerland, Iceland, Bhutan, Qatar. etc), I kept thinking to myself that maybe I was missing something . . . while he described many blissful experiences, none seemed to be even close to what I've already experienced in North Carolina.

The author also had some encounters that were anything but happy;

for example:

* I have to be honest: All this guru worship turns me off. If I wanted to worship someone, there's always my wife. I didn't need to come to India. Fawning over someone else is just as counter-productive, and annoying, as fawning over yourself. Narcissism turned inside out is still narcissism.

Or as he noted about another country:

* In Switzerland, it's illegal to flush your toilet past 10:00 p.m. or mow your lawn on Sunday, but it's perfectly legal to kill yourself.

At times, Weiner even cited some rather interesting research studies that he reviewed in an attempt to determine what made some individuals (and their countries) happy; for instance:

* Several studies have found that unemployed people in Europe are significantly less happy than people with jobs, even though the laid-off workers still receive the equivalent of a full salary, thanks to the generous welfare system. This inconvenient fact pokes holes at notions that the good life is a languid one. In fact, researchers have found that people who are too busy are happier than those who are not busy enough. In other words, the playwright Noel Coward got it right when he observed that interesting work is "more fun than fun."

Weiner seemed to have had an interesting time while writing THE GEOGRAPHY OF BLISS . . . I particularly enjoyed his descriptions of visits with local residents, many of whom he interviewed for sizable portions of his book.

D. Every time I read a book by Ann Rule, I think that she has found the creepiest individual to write about . . . and that she couldn't possibly find anybody more despicable.

Then, when I see something else she has written, I find that I'm wrong . . . she keeps finding other vile murderers out there . . . that's certainly the case with her latest effort, TOO LATE TO SAY GOOD BYE, in which the story is told of Dr. Bart Corbin--a dentist who seemingly had it all.

Yet when his current wife is found murdered, things begin to fall apart for him . . . and they get worse when it is discovered that the dentist's former girlfriend was murdered in a similar fashion some 14 years before.

What makes this particular story so chilling is the fact that the story is complicated by the fact that there had been another lover in the picture . . . I don't want to ruin the suspense for you, so I'll just tell you that TOO LATE will hold your attention from the very first page until the very end.

I was fortunate to have heard the book on CD, an experience that was enhanced by the narration of Tony-winning actress Karen Ziemba.

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5. TV alert

A. Guilty pleasure department: Catch the return of MILLIONAIRE MATCHMAKER on Thursdays at 10 p.m. on BRAVO . . . Patti Stanger counsels the rich-in-money-but-poor-in-moves types . . . among her tips for surviving Valentine's Day was this one: "No working late that night. Take time to shower and shave before your date, which will make you a yummy aphrodisiac. Oh, and for God's sake, turn off your cellphone!"

B. How could you go wrong by watching SPORTS ILLUSTRATED SWIMSUIT 2009? It airs on Friday at 11:30 p.m. on TNT.

C. Sarah McLachlan performs some of her greatest hits on AUSTIN CITY LIMITS on Saturday at 9 p.m. on PBS . . . because PBS times and dates sometimes vary, check local listings.

D. EASTBOUND AND DOWN premieres on Sunday at 10:30 p.m. on HBO . . . it stars Danny McBride (so funny in both TROPIC THUNDER and PINEAPPLE EXPRESS) as a destitute ex-ballplayer who returns to his North Carolina hometown to teach phys. ed.

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6. The rest of the story

A young cowboy from Wyoming goes off to college. Half way through the semester, he has foolishly squandered all his money.

He calls home. "Dad," he says, "You won't believe what modern education is developing! They actually have a program here in Laramie that will teach our dog, Ol' Blue how to talk!"

"That's amazing," his Dad says. "How do I get Ol' Blue in that program?"

"Just send him down here with \$1,000" the young cowboy says. "I'll get him in the course."

So, his father sends the dog and \$1,000.

About two-thirds of the way through the semester, the money again runs out. The boy calls home.

"So how's Ol' Blue doing son?" his father asks.

"Awesome, Dad, he's talking up a storm," he says, "but you just won't believe this--they've had such good results, they have now started to teach the animals how to read!"

"Read!?" says his father, "No kidding! How do we get Blue in that program?"

"Just send \$2,500, I'll get him in the class."

The money promptly arrives. But our hero has a problem. At the end of the year, his father will find out the dog can neither talk, nor read. So he shoots the dog.

When he arrives home at the end of the year, his father is all excited. "Where's Ol' Blue? I just can't wait to see him read something and talk!"

"Dad," the boy says, "I have some grim news. Yesterday morning, just before we left to drive home, Ol' Blue was in the living room, kicked back in the recliner, reading THE WALL STREET JOURNAL like he usually does. Then he turned to me and asked, "So, is your daddy still messing' around with that little redhead who lives in town?"

The father exclaimed, "I hope you shot that son of a bi*ch before he talks to your Mother!"

"I sure did, Dad!"

"That's my boy!"

The kid went on to be a successful lawyer, and he then went on to become the Governor of Illinois.

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7. Websites

A. If you are looking to find information on salaries, ratings and reviews posted anonymously by employees, please click:

<http://www.glassdoor.com/index.htm>

Viewers can find some 18,000 companies listed . . . of particular interest to me: the first annual Employees' Choice Awards for Best Places to Work . . . General Mills was Number One.

B. Remember the game FAMILY FEUD? To play a version online, please click:

[http://community.games.com/launch.jsp?
rkey=1439&privateRoom=&playNow=1&returnFromLogin=1](http://community.games.com/launch.jsp?rkey=1439&privateRoom=&playNow=1&returnFromLogin=1)

You have the option to play by yourself or with others . . . and if you enjoy playing, you can even download the whole version.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

If you have radio, TV or cable contacts in the Asheville area, please be advised that I'm looking at the possibility of hosting another public affairs-type show (along the lines of what I've done in the past) . . . for more information on my background, please click "Radio Show" to the left . . . and if you know anybody who might be able to use my service, I'd be most appreciative if you would forward any contacts.

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8. Computer tip

Last week, I mentioned about how to easily access websites you frequently visit; e.g., by dragging them to your toolbar.

You are somewhat limited as to the number of such websites you can include by the fact that there's only so much room . . . so to include even more, abbreviate them by right-clicking your mouse and choosing the rename option.

So, for example on my browser, Amzn = Amazon, BCCC = Bucks County Community College, etc.

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9. You know it's 2009 because . . .

1. You accidentally enter your PIN on the microwave.
2. You haven't played solitaire with real cards in years.
3. You have a list of 15 phone numbers to reach your family of three.
4. You email the person who works at the desk next to you.
5. Your reason for not staying in touch with friends and family is that they don't have email addresses.
6. You pull up in your own driveway and use your cell phone to see if anyone is home to help you carry in the groceries.
7. Every commercial on television has a website at the bottom of the screen.
8. Leaving the house without your cell phone, which you didn't even have the first 20 or 30 (or 60) years of your life, is now a cause for panic and you turn around to go and get it.
10. You get up in the morning and go on line before getting your coffee.
11. You start tilting your head sideways to smile. :)
12. You're reading this and nodding and laughing.
13. Even worse, you know exactly to whom you are going to forward this message.
14. You are too busy to notice there was no #9 on this list.
15. You actually scrolled back up to check that there wasn't a #9 on this list.

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10. A quote I like

Ten years from now, you'll laugh at whatever's stressing you out today. So why not laugh now?--Tony Robbins, American self-help writer and motivational speaker

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11. Thought for the day

The Law of the Garbage Truck

I hopped in a taxi, and we took off for the airport. We were driving in the right lane when suddenly a black car jumped out of a parking space right in front of us. My taxi driver slammed on his breaks, skidded and missed the other car by just inches! The driver of the other car whipped his head around and started yelling at us. My taxi driver just smiled and waved at the guy. And I mean, he was really friendly.

So I asked, "Why did you just do that? This guy almost ruined your car and sent us to the hospital!"

This is when my taxi driver taught me what I now call, "The Law of the Garbage Truck."

He explained that many people are like garbage trucks. They run around full of garbage, full of frustration, full of anger and full of disappointment. As their garbage piles up, they need a place to dump it and sometimes they'll dump it on you. Don't take it personally.

Just smile, wave, wish them well and move on. Don't take their garbage and spread it to other people at work, at home or on the streets.

The bottom line is that successful people do not let garbage trucks take over their day.

Life's too short to wake up in the morning with regrets, so love the people who treat you right. Pray for the ones who don't.

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. We are very happy to announce that on February 12 , we'll be celebrating Valentine's Day with a PARTY IN PINK to benefit the National Breast Cancer Foundation with SARAR's 2nd Fashion Show.

It will be at the Arena in New York City (135 W 41 Street).

One day before the official opening of Fashion Week, you will be able to sneak a peek of SARAR's summer and fall collection.

We also would like to announce a special appearance by Miss USA 2008, Crystle Stewart, who supports the campaign for breast cancer awareness.

Time: Door opens at 7 p.m.; Fashion Show begins at 8:30 p.m.

Dress code: Men: BLACK or GRAY; Women: PINK in any shade or BLACK. Entertainment by 4 European DJs.

Tickets: \$10 in advance/\$20 at the door. You can call 646.705.0115 to reserve your tickets.

B. If you missed the chance to get a FREE breakfast at Denny's, here's a second opportunity--this time sponsored by IKEA . . . go to most any store from Feb. 13-16, anytime before 10:30 a.m. . . . for the coupon that you'll need, please click:

<http://info.ikea-usa.com/seizethedays/>

C. High Voltage Chanting at the Princeton Center for Yoga & Health on Saturday, Feb. 14 from 7:30-9:30 p.m.

2 for the price of 1; save \$10.

Join Swami Gandharva and the AstroTheology Vibration party! Electrify your soul in this celebratory ceremony of the spirit as you chant the ancient sound vibrations of gods and goddesses, the sun, moon and all the planets! Come and chant at the top of your lungs and dance your head off! Swami G and friends will rock your spiritual world!

Register by clicking:

http://clicks.aweber.com/y/ct/?l=l6raa&m=1e.T1DOGENourH&b=uyJ0Mh0SIS_PO4.9x8vKww

D. At Bucks County Community College in Newtown, PA:

The Negro Baseball Leagues: An American Legacy

Tues., Feb. 24

12:30 p.m.in Penn 259

Stories, tales and Negro Leagues history, along with film clips of interviews from an upcoming documentary.

PS. Don't forget that Valentine's Day is Saturday . . . to see if you would have been the perfect date in another decade, please click:

<http://www.history.com/content/valentine/game-dating-through-the-ages>

Also, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and that peace resumes in Israel . . . and make it a great week!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#644

2.2.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride and I, participated in our first Dinner for Six on Friday . . . that's an activity that our homeowner's association runs, wherein you're matched with two other couples for dinner . . . this time, we brought appetizers . . . next month, we'll be mixed with two other couples and because we host, we're responsible for the main course . . . then the month after, we will bring dessert at some other home . . . it's a fun activity, and a real fine way to meet people.

On Saturday, we saw our first show at the NC Stage Company in Asheville: Terrence McNally's A PERFECT GANESH . . . it's a drama with some comedic moments about two women who take a trip to India . . . the first act was totally engrossing; however, the play fell apart for us in the second act . . . it was not the fault of the actors, though; they were all excellent . . . CJ Breland and Kay Galvin both touched us with their work in the leading roles . . . Zach Blew and Bradshaw Call were equally fine in the other roles, and they deserve special credit for having to juggle several roles.

GANESH runs through February 7 . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.ncstage.org/>

B. On Sunday, we then had our first gathering of folks in our new home when we invited our neighbors for brunch . . . that's the happy bunch below; we're in the middle row to the right:



We enjoyed getting to show our place and to hear the well-deserved compliments that everybody gave Cynthia for the great job she did in setting up our home so quickly.

Afterwards, we played a fun game that Cynthia used to use with her students: The Ungame . . . it's billed as the world's most popular self-expression game, and it gave everybody a chance to know each other as we answered such questions as:

- *Do you prefer being a leader or a follower?
- * If you had a pet as a child, tell about it.
- * Tell about a time you were phony.
- * Tell about your favorite teacher or a teacher that made an impact on you.
- * Tell about a favorite story as a child and why you liked it.

From there, we went for cocktails at the home of Warren Fluharty--our decorator/friend . . . he has quite a place and though it's not quite decorated along the lines of our style, we were impressed.

C. I love hearing good news from readers, so please do keep sharing such information . . . let me know about awards, graduations and of course, births of children and grandchildren.

It must be the season, but CONGRATULATIONS are certainly in order to Chic and Joni in Pennsylvania, Richard and Gail in New York, and Verna and Jim in New Jersey--all of whom became proud grandparents in the past few months.

D. MR. CURIOUS HERE:

You get canker sores? Or know anything about them?

As a kid, I used to get them often . . . then I stopped getting them for a long period of time, but they're back . . . I get them on a fairly regular basis and am wondering if you know anything that helps prevent them and/or helps lessen their severity?

I have tried Kankaid, but that no longer seems to help me very much . . . some research I've done says that stress causes them, though that said, I don't know that I'm dealing with any more stress than usual.

I'd welcome any thoughts you might have on the subject.

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

This week, it goes to Julie and Chris Diaz--owners of a place called Cruizers that is rapidly becoming one of our favorite eateries in the Asheville area.

It is located just around the corner from us on 320 Smoky Park Highway in Candler; 828.633.0718.

The first time we went there, we were just checking it out because we had heard it was one of the few local places that served ice cream . . . Cynthia asked for a taste of one flavor; Julie instead gave her a sample that was larger than most scoops you get at other places.

Cynthia then asked for a kiddie size portion of the ice cream. Julie said that they only have a small size, but she proceeded to do her best to scoop out a kiddie size. It was humongous. When we offered to pay, Julie said it wouldn't be necessary.

We knew we would become frequent customers by what Julie told us next . . . when we asked her if they had sprinkles, she said "no" . . . we kidded her and said, if we brought some in, would she hold onto them for our private use . . . she immediately said "yes."

The next night we returned for burgers and onion rings . . . they were both excellent . . . Chris then went around the restaurant, giving out free homemade cookies (that his wife had made) to all who were there.

Both Julie and Chris made us feel most welcome . . . we'll be back--repeatedly.

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2. FYI

My friend Ivan in Pennsylvania doesn't sign his credit cards . . . rather he puts on the back: ASK FOR ID . . . this makes it difficult for anybody to illegally use them; i.e., if the merchant bothers to read what has been written . . . methinks this is a great idea!

FYI, part 2

* Kathy in Pennsylvania (with a REQUEST FOR HELP):

I would be grateful for Boxtops for Education. These are small coupons--usually pink-- that can be found on Betty Crocker products, cereal boxes, Bisquick, juicy juice, etc.

For a complete listing of all companies, please click:

<http://www.boxtops4education.com>

Livi, my oldest granddaughter saves them for school and wants to win a prize at the end of the year. Just send them to me at this address: Kathy Webb, c/o Science Dept., Bucks County Community College, 275 Swamp Road, Newtown, PA 18940.

I will reimburse for postage. Thanks for your support.

* Earl in New Jersey, a nurse and a member of the faculty at LaSalle University:

LDL of 163 is way too high. Get some Zocor and stop deluding yourself.

Your buddies want you around!

* Mary in Pennsylvania (in response to Pat in Pennsylvania):

My husband and I have visited Asheville twice in the past 5 years and appreciate any insight and reviews about it. It has become one of our favorite places to visit. One of the toughest things when visiting new cities is choosing restaurants. I save all your newsletters for future use. Keep up the good work and best wishes to you and your wife in your new home. I think you made a great choice.

* Natalie in Pennsylvania:

We saw DEFIANCE. I thought it was excellent. I highly recommend it. We also saw REVOLUTIONARY ROAD and found it to be very powerful.

* Jack in Pennsylvania:

Have you seen PAUL BLART, MALL COP yet? It was written by Kevin James and Adam Sandler. You will find yourself laughing out loud at times. It may tempt you to become a mall officer in Asheville while you are rewiring!

* Win in New Jersey:

Glad to know you're enjoying mountain life.

You can get Mercer County Community College's new jazz station by clicking:

<http://www.jazzon2.com>

* Cathy in Pennsylvania:

Thursday's Town Hall meeting on Healthcare was featured on the front page of today's Courier Times. BuxMont CFPA is mentioned as one of the cosponsors. You can read the story here:

http://www.phillyburbs.com/news/local/courier_times/courier_times_news_details/article/28/2009/February/01/forum-argues-for-single-payer-health-care-1.html

* Barbara in Pennsylvania:

HIP HIP Hooray for "Frank in NJ" for the Bush bashing remarks. I totally agree with him.

* Foundation Office at Bucks County Community College

Tough Economy! Make Students Aware of these Scholarships

More than \$100,000 available this spring! DEADLINE: APRIL 1!

For more information about eligibility requirements and for applications, visit:

<http://www.bccscholarships.com>

visit Academic Departments, Financial Aid, or the Foundation and Alumni Relations office (Tyler Hall, Room 224); call 215-968-8224 or e-mail: alumni@bucks.edu.

Here's a sampling of available scholarships:

Alumni Association Completion Scholarship-\$500 Awarded to a second year student who has accumulated at least 30 credits at BCCC and possesses a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0.

Express Employment Professionals Scholarship-minimum \$500 Awarded to a current BCCC student who majors in a program of study in one of the College's six academic departments

Dr. James J. Linksz Presidential Scholarship-minimum \$600
Awarded to a student currently matriculated at BCCC and who has demonstrated leadership ability.

MY TWO CENTS:

There are many, many more . . . check them out if you're at all interested in applying . . . also, share this information with your friends and relatives.

More importantly, if you don't live in Bucks County, your local community college or university probably has a similar listing of scholarships that you can find out about just by asking.

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3. Oral exam

The psychology instructor had just finished a lecture on mental health and was giving an oral exam.

Speaking specifically about manic depression, she asked, "How would you diagnose a patient who walks back and forth screaming at the top of his lungs one minute, then sits in a chair weeping uncontrollably the next?"

A young man in the rear raised his hand and answered, "A basketball coach?"

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4. Reviews

A. I'm a bit surprised that Clint Eastwood did not receive any nominations for GRAN TORINO, a film he both directed and stars in . . . it's the story of a Korean War vet's reluctant friendship with a Hmong teenage boy and his immigrant family . . . Eastwood is funny at times; at other times, he'll remind you of his famous Dirty Harry character . . . the ending is as good as it gets . . . stick around for the credits, and you'll even get to hear Eastwood sing . . . rated R.

B. ZACK AND MIRI MAKE A PORNO is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #632 follows:

Kevin Smith's ZACK AND MIRI MAKE A PORNO is definitely not for anybody who is offended by foul-language . . . but if that doesn't bother you, methinks you'll enjoy this raunchy comedy that's surprisingly romantic . . . it is about a guy, Seth Rogen, and his platonic pal, Elizabeth Banks, who live together in order to save money on both their housing and bills . . . when they become really down on their luck, a chance encounter at their 10-year reunion gives them the idea to make a porn movie to make some money . . . Rogen and Banks have great chemistry in the leading roles, and I also liked the work of both Justin Long and Craig Robinson . . . make sure you stay until the very end of the credits for an add-on part to the film that most everybody else will miss . . . rated R.

C. You don't have to age badly . . . that's the premise behind YOU: STAYING YOUNG, an informative guide written by Dr. Michael Roizen and Dr. Mehmet Oz.

Rather, you can actually extend your warranty if you learn some basic tips that the authors clearly (and with some humor) point out . . . for example:

* [If] You're just beginning to experience some mild sleep problems.

Try Benadryl.

Why? The nonaddictive OTC option contains an ingredient that makes you groggy (it's also the ingredient in OTC sleep medications). If you don't have pains or other symptoms, stick to straight Benadryl. But if you do, you can add an OTC medication with a pain-killing element. Downside: You may feel groggy in the morning and suffer memory problems. If so, stop it. . . .

[If] You're jet-lagged or work shift work.

Try Melatonin.

Why? Available in health-food stores, this supplement helps reset your body clock and is a first-line therapy for travel related sleep issues. The dose varies between 0.5 and 5 milligrams, so you'll have to experiment with dosing to see what works best for you.

Then there was this great suggestion on how to get an assessment on your overall health:

* Ask three strangers how old they think you are. (Asking friends and family doesn't count, since they either know or have a vested interest in not hurting your feelings. Think servers, baristas, seatmates on the subway, anyone who won't automatically say "ninety-seven.") That will help give you some kind of baseline as to how others perceive you—based on appearance and demeanor—and it can be a strong indicator of how healthy you actually are. In addition, you can ask a friend you trust to be honest with you about how you are aging compared to others.

YOU: STAYING YOUNG covers a wide range of other topics, ranging from how to control your genes to developing a remarkable memory and a lot else between . . . there was even this suggestion on how to handle your closets:

* If you get your clothes dry-cleaned, remove them from the plastic wrap, which traps in the chemicals used to clean them, and air them out on a porch or another covered area that is open to the outside air. Limit dry cleaning to only what absolutely has to be dry cleaned. Use only dry cleaners that have stopped using either trichloroethylene or perchloroethylene (PERC). These chemicals have been linked to kidney and nervous system damage as well as cancer (in the person wearing the clothes, as well as the person cleaning them).

Dr. Roizen and Dr. Oz present a lot of other such information in their book . . . it is one that you'll probably want to add to your permanent collection so you can read and reread several times.

D. Heard the taped version of Dr. Norman Vincent Peale's YOU CAN IF YOU THINK YOU CAN, which is his guide to living a better life.

Dr. Peale, the author of THE POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING (perhaps the classic book on that topic), has another winner here . . . it is full of useful tidbits and stories that I found applicable to my life, and I'm sure you also be able to relate to them.

One, in particular, had me chuckling:

* I know a place where there are 100,000 people with no problems. It is the cemetery.

Yet what really impressed me most was the fact that Dr. Peale was talking about the now-famous law of attraction long before it became the craze that it now is . . . as he notes:

* What we think and visualize is, to a large extent, what we are about to become.

And this observation that had me nodding in agreement:

* When fate throws a dagger at you, there are ways to catch it. If you catch it by the blade, you can harm yourself. But if you catch it by the handle, you can use it to help you fight through the obstacles ahead.

Dr. Peale also served as the narrator for much of this program. . . though he was 90 at the time (he lived to be 95), his enthusiasm made it more enjoyable than had I just read the book.

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5. TV alert

A. Imagine being a 120-pound rider on top of a 1,2000-pound horse . . . you can find out more by watching *JOCKEYS*, a docuseries that debuts on *ANIMAL PLANET* on Friday at 9 p.m.

B. *GIFTED HANDS: THE BEN CARSON STORY* stars Cuba Gooding Jr. in a biopic about the pediatric neuro-surgeon who made history in 1987 when he successfully conjoined twins connected at the head . . . Saturday at 8 p.m. on TNT.

C. Keke Palmer now has her own tween-com, *TRUE JACKSON, VP* . . it's about a teen fashion executive . . . watch it with your children and grandchildren to catch Palmer, who was so fine in 2006's *AKEELAAH AND THE BEE* (a must-see rental) . . . Saturdays at 8:30 p.m. on *NICKELODEON*.

D. Catherine Bell returns as free-spirited (yet misunderstood) Cassandra Nightingale in *THE GOOD WITCHE'S GARDEN* on Saturday at 9 p.m. on *HALLMARK* . . . the original last year, *THE GOOD WITCH*, was the cable channel's second-highest original film ever.

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6. Mirror, mirror on the wall

A woman is standing nude, looking in the bedroom mirror. She is not happy with what she sees and says to her husband, "I feel horrible; I look old, fat and ugly. I really need you to pay me a compliment."

Her husband replies, "Your eyesight's darn near perfect."

And then the fight started.

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7. Websites

A. To see how unique you are, please click:

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

Doing so will enable you to find out if there are others "out there" with your name . . . when I checked on Blaine Greenfield, I found out that I was the only one in the country with my name . . . I also found out that there are 22,931 people in the U.S. with the first name Blaine; statistically, that's the 1,219th most popular first name; and that more than 99.9 percent of people with the first name Blaine are male.

With respect to Greenfield, there are 13,269 people in the U.S. with that last name; statistically, that's the 2,859th most popular last name; and that Luke Greenfield (an American film director) is a famous person with the same last name.

B. Missed any of the Super Bowl commercials? You can still see them by clicking:

<http://www.usatoday.com/money/advertising/admeter/2009admeter.htm>

The most popular and best reviewed one--a spot for Durritos--was developed by two unemployed brothers from Batesville, IN . . . it won them \$1 million as a result of an online ad contest for amateurs.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

If you'd like to see reviews of books that I've tended to enjoy, go to "Blaine's Best" on the left, then the second paragraph of letter "O" . . . skim around; all totaled, you'll see some 780 titles.

Currently, in large part to your efforts, I'm ranked 351 in amazon.com's list of Top Reviewers . . . if you'd like to help me move up, click:

<http://www.amazon.com>

Find any recent review by using the search engine at the top; e.g., THE HOW OF HAPPINESS . . . then look for the customer reviews on the left (I'm probably at the top or close to it) . . . click on my review . . . after reading it, if you've found it helpful, indicate that by also clicking that option . . . thanks, in advance!

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8. Computer tip

If you go to a website frequently, drag it with your mouse to your toolbar . . . this makes easily available via just one click.

So when I'm using Internet Explorer, I can just look at the top and access Amazon, Facebook, etc. . . . this can also be done if you use Firefox as your browser.

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9. Dog property rules

1. If I like it, it's mine.
2. If its in my mouth, it's mine.
3. If I can take it from you, it's mine.
4. If I had it a little while ago, it's mine.
5. If I'm chewing something up, all the pieces are mine.
6. If its mine, it must never appear to be yours anyway.
7. If it just looks like mine, it's mine.
8. If I saw it first, it's mine.
9. If you are playing with something and you put it down, it automatically

becomes mine.

10. If its broken, it's yours.

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10. A quote I like

We want them [our children] to continually understand that our legacy is not going to be how big our house is or what kind of car we drive. Our legacy is going to be the way we impact other people.--Kurt Warner, the quarterback of the Arizona Cardinals in last week's Super Bowl

IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT YOU MISSED IT:

For a great Warner story, see [BLAINESWORLD #643](#), Section 11 . . . even if you haven't been a fan of his, you'll change your mind after reading this piece.

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11. Thought for the day

What are you looking forward to?
by Jim Donovan*

Several years ago my wife, Georgia, and I began the practice of making a "looking forward to" list at the start of the new year. This is different from my list of goals in that it typically has all kinds of things on it. Obviously, we list the big things like any vacations we're planning but we also list things we might enjoy doing on a weekend or for an evening out.

For example, in addition to a vacation this year to Alaska, someplace I've always wanted to see, we'll list "everyday" activities like seeing specific movies, visiting a museum or going to particular restaurants.

One of the things we've noticed since adopting the practice of making a looking forward to list is that we do more. We went from hardly ever going to the movies, for no particular reason, to attending 12 or 15 movies a year. And we've enjoyed more variety in the restaurants we've visited. Typically people frequent the same four or five restaurants even though, in any given area, there are probably a hundred within a reasonable driving distance.

Having our list eliminates the dialog many couples have of asking, "What do you want to do dear?" and hearing, "I don't know, what do you want to do?" It always reminds me of the movie "Marty" where the characters go through this routine throughout the movie.

When faced with trying to decide what we want to do on a given day off we can always pick something from our list. Another version of this is to make a list of everything you want to do before you leave the planet, however, for obvious reasons, I'm not as fond of that idea: -)
I recently met a woman who said she had almost finished her "bucket" list, from the movie of the same name. "What will you do then?" I asked her. "I guess I'll just die," was her response. Personally, I'd rather just keep a list of what I'm looking forward to.

Something else you may enjoy is an activity I learned at a live seminar given by my friend, Terri Levine. Terri suggested we look back to our youth and think about some of the things we used to enjoy doing but, for whatever reason, are no longer engaged in. For example, when was the last time you went ice skating? For me it's been years even though, as a teenager, I thoroughly enjoyed it.

What are some of the things you used to enjoy that you may like doing again?

What's stopping you?

Caution: If you're older, remember to start slowly and, in some cases, get a physical checkup before starting any strenuous activity.

Even though lacrosse is usually associated with youth, my friend, Ski, plays with a group of older guys appropriately named the "Old Dogs." Yes you can still play but you're gonna feel the pain: Remember, it's never too late to have a happy childhood.

Is your age stopping you from the success you desire?

If you need some inspiration, regardless of your age, take a look at this list of the top 100 youngest bloggers, provided by my friend, Kid Blogger Carl Ocab who, at 15 years of age has achieved top Google ranking for one of the most searched for phrases online.

Here's the list:

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

Carl has been earning a full-time and sizable income online while still attending high school. It's a new and exciting world we're living in. So, what's stopping you?

* Reprinted with permission from my friend Jim Donovan, author and motivational speaker, whose website can be reached by clicking:

<http://www.JimDonovan.com>

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12. Advance planning department

A. ORSON'S SHADOW runs on weekends through Feb. 8 at Actors' Net in Morrisville, PA . . . the play by Austin Pendleton is a penetrating backstage look at actors and their egos . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.actorsnetbucks.org/>

B. The February meeting for Lower Bucks Coalition for Peace Action will not be this Sunday, February 1. It will be held on Sunday, February 8, 2009 at our new meeting location, United Christian Church, 8525 New Falls Road in Levittown. The potluck supper begins at 6:00 with the meeting following a 6:30 p.m.

C. If you or someone you know owns or manages a children's school or day care center and could use some mentoring or expert opinions on how to enhance existing operations and/or get guidance on how to get your school to the next level, sign up today for your one-to-one sessions starting February 10 with successful multi-school owner/founder Al Spiewak. Sponsored by our SBDC and the County of Mercer Office of Economic Opportunity, there is no charge for his counsel. Call Kathy Anderson at 609.771.2947 to schedule your appointment today.

D. ADVANCE PLANNING DEPARTMENT:

Are you looking to quit smoking? Or do you have a friend, relative or colleague who wants to quit?

If so, stay tuned for details of various FREE smoking cessation programs that I'll be running . . . they will start sometime in late March.

Should you not be able to wait for this information, drop me an email and include your name, email address, snail mail address, home number and cell number . . . put SMOKING CESSATION PROGRAMS in the subject line.

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and that peace resumes in Israel . . . also, make it a great week!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#643

1.26.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I were glad to be reunited after an 11-day absence when I was in Pennsylvania for some work-related stuff . . . we quickly resumed our exploration of the area, seeing a dance program at the beautiful Diana Wortham Theatre in downtown Asheville . . . it featured a group called Galumph, which to quote from the program, combines "stunning acrobatics, striking visual effects, physical comedy and inventive choreography" to present a "sensory feast of images ranging from the ridiculous to the sublime" . . . what we saw was certainly different, though I'm not sure either of us was crazy about this particular evening's entertainment . . . it was a little too much of the same thing, after we saw the first few numbers, and the modernistic music was not quite to our liking.

The next night we went to a book talk at the clubhouse of the association where we live . . . LAST CHILD IN THE WOODS by Richard Louv was being discussed, and we found it interesting to learn how children are being negatively impacted by the absence of nature in their lives.

We also had an excellent dinner at Stone Ridge Tavern . . . my herb-crusted tilapia was excellent, and Cynthia said the same thing about her ribeye steak . . . I also enjoyed the salad, particularly because of the tasty raspberry vinaigrette dressing that accompanied it . . . we had a fine server, Nicholas, too . . . for more information, please click:

<http://thestoneridgetavern.com/>

B. When not at Bucks County Community College, I'm hard at work on my next career . . . since I may not see you for a bit, please see below for my business card in case you want to contact me for more information about exactly what I'll be doing:

BLAINE GREENFIELD

Rewirement Expert-in-Training

19 N. Kaufmann Stone Way
Biltmore Lake, NC 28715

Email: bginbc@aol.com
Website: www.blainesworld.net
Fax: 828.633.1327

Telephone: (see over)

Important Telephone Numbers

Barack Obama.....202.456.1414
Pope Benedict XVI.....(011)39.6/6982
Elizabeth II.....(011)44.1/9304632

Blaine Greenfield (Home).....828.633.1049

Angela Merkel.....(011)49.226/561
Dimitri Medvedev.....(011)95.2959051
Nicolas Sarkozy.....(011)33.1.4/2615100

Blaine Greenfield (Cell).....215.208.0646

As for the "Important Telephone Numbers," yes they are real . . . yet don't just believe me . . . call them yourself, on your dime, and if there are any mistakes, please do let me know.

AN ASIDE:

If you have a business card (something I believe all folks should have), do what I do; i.e., use both sides . . . otherwise, you're wasting valuable space that could provide additional information about you and/or what you do.

I was fortunate to find a good local printer for my cards: Kwik Kopy Printing in Asheville; 828.274.5945 . . . prices were reasonable, and there was a quick turnaround time.

C. Personally, I received some good news on the health scene . . . as you may recall, the last time I had blood work done, my cholesterol had gone way high . . . before recommending any medication, my doctor had me see a nutritionist.

As a result, I made several changes in my diet . . . some six months later, I've lost 15 pounds, an inch from my waist and one jacket size . . . as for my cholesterol readings, they were as follows:

Total: 253 (down from 271)
Triglycerides: 65 (down from 92)
LDL: 163 (down from 191)
HDL, the good stuff: 77 (up from 62)

Those results are still not quite what I want them to be, but I'm making progress . . . and will continue to do so, especially given the fact that I'm no longer on a diet per se . . . rather, I'm eating healthier as a way of life.

D. Andy Wargo, my longtime friend, has had some medical setbacks . . . but he is now doing better and has been moved to the following short-time assisted living facility:

Springfield Residence
551 East Evergreen Avenue (intersection of Evergreen & Stenton)
Wyndmoor, PA 19038

Room B-214

Please feel free to send him a card or even better, visit him . . . the best way to contact him is by cellphone at 215.498.7394.

I was fortunate to be able to see Andy during my most recent visit "up North" . . . his attitude, as always, was great . . .and almost like old times, we went out for a bite to eat at a fun place called the Trolley Car Diner on Germantown Ave. in Philadelphia . . . going there is almost like returning to the 50s . . . our sandwiches were OK, but next time we'll order their famous burgers and delicious milkshakes . . . for more information, please click:

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

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

This week, it goes to Josh Rubinsky--the attorney for our teacher's union at Bucks County Community College.

I, along with my other officers, have spent quite a bit of time lately with Josh as we prepare for two upcoming arbitration cases . . . one involves the fact that the College is nowhere close to the 60/40 ratio (full-timers to part-timers) that is required by our contract . . . the other is concerned with the issue of salary inequities . . . we contend there are some that need to be addressed; the College doesn't believe this to be the case.

Josh has helped us win many "battles" in the past with the administration . . . he is always well-prepared, and he has the useful ability of being able to see all sides of most any issue.

In 1997, he helped employees at Total Health Home Care Corp. win a \$2.2 million settlement . . . though we're not shooting for quite that much money, we're hopeful he can continue with his magic in the aforementioned grievances . . . the result would mean life at the College would be a lot better for folks who will be there long past the time I'm gone.

Josh's office is on Broad Street in Philadelphia; his number is 215.925.1470.

2. FYI

There's still time for you to enter the contest for the world's best job!

Hundreds of people have already applied from across the globe for the chance to be paid \$150,000 to blog about the virtues of a tropical island.

The job is expected to attract thousands of applications.

Tourism Queensland has put out a worldwide call for the dream job that will see the successful applicant live on the Great Barrier Reef's Hamilton Island for six months.

"The global response in the first 24 hours has outstripped even our expectations," Australia's Tourism Minister Desley Boyle said.

Boyle said the campaign had already reached some 29 million people through television and print media coverage--the equivalent of nearly \$10 million in publicity.

The winner will be required to explore the reef's islands, swim, snorkel, make friends with the locals and enjoy Queensland's climate and lifestyle.

The winner must also post the experiences, photos and video diaries on a weekly blog.

It is hoped the unique job will draw more thrillseekers to the Sunshine State.

Applications are open until February 22 and 11 short-listed candidates will be flown to Hamilton Island in early May for the final selection process.

For more information and an application, please click:

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

FYI, part 2

* Marianne in Pennsylvania:

Many of us experience high stress levels in our daily lives, and with the current economic situation, our stress levels have only intensified. Marianne Kepler, a full-time faculty member of Bucks County Community College who teaches stress management, has her own private practice where she helps people deal with the stress in their lives. If you would like to rejuvenate your life, please contact Marianne. Marianne's office is located in Buckingham Green on Route 263, and she can be reached at 267.218.6207 for an appointment.

MY TWO CENTS:

You won't go wrong by working with Marianne . . . she really knows her stuff!

* Dotty in New Jersey (with a great idea for Valentine's Day):

Less than THREE WEEKS until Valentine's Day!! Do you need ideas to make the day special for someone?

Here's a suggestion for a wonderfully unique and memorable Valentine's gift: a SINGING TELEGRAM by The Tritones!

By telephone (for loved ones at a distance: \$15) or in person (Princeton/Montgomery/Hopewell NJ area: \$50).

For details, contact me directly at 609.683.0563 or SingingTelegrams4u@yahoo.com.

HERE'S ANOTHER PLACE YOU WON'T GO WRONG:

I've personally used Dotty's services in the past . . . the result was fantastic--or at least according to Cynthia.

* Frank in New Jersey [commenting on the Lee Iacocca piece in the last two issue]:

Politics is an interesting topic and all views are certainly worth discussing.

Character assassination and name calling on the other hand is not. Surely there were parts of the book that described the flaws of other leaders, (Carter, Bill, Hillary, Obama or any Democrat for that matter) or better yet, discussed the traits of good leaders.

While you have in the past printed other less than favorable opinions about President Bush, what struck me this time was that you seemed to jump on the "Bash Bush Bandwagon" in hopes of getting in a final parting shot. Not everyone thinks that President Bush was the incompetent boob that Lee Iacocca is trying to make him out to be. I'm certain that you have other readers who were also offended by these excerpts.

PS. In spite of our differences of opinion, I still enjoy the newsletter (and obviously I read the whole thing).

IN RESPONSE:

The comments Frank was upset about were not mine, but rather from a book by Lee Iacocca . . . it should be noted that Iacocca has supported both Democrats and Republicans in the past, and I'm sure he will be critical of Obama if and when he feels the need . . . I also made every attempt to not take shots at Bush on his way out; in fact, if anything, I think I ran more negative things about the Democrats than the Republicans.

* Pat in Pennsylvania:

Nice but not sure I will EVER need any of the vendors, stores etc you mention in detail in Asheville. And I suspect few of your readers are from Asheville that could benefit. Granted, I couldn't use many if any of the vendors in New Jersey you've mentioned, but I suspect lots of your New Jersey friends could? Same for Bucks/Philly people. So not sure of the benefit to us Yankees about Asheville vendors?

POINT WELL TAKEN:

That's why, in general, I'm trying to run less information about every single Asheville visit . . . however, it is my hope that my reports may

encourage at least some readers to give Asheville a look . . . based on my early experiences here, I do believe that you won't be disappointed.

* Carole in New Jersey:

My husband's "card" isn't quite so classy [as yours]. His just reads, "I'm retired. Don't call me. I'll call you."

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3. Update

Last year I entered the New York City Marathon. The race started and immediately I was the last of the runners. It was embarrassing.

The guy who was in front of me, second to last, was making fun of me. He said, "Hey buddy, how does it feel to be last?"

I replied: "You really want to know?" Then I dropped out of the race.

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4. Reviews

A. LAST CHANCE HARVEY is a rare romantic comedy that features stars who are not teenagers . . . so that alone made me appreciate the unlikely coupling of Dustin Hoffman with Emma Thompson as two lonely singles who spend most of the film adrift in London . . . the scenery is beautiful, and so is the cinematography . . . I also liked the story, and though you had a pretty good idea about how it would end, it still kept me interested until the very last scene . . . rated PG-13.

B. Now out on DVD is LAKEVIEW TERRACE, a thriller a menacing cop who threatens the new couple in the neighborhood . . . the first half of the film was suspenseful; unfortunately, it tailed off to a rather predictable finish . . . Samuel L. Jackson certainly gets me vote as the "neighbor from hell," the guy you most certainly wouldn't want to have live next to you . . . he's excellent . . . rated PG-13, though this is one case where I think that young teenagers should not watch.

Methinks you'd do much better renting HEAVEN CAN WAIT, the 1978 remake of 1941's HERE COMES MR. JORDAN . . . I liked the original; that said, this is one instance where the remake was even better . . . it is the story about a football player who is taken too early from the Earth by an overzealous angel . . . Warren Beatty, the actor-director-star, does a terrific job in all three roles . . . Julie Christie also shines, as does Jack Warden (who I think should have won an Oscar for his work here) . . . rated PG, though probably of not much interest to younger children.

C. I consider myself a happy guy . . . this belief was confirmed when I read THE HOW OF HAPPINESS (see also Section 10) by Sonja Lyubomirsky.

The author, a professor of psychology, began her book with a short diagnostic quiz that helped me to first quantify and then understand my "happiness set point" . . . she then explains that just 50 percent of happiness can be explained by this set point, while a mere 10 percent can be attributed to differences in life circumstances or situations.

This leaves the remaining 40 percent of our capacity for happiness within our power to change . . . though I never had that exact number in mind, I always have believed this to be true.

Lyubomirsky then presents a series of happiness strategies designed to help you achieve a happier life. . . . while I've done (or at least thought about) a bunch of these, I realize that I could still do a better job in this area.

Furthermore, what made THE HOW OF HAPPINESS such an interesting book for me was the fact that the author backs up her suggestions with actual research . . . for example:

* Since then my students and I have conducted many more studies showing essentially the same result: that the happier the person, the less attention she pays to how others around her are doing. Once again the research tunders an example of what we can learn from the habits of a happy person. Indeed, the practice of incessantly comparing ourselves with others is part of the wider-ranging habit of overthinking.

Then there was this finding:

* In a recent study, my graduate students and I showed that the practice of repetitively replaying your happiest life events serves to prolong and reinforce positive emotions and make you happier. So think about one of your happiest days--commencement day (yours or your child's), the first time you heard, "I love you," the first day of your European vacation, the day you brought home a puppy--and replay it in your mind as though you were rewinding a videotape and playing it back. Think about the events of the day, and remember what happened in as much detail as you can. What exactly did you (or other people involved) say or do? What were the thoughts and emotions running through your head at the time? Don't analyze this day; just replay and revel in it. We found that people who performed this exercise right for eight minutes per day on three consecutive days felt more intense positive emotions four weeks later

And perhaps my favorite, which I had never realized before:

* A University of Scranton study found that people who made public New Year's resolutions were a remarkable ten times more likely to succeed at their goal (e.g., quitting smoking, improving their relationships, becoming a vegetarian, etc.) than those who had not. Making public our commitment to a particular goal raises the likelihood that we will carry through that goal, in part because we want to appear consistent to ourselves and others (e.g., "I claimed I'd apply for the managerial position, and so I did") and avoid embarrassment or awkwardness.

So with that in mind, I'll end this review now so that I can continue my plan to read or listen to two books per week.

D. Enjoyed the CD version of LOSING JULIA, a debut novel by Jonathan Hull.

It is the story of a 19-year old soldier from New Jersey off to fight the Great War, told in the form of a diary that looks back at the defining periods of his life . . . there's skipping back and forth between his various ages (up through his time in a nursing home) that's confusing at first . . . but once you get into the head of Patrick Delaney, the main character, you'll never want the story to end.

You'll be moved by the love story that he tells, as well as his graphic accounts of what it's like to fight in war.

The ending left me wanting to read the author's next book, a 1994 novel entitled THE DISTANCE FROM NORMANDY . . . I'm frankly surprised that he does not seem to have written anything since, nor that LOSING JULIA wasn't ever made into a movie.

Ralph Waite's narration added to my enjoyment of the book.

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5. TV alert

A. THE TRIALS OF TED HAGGARD has the antigay evangelist talking about his sexual immorality and battle to stay straight . . . Thursday at 8:15 p.m. on HBO.

B. B.B. King performs on SOUNDSTAGE on Thursday at 10 p.m. on PBS . . . because PBS times and dates often vary, check local listings.

C. SUPER BOWL'S GREATEST COMMERCIALS features some of viewers' all-time favorites . . . Jim Nantz and Daisy Fuentes host . . . Saturday at 8 p.m. on CBS.

D. SUPER BOWL XLIII airs on Sunday at 6 p.m. on NBC . . . since I'm not a big fan of either team, I'll probably watch for the halftime featuring Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band.

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6. New evidence

Lawyer: "Judge, I wish to appeal my client's case on the basis of newly discovered evidence."

Judge: "And what is the nature of the new evidence?"

Lawyer: "Judge, I discovered that my client still has \$500 left."

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7. Websites

A. Just start typing and you can get an almost instantaneous translation into 34 different languages:

<http://www.nicetranslator.com/lowres.php>

So to check it out, I typed "Thanks for reading BLAINESWORLD, my online newsletter" . . . here's what I got in:

French: Merci de lire BLAINESWORLD, mon bulletin d'information en ligne.

Spanish: Gracias por leer BLAINESWORLD, mi boletín en línea.

And in Italian:

Grazie per la lettura BLAINESWORLD, la mia newsletter online.

B. If you're in the mood for a laugh, please click:

<http://able2laff.com/>

This is a website run by Papa Thon, an online California friend . . . you'll find jokes galore and can even sign-up to get them emailed to you FREE . . . for example, here's a recent one:

Last day

A man sat at a bar, drinking slowly. On his face was the saddest hangdog expression.

The bartender asked, "What's the matter? Are you having troubles with your wife?"

The man said, "We had a fight and she told me that she wasn't going to speak to me for a month."

The bartender said, "That should make you happy."

The man sadly shook his head, "Not when the month is up today!"

BONUS WEBSITE offered by Papa Thorn:

If you're a listmaster, please click:

<http://able2laff.com/EZ/rules.html>

You'll find an array of good stuff that will be of interest to your readers, plus there's a great way to advertise your own list without a lot of the hassle.

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

I do appreciate the fact that there are now over 900 subscribers to this missive--and the number is growing . . . this has happened, thanks in large part, to your efforts in inviting others to come on board . . . it's also easy to have your friends, colleagues and relatives sign up . . . all you need to do is go the left of the homepage, then "Newsletter" and then "Subscribe."

Another option that works even better is to forward this issue to anybody

you think would like to receive it . . .the more the merrier . . . if the recipient likes the forwarded email, encourage him or her to send an email to: bginbc@aol.com and to subscribe, just put the these words in the subject line: FREE SUBSCRIPTION.

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8. Computer tip

If you choose to download a pirated version of any software, beware that it could come with a virus . . . that's what recently happened to some 20,000 folks who thought they'd get a copy of iWork '09 without paying for it . . . they also got a Trojan Horse called OSX.Trojan.iServices.A, which allows malicious users to take charge of their computers remotely . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.switched.com/2009/01/23/iwork-09-trojan-virus-infects-at-least-20-000-machines/?icid=200100397x1216761477x1201100825>

At the bottom of the report, you'll also find a link to an interesting report on other Internet threats.

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9. Innovative supermarket marketing

Many supermarkets have an automatic water mister that keeps the produce fresh. Just before it turns on, you hear the sound of distant thunder, and the misters produce the smell of fresh rain.

Unfortunately, a new store near my house has taken the concept too far.

At this new place, when you pass the milk cases you hear cows mooing and you experience the scent of fresh hay.

In the meat department, there's a sizzling sound, and the aroma of charcoal grilled steaks with onions.

When you approach the egg case, you hear hens cluck and cackle, and the air is filled with the pleasing aroma of bacon and eggs frying.

The bread department features the tantalizing smell of fresh baked bread and cookies.

Sounds great, right? But they've gone too far.

Let's just say I don't go down the toilet paper aisle anymore.

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10. A quote I like

Express admiration, appreciation and affection. One of the key conclusions of two decades of research on marriages is that happy relationships are characterized by a ration of positive to negative affect of five to one. This means that for every negative statement or behavior-criticizing, nagging, lecturing- -there are five positive ones. Make your weekly goal to raise

your positive affect ratio. You can do this, first, by increasing the number of times you show affection to your partner-- verbally (e.g., saying or e-mailing, "I love you," more often), physically (no need to explain this) or through other behaviors (like kindness). I once heard a family expert say, "A spontaneous kiss while doing house-hold chores can do wonders."--Sonja Clubroom, author of THE HOW OF HAPPINESS (see also Section 4C)

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11. Thought for the day

Kurtis, the stock boy, and Brenda, the checkout girl

In a supermarket, Kurtis the stock boy was busily working when a new voice came over the loud speaker asking for carry out help at the register. Kurtis was almost finished and wanted to get some fresh air, but decided to answer the call.

As he approached the check-out stand, a distant smile caught his eye; the new check-out girl was beautiful. She was an older woman (maybe 26 and he was only 22). It was love for him at first sight.

Later that day, after his shift was over, he waited by the punch clock to find out her name. She came into the break room, smiled softly at him, took her card and punched out, then left. He looked at her card: Brenda. He walked out, only to see her start walking up the road.

Next day, he waited outside as she left the supermarket and offered her a ride home. He looked harmless enough, and she accepted. When he dropped her off, he asked if maybe he could see her again, outside of work. She simply said it wasn't possible.

He pressed, and she explained she had two children and she couldn't afford a baby-sitter, so he offered to pay for the baby-sitter. Reluctantly she accepted his offer for a date for the following Saturday.

That Saturday night, he arrived at her door only to have her tell him that she was unable to go with him. The baby-sitter had called and canceled. To which Kurtis simply said, "Well, let's take the kids with us."

She tried to explain that taking the children was not an option, but again not taking no for an answer, he pressed. Finally, Brenda brought him inside to meet her children. She had an older daughter who was just as cute as a bug, Kurtis thought, then Brenda brought out her son who was in a wheelchair. He was born a paraplegic with Down's Syndrome.

Kurtis asked Brenda, "I still don't understand why the kids can't come with us?"

Brenda was amazed. Most men would run away from a woman with two kids, especially if one had disabilities--just like her first husband and father of her children had done. Kurtis was not ordinary; he had a different mindset.

That evening, Kurtis and Brenda loaded up the kids, went to dinner and the movies. When her son needed anything, Kurtis took care of him. When he needed to use the restroom, he picked him up out of his

wheelchair, took him and brought him back. The kids loved Kurtis. At the end of the evening, Brenda knew this was the man she was going to marry and spend the rest of her life with.

A year later, they were married and Kurtis adopted both of her children. Since then they have added two more kids. So what happened to Kurtis the stock boy and Brenda the check-out girl?

Well, Mr. & Mrs. Kurt Warner now live in Arizona , where he is currently employed as the quarterback of the National Football League Arizona Cardinals and has his Cardinals in the upcoming Super Bowl. It should be noted that he also quarterbacked the Rams in Super Bowl XXXVI. He has also been the NFL's Most Valuable Player twice and the Super Bowl's Most Valuable Player.

What this story doesn't tell you is that Kurt was working in the grocery store (11 years ago) to help support his Mom.

Last year as well as this past Christmas, Kurt and Brenda totally renovated a home and completely furnished it for a needy family or a single Mom .

He is humble and never seeks the spotlight.

Even if you don't like football, you gotta pull for those Cards on Super Bowl Sunday. No one gave them a chance. The only reason Kurt was/is playing is because Matt Lienert got injured. Kurt was the backup quarterback.

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

THE REST OF THE STORY:

The above story has a basis in truth, despite the fact that there are many inaccuracies. If you can believe it, the actual story is even more inspiring . . . to read it for yourself, please click:

<http://www.snopes.com/glurge/warner.asp>

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12. Advance planning department

A. Cathy in Pennsylvania:

I just wanted to send out a reminder for the Healthcare Town Hall that is happening this Thursday. Please pass this on to your email lists and tell all your friends.

Topic:

The Health Care Crisis in Bucks County and the Way Forward

Thursday, January 29 - 7:00 p.m.
United Christian Church
8525 New Falls Rd., Levittown

Come share your thoughts in a public discussion about what's needed

to reform America's and Pennsylvania's broken health care systems. Hear from health care experts and find out how to take action to make sure that 2009 is the year that reform happens on the statewide and national levels.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for coffee and networking.
Program starts promptly at 7:00 p.m.

Featured Speakers: Chuck Pennacchio of Health Care for All PA and Dr. Henry D'Silva, Advocate for National Health Care Reform.

Please bring a non-perishable food item to help the Emergency Relief Association Food Pantry, which assists families who are struggling during this difficult time.

Brought to you by BuxMont Coalition for Peace Action, OpEdNews.com, United Christian Church and Penn Action

For more information, call Robin Stelly at 267.240.9819.

B. Janet in New York:

The Women's Heart Foundation invites one and all to a gala luncheon and celebration WEAR RED FOR WOMEN to kick off Women's Heart Week. Marriott Lafayette Yard Hotel, Trenton, Sunday February 1st, 12 Noon-3 p.m. Luncheon, Health Screenings, well-stocked guests' gift bags, raffles, camaraderie, entertainment and more! \$25.00. For more information, call 609.771.9600.

C. Rick in Pennsylvania:

Our Next TV TAPING FOR THE COMEDY CABARET will be Friday, Feb. 20th in Bucks County. (We are working on an April TV taping for South Jersey or DE and we will let you know in a few weeks.)

For more information, please click:

<http://www.comedycabaret.com/doylestown.html>

Also, we're running a NEW COMEDY CLASS:

<http://www.comedycabaret.com/classes.html>

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and that peace resumes in Israel . . . also, make it a great week!

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Biltmore Lake, NC 28715
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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#642

1.19.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I spent a rare week apart . . . she stayed in North Carolina, while I returned to Pennsylvania for a bunch of meetings involving the teacher's union at Bucks County Community College . . . the good news is that we had some good news with respect to two grievance hearings . . . we heard that the administration has seen our way on these, which means we won't have to go to the added expense or time of filing for arbitration.

B. I can say unequivocally:

* That I did not enjoy the cold weather that hit me just as soon as I got off the plane . . . and that's stayed with me ever since.

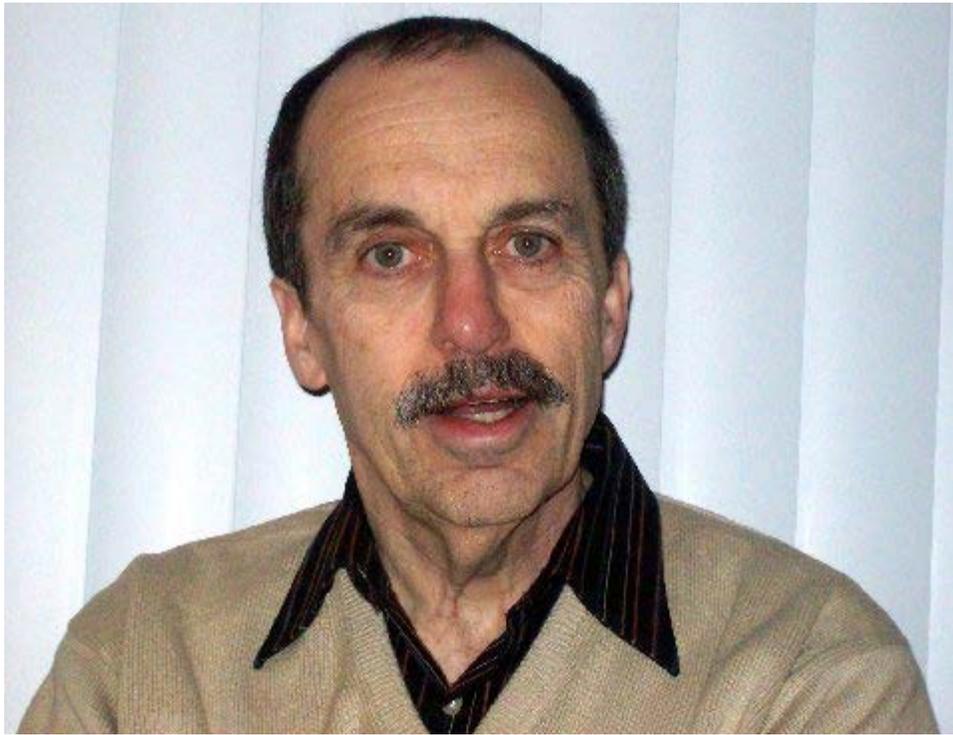
* That I'm grateful for the friendship of Michael Ursino, a former student, who has allowed me to stay in his place in Wrightstown . . . he and his wife Carol have a beautiful place, and my accommodations couldn't be better.

* That I miss the mountains that surround our home in Asheville and more importantly, I miss Cynthia!

C. I finally took the plunge and am now a member of the Facebook community.

People have been encouraging me to do this for years, but for some reason, I resisted . . . that's no longer the case.

Now, I'll be curious as to see how this plays out . . . in the meantime, see below for my initial Facebook picture:



I'm in the process of putting up some other ones . . . , also, I haven't yet figured out a way to invite ALL readers of this missive to become my official "friends" . . . so until I do, please feel free to invite me to become your friend if you'd want that.

And to check out my Facebook profile, please click:

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=519364756&ref=profile>

D. CONDOLENCES to Harry Paul, my friend and BLAINESWORLD reader, on the death of his father Jack . . . I had the pleasure of meeting Jack on two separate occasions and can say that he was quite a guy.

You can see for yourself by reading part of the following piece that Harry wrote for BLAINESWORLD #525:

Recently Jack was in a local delicatessen in Philadelphia enjoying brunch with his wife. A man recognizes him from the WAWA convenience store where Jack works and stopped by to say hello. The man says that he had had a cup of coffee at the WAWA that morning, but it didn't taste as good as when Jack makes it. Jack thanks the man for being a regular WAWA customer and for stopping by their table to share. He then turns to his wife and says with a laugh, "The coffee is pre-measured, and the water comes out of a filtered tap. How could it taste better when I make it? Maybe it's because I wash the coffee pots better--that's it, I wash the pots better." . . .

As my friend Jack Mitchell, author of HUG YOUR CUSTOMERS says, "Grab them with warmth."

That's exactly what Jack does. But who's Jack? Actually, Jack is my father. He lives in Philadelphia, is 85 years young and still works part time. He is the oldest employee for WaWa and works the coffee counter at the store near his home three mornings a week. My dad loves people--he loves talking to them, sharing stories and getting to know them. He is the Mayor of WaWa.

When telling me the story about the man at the delicatessen saying how the coffee tastes better when he makes it, I started to laugh. I told him it wasn't that the pots were cleaner. I said, "Dad, you make the coffee taste better." He said questionably, "I do?" I said, "Sure, you do. It's because you are nice to people and you're interested in them. You share yourself with them, make them laugh and create a positive experience for them which, in turn, makes the coffee taste better. You do naturally what helps an organization attain and maintain success. You make a big-time difference."

Jack's behavior did not go unnoticed. Not long ago, WAWA awarded him with a medal for outstanding customer service. After receiving the medal, he said to me. "I still think it's that the pots are cleaner." I respond, "They may be cleaner, but remember, you make the coffee taste better."

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

This week, it goes to Risa Reavely--my lovely daughter. That's her below:



Risa--in case you are new to this newsletter--was married in October; hence, the new last name. . . she and her husband JP are both doing well in their new apartment in East Windsor, NJ.

Yet I'm recognizing her for another reason; i.e., because she got me up and running on Facebook (see also Section 1C) . . . I was impressed with how quickly she moved me through the process, getting me up and running within minutes . . . she then patiently taught me what else I needed to know, patiently answering all my many questions . . . she even took and posted the picture for my profile.

In addition, Risa--aided by JP--did an excellent job in helping to set me up in my temporary Wrightstown digs.

Lastly, I was impressed by the fact that Risa found a new job on her own--a difficult task given the present economy . . . she had worked in retail ever since high school . . . she put up with the long hours, work on nights and weekends, and a long commute.

That will now be in her past, however . . . she starts with Sovereign Bank on Monday . . . methinks the banking profession will never be the same; look out world!

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2. FYI

I'm a big fan of peanut butter . . . however, that said, I'm not consuming any (or products that contain peanut butter paste, such as ice cream, crackers, pretzels, etc.) until more information is known about the latest health scare . . . this is NO JOKE; see for yourself:

Update on FDA's investigation

January 17, 2009: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is conducting a very active and dynamic investigation into the source of the Salmonella Typhimurium outbreak. At this time, the FDA has traced one likely source of Salmonella Typhimurium contamination to a plant owned by Peanut Corporation of America (PCA), which manufactures both peanut butter that is institutionally served in such settings as long-term care facilities and cafeterias, and peanut paste—a concentrated product consisting of ground, roasted peanuts—that is distributed to food manufacturers to be used as an ingredient in many products including cakes, cookies, crackers, candies, cereal and ice cream. . . .

Based on this information, and on the current state of the investigation, the FDA recommends that consumers avoid eating products that have been recalled and discard them.

Because identification of products subject to recall is continuing, the FDA urges consumers to postpone eating peanut butter-containing products until further information becomes available about which products may be affected. Efforts to specifically identify those products are ongoing.

SOURCE:

<http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/salmonellatyph.html>

MR. CURIOUS HERE:

I have not seen anything (yet?) about peanuts being tainted . . . for example, I'm a big fan of PayDay Pro--a delicious high protein bar that is a healthy version of the PayDay candy bar . . . I'd like to continue eating this product . . . and some peanuts, too, in a daily mix with some almonds and raisins . . . have you come across anything that says that this might not be a good idea? If so, please let me know.

FYI, part 2

* Pat in Pennsylvania:

Just curious: When you say [referring to Kilwin's Ice Cream in Asheville] "not only is there great ice cream, but the fudge is off the charts, too" . . . I'm wondering if this is something that women taught us to enjoy and appreciate? I mean when I was younger, ice cream was just ice cream. But I must say that my wife made me understand and appreciate little things in life that I think most guys typically don't make a big deal over, especially when men are younger.

Make sense? Like you are making a big deal over fudge now when probably when you were younger you never really thought of it as being a big deal? Thoughts? Make sense?

* Jean in Pennsylvania:

When you type an artist in Pandora, it plays that artist and artists that match the rhythm, beat, and style. If you don't like one of the songs in the rotation, each song has a "thumbs up" or "thumbs down" icon. Just click on "thumbs down" and Pandora will remove that song from the rotation and not play it again. If you like it, click on "thumbs up" and it will play more songs by that artist and more songs like it. It's very smart!

You can also block a song just for a month or a year. I don't think it will play ALL TURTLES (or solo of whatever other artist) for copyright reasons. I created a Beatles station that had Rolling Stones in the rotation. I kept the bluesy-Stones but blocked the screaming-heavy-rock Stones.

* Diane in Pennsylvania:

I was just talking to my sister and unfortunately, she has to get rid of her Golden Lab. Her daughter is going off to college and my sister does not have the time to take care of the dog plus her house is too small for this very big dog who is absolutely adorable.

She asked me if I knew of anyone who would want her, and I told her that I will put an email out there.

It is a pure bred Golden Lab named Summer (female). She is nine months old and is up to date on all shots, plus she is caged trained. She cost \$700 and my sister is asking \$250.00. If anyone is interested please let me know ASAP. My sister will have no choice but to give her to the S.P.C.A.

If you know of anyone with a big house or yard who would be interested, please pass the word on also. She is going to give it until Thursday.

Thank you

Diane
267.574.4003/215.953.5288

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3. Question

Did you hear about the 83-year-old woman who talked herself out of a speeding ticket by telling the young officer that she had to get there before she forgot where she was going?

Makes perfect sense to me!

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4. Reviews

A. Micky Rourke gives an Oscar-winning performance in THE WRESTLER, a moving drama about a has-been whose life is falling apart . . . it is a film that is often violent, but always compelling . . . Marisa Tomei is also excellent as a stripper who is Rourke's only true friend . . . I still have THE WRESTLER in my mind and imagine that it will be there for quite some time . . . even if you're not a wrestling fan, catch it . . . rated R.

B. WANTED is now out on DVD . . . the story about an apathetic nobody's transformation into an enforcer of justice, it starts quickly and will hold your attention until it falls apart a bit toward the end . . . there's lots of action and a good amount of violence, too . . . James McAvoy, rapidly becoming one of my favorite actors, is fine in the leading role . . . and also I liked the work of Angelina Jolie, the woman who recruits him into the Fraternity--a secret society . . . rated R.

IF YOU ALSO LIKE MCAVOY:

Rent one of his earlier films, RORY O'SHEA WAS HERE . . . he's superb as an individual suffering from Duchenne muscular dystrophy, a degenerative muscle-wasting condition, who befriends somebody who has cerebral palsy . . . rather than being depressing, it is life-affirming . . . rated R for language; however, I do believe that it would be appropriate for any mature teenager.

C. Richard Zoglin's COMEDY AT THE EDGE, subtitled HOW STAND-UP IN THE 1970S CHANGED AMERICA, brought back fond memories of an era when comics changed from those my parents enjoyed (Milton Berle, Totie Fields, etc.) to much edgier humor pioneered by Lenny Bruce.

I had not known too much about Bruce, so I found it fascinating to read about how he began to change things in the entertainment world . . . he was then followed by innovative comedians such as George Carlin, Richard Pryor and Robert Klein, and shortly thereafter, Steve Martin, Albert Brooks, Robin Williams and Andy Kaufman.

Many of these guys were my idols at the time; in particular, Brooks had been my favorite . . . it is too bad that his stand-up career didn't last that long (though his movies have since kept him in the limelight).

Even as a kid, he was recognized as being one of the funniest people around . . . in fact, when Johnny Carson asked Carl Reiner to name the funniest people he had ever seen, at the top of his list was his son's sixteen-year-old high school friend, Albert Einstein [later changed to Brooks].

I liked how this book got into the minds of what humor is all about . . . for example, there was this one passage that described how Martin developed his routines:

* And so I came up with a plan, which was to observe myself when I laughed, and figure out what it was that made me laugh, and try to put it into material.

Naturally, COMEDY AT THE EDGE contained its share of jokes; among them:

* If God made the body and the body is dirty, the fault lies with the manufacturer.--Bruce

* He [Carlin] loved dissecting the illogic of language (oxymorons like "military intelligence" and "jumbo shrimp") and the social uses of euphemism ("When did 'toilet paper' become 'bathroom issue'? When did 'house trailers' become 'mobile homes'?")

* One thing I found out. When you're on fire and runnin' down the

street, people get out of your way.--Pryor

Yet I also liked how Zoglin's book addressed more serious issues, too, such as the time when comedians went out on strike to protect the fact that they weren't getting paid to work in comedy clubs . . . the chapter on the scarcity of big-name women comedians was equally interesting.

Even the source notes at the end kept my attention . . . I was particularly impressed by how much research went into the writing of COMEDY AT THE EDGE.

D. Enjoyed Collection 1 of THE TWILIGHT ZONE RADIO DRAMAS, hosted by Stacy Keach . . . it contained four stories that were performed by such actors as Jim Caviezel, Jane Seymour, James Keach, Lou Diamond Phillips and Tim Kazurinsky.

If you were a fan of the TV show, THE TWILIGHT ZONE, you'll want to listen to this program . . . doing so will enable you to step back in time to revisit the chills you experienced when you watched Rod Sterling hosting the original version.

You'll also receive an introduction to what it was like listening to the radio for your entertainment . . . folks actually did that at one time . . . or so I've been told.

Though some of the stories were better than others, none left me disappointed . . . they left me seeking Collection 2 of these dramas.

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5. TV alert

A. LIE TO ME, a drama series inspired by a true story about a deception expert who can read the human face, body and voice to expose the truth in criminal cases and investigations, debuts on Wednesday at 9 p.m. on FOX . . . I'll watch if for no other reason than Tim Roth (so fine in ROB ROY, PULP FICTION, etc.) stars.

B. SPECTACLE: ELVIS COSTELLO WITH . . . combines the best elements of talk and music television and invites viewers to enjoy an intimate conversation between host Costello and his guests, including rare musical performances by Costello, his guests and a wide variety of musicians . . . guests for the 13-part series will include Sir Elton John, Tony Bennett, Lou Reed and President Bill Clinton . . . Wednesdays at 9 p.m. on SUNDANCE.

C. WE ARE ONE: THE OBAMA INAUGURAL CELEBRATION AT THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL, held on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, has a repeat broadcast on Wednesday on 11:30 p.m. on HBO2 . . . Beyonce, Mary J. Blige, Garth Brooks, Josh Groban, Herbie Hancock, John Legend, John Mellencamp, Shakira, Bruce Springsteen, James Taylor and Stevie Wonder are among those slated to perform . . . reading historical passages will be Jamie Foxx, Martin Luther King III, Queen Latifah and Denzel Washington.

D. COME WALK IN MY SHOES features Rep. John Lewis (D-GA), who was a civil-rights leader in the 1960s, leading members of Congress on a tour of important civil-rights sites . . . Thursday at 10 p.m. on

PBS . . . because PBS times and dates often vary, check local listings.

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6. Confusion

A Sunday School teacher of pre-schoolers was concerned that his students might be a little confused about Jesus Christ because of the past Christmas season's emphasis on His birth. She wanted to make sure they understood that the birth of Jesus occurred a long time ago, that He grew up, etc. So she asked her class, "Where is Jesus today?"

Johnny raised his hand and said, "He's in heaven."
Mary was called on and answered, "He's in my heart,"
and Robert, waving his hand furiously, blurted out,
"I know! I know! He's in our bathroom!"

The whole class got very quiet, looked at the teacher, and waited for a response. The teacher was completely at a loss for a few very long seconds. She finally gathered her wits and asked Robert how he knew this.

And Robert said, "Well . . . every morning, my father gets up, bangs on the bathroom door, and yells 'Jesus Christ, are you still in there?' "

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7. Websites

A. I've read about the crash of the US Airways jetliner into the Hudson River, but watching it amazed me even more:

<http://news.aol.com/article/both-engines-missing-from-downed-jet/308358?icid=200100397x1216356071x1201100447>

One thing I do know is that I'll pay more attention to the safety instructions the next time I fly!

B. If you've ever had printer or other computer problems, you can probably relate to the following letter:

Dear Geek Squad,

I recently purchased an HP Printer, and when I am in the room watching it, it works perfectly.

However, nearly every time I leave it unattended, the papers come out wrinkled, sometimes even shredded, with blurred ink.

If I restart the print job and babysit it, there are no problems. You can imagine that this has been very frustrating, and I would appreciate one of your technicians coming out to fix whatever the problem is.

Thank you,
Dave Larson

The response:

Dave,

Thank you for contacting the Geek Squad. As you know, one of our top Technicians was dispatched to investigate your printer problem.

His initial findings mirrored your experience, so he set up a hidden camera to document what was causing the paper disruption.

Please review the attached video, and thanks again for your business. And for the laughs we all had upon discovering the source of your problem.

Sincerely,
Mark Donaldson
Geek Squad

Here's the video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6MXh244-rz0>

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

<http://www.blaineworld.net>

For an easy way to subscribe to BLAINESWORLD, the newsletter, just go to the "Special Offer" at the bottom of the homepage.

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8. Computer tip

I've heard about Skype for a long time, but only recently added it to my computer--and Cynthia's too . . . it enables us to speak AND look at each other; e.g., when I'm in Pennsylvania and she is in North Carolina . . . best of all: there's no cost!

To check this out for yourself, please click:

<http://www.skype.com/allfeatures/videocall/>

All you need is a webcam.

In addition, Skype offers unlimited calls to the US and Canada for just \$2.95/month . . . if you want unlimited calling to 36 countries worldwide, the cost is \$9.95/month . . . there's even an option for cellphones . . . for more information, please click:

<http://www.skype.com/allfeatures/subscriptions/#uscaSubscriptionTab>

If you use Skype for any purpose, I'd be interested in hearing your reaction to it.

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9. True love

I ran into Jim at work yesterday. He had been out for a few days with the flu.

I asked him how he was feeling. "I'm better, thanks. You know, it was a wonderful experience."

"Wonderful? How can the flu be wonderful?" I asked in stunned disbelief.

"Well, I learned that my wife really loves me. You know that whenever the mailman came by or a delivery man headed toward the door, my wife ran out to meet them? I could hear her excitedly saying 'My husband is home! My husband is home!' "

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10. A quote I like

If you're walking down the right path and you're willing to keep walking, eventually you'll make progress.--President-elect Barack Obama

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11. Thought for the day

Last week, I ran part of the introduction from Lee Iacocca's latest book (WHERE HAVE ALL THE LEADERS GONE?); here's the rest:

To be a leader you've got to have CONVICTION--a fire in your belly. You've got to have passion. You've got to really want to get something done. How do you measure fire in the belly? Bush has set the all-time record for number of vacation days taken by a U.S. President--four hundred and counting. He'd rather clear brush on his ranch than immerse himself in the business of governing. He even told an interviewer that the high point of his presidency so far was catching a seven-and-a-half-pound perch in his hand-stocked lake.

It's no better on Capitol Hill. Congress was in session only ninety-seven days in 2006. That's eleven days less than the record set in 1948, when President Harry Truman coined the term do-nothing Congress. Most people would expect to be fired if they worked so little and had nothing to show for it. But Congress managed to find the time to vote itself a raise. Now, that's not leadership.

A leader should have CHARISMA. I'm not talking about being flashy. Charisma is the quality that makes people want to follow you. It's the ability to inspire. People follow a leader because they trust him. That's my definition of charisma. Maybe George Bush is a great guy to hang out with at a barbecue or a ball game. But put him at a global summit where the future of our planet is at stake, and he doesn't look very presidential. Those frat-boy pranks and the kidding around he enjoys so much don't go over that well with world leaders. Just ask German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who received an unwelcome shoulder massage from our

President at a G-8 Summit. When he came up behind her and started squeezing, I thought she was going to go right through the roof.

A leader has to be COMPETENT. That seems obvious, doesn't it? You've got to know what you're doing. More important than that, you've got to surround yourself with people who know what they're doing. Bush brags about being our first MBA President. Does that make him competent? Well, let's see. Thanks to our first MBA President, we've got the largest deficit in history, Social Security is on life support, and we've run up a half-a-trillion-dollar price tag (so far) in Iraq. And that's just for starters. A leader has to be a problem solver, and the biggest problems we face as a nation seem to be on the back burner.

You can't be a leader if you don't have COMMON SENSE. I call this Charlie Beacham's rule. When I was a young guy just starting out in the car business, one of my first jobs was as Ford's zone manager in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. My boss was a guy named Charlie Beacham, who was the East Coast regional manager. Charlie was a big Southerner, with a warm drawl, a huge smile, and a core of steel. Charlie used to tell me, "Remember, Lee, the only thing you've got going for you as a human being is your ability to reason and your common sense. If you don't know a dip of horsesh*t from a dip of vanilla ice cream, you'll never make it." George Bush doesn't have common sense. He just has a lot of sound bites. You know--Mr. they'll-welcome-us-as-liberators-no-child-left-behind-heck-of-a-job -Brownie-mission-accomplished Bush.

Former President Bill Clinton once said, "I grew up in an alcoholic home. I spent half my childhood trying to get into the reality-based world--and I like it here."

I think our current President should visit the real world once in a while.

THE BIGGEST C IS CRISIS

Leaders are made, not born. Leadership is forged in times of crisis. It's easy to sit there with your feet up on the desk and talk theory. Or send someone else's kids off to war when you've never seen a battlefield yourself. It's another thing to lead when your world comes tumbling down.

On September 11, 2001, we needed a strong leader more than any other time in our history. We needed a steady hand to guide us out of the ashes. Where was George Bush? He was reading a story about a pet goat to kids in Florida when he heard about the attacks. He kept sitting there for twenty minutes with a baffled look on his face. It's all on tape. You can see it for yourself. Then, instead of taking the quickest route back to Washington and immediately going on the air to reassure the panicked people of this country, he decided it wasn't safe to return to the White House. He basically went into hiding for the day--and he told Vice President Dick Cheney to stay put in his bunker. We were all frozen in front of our TVs, scared out of our wits, waiting for our leaders to tell us that we were going to be okay, and there was nobody home. It took Bush a couple of days to get his bearings and devise the right photo op at Ground Zero.

That was George Bush's moment of truth, and he was paralyzed. And what did he do when he'd regained his composure? He led us down the road to Iraq--a road his own father had considered disastrous when he was President. But Bush didn't listen to Daddy. He listened to a higher father. He prides himself on being faith based, not reality based. If that doesn't scare

the crap out of you, I don't know what will.

A HELL OF A MESS

So here's where we stand. We're immersed in a bloody war with no plan for winning and no plan for leaving. We're running the biggest deficit in the history of the country. We're losing the manufacturing edge to Asia, while our once-great companies are getting slaughtered by health care costs. Gas prices are skyrocketing, and nobody in power has a coherent energy policy. Our schools are in trouble. Our borders are like sieves. The middle class is being squeezed every which way. These are times that cry out for leadership.

But when you look around, you've got to ask: "Where have all the leaders gone?" Where are the curious, creative communicators? Where are the people of character, courage, conviction, competence, and common sense? I may be a sucker for alliteration, but I think you get the point.

Name me a leader who has a better idea for homeland security than making us take off our shoes in airports and throw away our shampoo? We've spent billions of dollars building a huge new bureaucracy, and all we know how to do is react to things that have already happened.

Name me one leader who emerged from the crisis of Hurricane Katrina. Congress has yet to spend a single day evaluating the response to the hurricane, or demanding accountability for the decisions that were made in the crucial hours after the storm. Everyone's hunkering down, fingers crossed, hoping it doesn't happen again. Now, that's just crazy. Storms happen. Deal with it. Make a plan. Figure out what you're going to do the next time.

Name me an industry leader who is thinking creatively about how we can restore our competitive edge in manufacturing. Who would have believed that there could ever be a time when "the Big Three" referred to Japanese car companies? How did this happen-- and more important, what are we going to do about it?

Name me a government leader who can articulate a plan for paying down the debt, or solving the energy crisis, or managing the health care problem. The silence is deafening. But these are the crises that are eating away at our country and milking the middle class dry.

I have news for the gang in Congress. We didn't elect you to sit on your asses and do nothing and remain silent while our democracy is being hijacked and our greatness is being replaced with mediocrity. What is everybody so afraid of? That some bobblehead on Fox News will call them a name? Give me a break. Why don't you guys show some spine for a change?

HAD ENOUGH?

Hey, I'm not trying to be the voice of gloom and doom here. I'm trying to light a fire. I'm speaking out because I have hope. I believe in America. In my lifetime I've had the privilege of living through some of America's greatest moments. I've also experienced some of our worst crises--the Great Depression, World War II, the Korean War, the Kennedy assassination, the Vietnam War, the 1970s oil crisis, and the struggles of recent years culminating with 9/11. If I've learned one thing, it's this: You don't get anywhere by standing on the sidelines waiting for somebody else to take action. Whether it's building a better car or building

a better future for our children, we all have a role to play. That's the challenge I'm raising in this book. It's a call to action for people who, like me, believe in America. It's not too late, but it's getting pretty close. So let's shake off the horsesh*t and go to work. Let's tell 'em all we've had enough.

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12. Advance planning department

A. You can get a FREE cup of coffee for doing good for the community!

Starting: Wednesday, January 21, 2009 at 7:00 a.m.

Ending: Sunday, January 25, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

Location: Participating Starbucks locations in the US

Description:

What if you gave 5 hours to help your community?

What if we all did?

Your small commitment could add up to something BIG.

Starbucks and HandsOn Network are launching a campaign to support the President-elect's call for national service. Working together, we can create the change we all wish to see.

From January 21-25, 2009, you'll be able to find local volunteer opportunities at:

<http://pledge5.starbucks.com>

And during those five days, when you pledge 5 hours for the charity or cause of your choice, Starbucks will salute your work and dedication with a free Tall brewed cup of coffee in participating U.S. Starbucks stores (not valid at airports or Barnes & Noble locations). It's just a small token of gratitude for the big work we can all do together.

B. Best-selling author James McBride joins us for the paperback release of his highly acclaimed novel *Song Yet Sung*. Join us for an entertaining and enlightening discussion and book signing.

Monday, Jan 26 at 7:30 PM

Barnes & Noble, Princeton MarketFair Mall, 3535 US Route 1 South, Princeton NJ.

PS. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people."

Think about that as you honor his memory on Monday on Martin Luther King Day, the day celebrating his birthdate.

Also, please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and that peace resumes in Israel . . . and make it a great week!

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BLAINESWORLD

BLAINESWORLD

#641

1.12.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I are continuing to be delighted by all that the South has to offer . . . in just the past week, we attended orientations for the local Jewish Community Center and the Center for Creative Retirement, and we went to the monthly social gathering of our homeowner's association . . . in addition, we participated in a drumming circle, and Cynthia attended a yoga session.

B. We also saw a production of MORNING'S AT SEVEN that was put on by the Asheville Community Theater's senior theatre group . . . it was well done, but ultimately disappointing because we did not like the story (a rather outdated drawing room comedy).

C. Naturally, we're continuing to check out the many fine restaurants in the area . . . one of our favorites so far: Tupelo Honey Cafe, located on 12 College Street in downtown Asheville; 828.255.4404.

We had to wait some 45 minutes to be seated, so you know the place had to be special in that I hardly ever do that . . . yet everybody told us to be prepared to wait, so we were . . . and were we glad that we did.

I splurged and had the item that we had only heard raves about: the sweet potato pancake . . . it consists of one large buttermilk pancake flavored with cinnamon and sweet potatoes, topped with whipped peach butter and spiced pecans . . . it was even better than it sounds; in fact, just writing about it is getting me hungry . . . Cynthia had a veggie black bean burger that she said was excellent.

D. I've long been blessed to have had many fine assistants work for me . . . most recently, Jayne Venanzi helped me when

I lived in New Jersey (while Bridget Hughes continues to assist me with my union work at Bucks County Community College).

I mention that as a preface to welcoming aboard Monica Hester . . . she recently started working for me out of our Asheville residence, and I'm impressed that she has already proven to be a valuable addition.

So if you call and don't get Cynthia or me, that will most probably be Monica on the line . . . please feel free to give her a big Northern or Southern greeting--depending on where you live. And if you live in the Western United States or some other country for that matter, methinks y'all will be able to figure out what to say.

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

This week, it goes to Tom and Marcy Gallagher--owners of Kilwin's Ice Cream in Asheville.

This establishment has rapidly become our favorite such places in the area . . . not only is there great ice cream, but the fudge is off the charts, too . . . in addition, it's a great place to shop for other homemade candy, gifts, etc.

Every time we go there, we are warmly greeted by either Tom or Marcy . . . it's almost as if we are part of their family . . . yet it's not just us that feel this way . . . it seems that everybody else who goes there receives the same treatment.

I should also mention that all the other employees at the store treat us in a similar fashion . . . should you want to check this out yourself, Kilwin's is located at 26 Battery Park Ave. in downtown Asheville; the phone number is 828.252.2639.

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2. FYI

It will now be OK to copy iTunes music!

In moves that will help shape the online future of the music business, Apple said Tuesday that it would remove anticopying restrictions on all of the songs in its popular iTunes Store and allow record companies to set a range of prices for them.

Beginning this week, three of the four major music labels--Sony Music Entertainment, Universal Music Group and Warner Music Group--will begin selling music through iTunes without digital rights management software, or D.R.M., which controls the copying and use of digital files. The fourth, EMI, was already doing so.

In return, Apple, whose dominance in online music sales gives it powerful leverage, agreed to a longstanding demand of the music labels and said it would move away from its insistence on pricing all individual song downloads on iTunes at 99 cents.

Instead, the majority of songs will drop to 69 cents beginning in April, while the biggest hits and newest songs will go for \$1.29. Others that are moderately popular will remain at 99 cents.

The music companies are hoping that their eagerly awaited compromise with Apple will give a lift to digital downloads. They will be able to make more money on their best-selling songs and increase the appeal of older ones.

And with the copying restrictions removed, people will be able to freely shift the songs they buy on iTunes among computers, phones and other digital devices.

SOURCE:

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/07/technology/companies/07apple.html?_r=1&em

FYI, part 2

* Dan in Pennsylvania:

You are among many people I know who have moved, or are contemplating a move, to NC for their retirement. . . .

I must admit, the climate is much milder there than it is here. . . .

Chris told me that Asheville is in the mountains. Are we talking about the same place? She said it is quite a tourist area. . . .

I like the seasonal changes up here. I also don't like having to make new friends and moving away from the ones I already have, although one of my best friends lives in Arlington, VA, and we are still in regular contact. I guess our fast modern communication allows us to keep in contact with people, but I don't like long trips to visit.

I hope you keep your newsletter going. It's a good means to keeping in contact with all the friends you have made "up here". I'll respond to a newsletter periodically to remind you of who I am.

I hope you are happy there and make lots of new friends.

MY TWO CENTS:

Asheville is grand; for more information, please click:

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

You get the four seasons, but the weather has been milder than I experienced in New Jersey . . . for example (and I don't mean to gloat), as I write this, it's now 53 here vs. 40 up North . . . it has been that way all winter . . . and there's been no snow here to date.

People are so friendly here, and it seems that meeting people and making friends is not a problem for anybody.

And YES, my plans are to continue the newsletter!

* Joyce in New Jersey [on opening jars]:

I always find that if I am having difficulty opening a jar, I'll take the end

of a knife and bang it around the lid. It usually works.

* Marty in New Jersey [who happens to have the wisdom to be married to Joyce . . . on the same subject]:

Opening a stubborn jar can be daunting. I find that if you hit the top edge of the lid hard, all the way around, with the back of a knife blade, it tends to loosen the seal and make the jar easy to open. Give it a try and let me know how it works out.

* Annemarie in New Jersey:

Jury duty scam (that I personally verified myself; see below)

The caller claims to be a jury coordinator. If you protest that you never received a summons for jury duty, the scammer asks you for your Social Security number and date of birth so he or she can verify the information and cancel the arrest warrant. Give out any of this information and bingo; your identity was just stolen.

The fraud has been reported so far in 11 states, including Oklahoma , Oregon , Texas , Minnesota , Pennsylvania , Ohio , Illinois , Washington State and Colorado . This (swindle) is particularly insidious because they use intimidation over the phone to try to bully people into giving information by pretending they are with the court system. The FBI and the federal court system have issued nationwide alerts on their web sites, warning consumers about the fraud.

VERIFICATION:

I appreciate the fact that Annemarie included a link to snopes.com, so I checked it out myself by clicking:

<http://www.snopes.com/crime/fraud/juryduty.asp>

If you ever receive such warnings, I encourage you to ALWAYS check them with snopes.com:

<http://www.snopes.com>

Please NEVER forward them out without first doing the above . . . in addition, if you do forward them, remove the "FW" or "FWD" that probably came with it because many folks will not even bother reading emails with that designation.

* Ken in New York [wondering about Jayne's comment last week about "not knowing anybody in the movie SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE]:

She went by herself?

* Jeanne in Pennsylvania (WITH A NEED FOR A FLASH DESIGNER):

I am looking for a FLASH designer. I have been asked to work on a project that includes FLASH, and I would like to work with someone who has that experience. If anyone is interested, please contact me at: Jeanne@Entre-net.net with your email address and addresses of samples of your work. If the company (Entre-Net Graphics) is pleased with the work, there will be more.

Also, please feel forward to share this blurb with others who might

be interested in the position. Thanks so much.

* Mandy in Pennsylvania:

I wonder if you would be willing to share this information in your next edition of BLAINESWORLD. A very dear friend of mine who happens to be beautiful, charming, creative, and well adjusted, has been awarded a grant to travel to India for Spring Break and is looking for a travel partner.

Information below:

From: jennifer mazzucco [mailto:jennifermazzucco33@gmail.com]

Hello,

I am still looking for a travel partner to share in my journey to India.

The trip is slated for this upcoming spring and the tentative dates are March 13th-30th. (Time is running out!)

I have researched many places to go and there would be a choice involved if someone else is interesting in coming along.

So far, I've fallen in love with Delhi, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Vrindavan, Agra, Jaipur, Varanasi, Dharamshala, Manali or south to Trivandrum to check out Amma's Ashram.

Of course these would have to be narrowed down to a few.

The things I would love to experience besides art and culture are elephants, temples and the landscape.

Since the grant from my school will cover room and board for me, I may be able to offer to extend that to others (depending on how many people are interested). An added little perk.

Please help me find someone who is as curious about this magical place as I am.

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3. Pancakes

A mother was preparing pancakes for her sons. The boys began to argue over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson.

She told them, "If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake. I can wait.' "

One of the buys then turned to the other and said, "You be Jesus."

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4. Reviews

A. I don't ordinarily see a movie after I've read the book, but

I made an exception for Bernhard Schlink's THE READER . . . the story of an older woman who has an affair with a younger boy moved me when I read it, several years ago, and it had a similar effect on me when I saw the screen adaptation--in large part because of Kate Winslett's terrific performance . . . German actor David Kross is equally fine in the other leading role, though I didn't really buy his physical transformation from the time he was a high schooler until he became a law student . . . there's a twist to this story that I won't give away for fear that it will ruin your viewing enjoyment . . . the accompanying music soundtrack was excellent . . . rated R.

B. TYLER PERRY'S THE FAMILY THAT PREYS is now out in DVD format . . . my review from BLAINESWORLD #628 follows:

The more I think about TYLER PERRY'S THE FAMILY THAT PREYS, the more impressed I am becoming with Perry . . . he not only is one of the co-stars, but he also wrote and directed it--much like he has done in several of his other films (DADDY'S LITTLE GIRLS, WHY DID I GET MARRIED, etc.) . . . this is a drama about two very different families who are torn apart by both greed and scandal . . . Kathy Bates and Alfre Woodard are both excellent in the main roles, and Sanaa Lathan as one of Woodard's daughters continues her work as a most watchable actress . . . though FAMILY is very much a soap opera, it manages to catch your attention from the beginning and maintain it until the very end . . . rated PG-13.

C. I've only become a history buff in the past few years . . . that's probably because I never had a teacher like Dave Barry, author of DAVE BARRY'S HISTORY OF THE MILLENIUM (SO FAR).

Barry has long been one of my favorite humorists . . . I've enjoyed reading his columns, as well as most of his books . . . this one is perhaps his funniest, though that said, I realize I probably write that after reading everything he has written.

I do know his latest had me hooked as soon as I picked it up and read the book jacket:

* I suspect that you'll come to the same surprising conclusion that I did: No matter what challenges we face as a species--no matter what hurdles are placed in our way--somehow we always find a way, even in the darkest hour, to make things worse. It's a miracle, really. You read about the events of one year, and you think, "There is no possible that human beings can get any stupider than that." Then you read what we did the next year, and darned if we didn't pull it off."

Barry then proceeds to dissect each year of the Second Millennium and for a bonus, he throws in the entire First Millennium . . . on almost any page, you'll find yourself laughing out loud at such observations as these:

* Another important scientific advance occurred in 1614 when the logarithm was invented by Scottish mathematician John Napier. Someday when time travel is invented, high school students will go back and kill him.

* In Egypt, soldiers discovered the Rosetta Stone (daughter of

Sol and Esther Stone). This was very significant because it enabled scholars, for the first time, to decipher ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics, which turned out to be a letter from Publishing Clearing House informing the ancient Egyptians that they might already have won two hundred sheep.

* Dan Marino retires, causing hundreds of sports-talk radio callers to stop complaining that he stinks and start complaining that he stinks and start complaining that the Dolphins are going to really stink without him.

My only regret is that I'm still going to have to wait a few years to read HISTORY OF THE MILLENUM (THE REST).

D. Heard REMEMBERING SLAVERY. a series of actual interviews from the 1920s and 1930s with 124 former slaves . . . they have been remastered and the quality is remarkably good.

All touched me, though in particular, I doubt that I'll ever forget this one quote: "If I had to do it again, I'd take a gun and shoot myself 'cause you're nothing but a dog."

No matter how much you think you know about slavery , you'll gain a greater appreciation of the wrongs that were perpetuated by listening to this program . . . while the narration by actors such as James Earl Jones, Debbie Allen and Louis Gossett, Jr. was quite professional, I actually enjoyed hearing the actual voices of many of the slaves much more.

If you are interested in having history come alive or you want get a child or grandchild excited in the subject, get the CD version of REMEMBERING SLAVERY . . . there's also a book version, edited by Ira Berlin, Marc Davneau and Steve F. Miller.

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5. TV alert

A. AMERICAN IDOL returns for its eighth season . . . there's a new face, too: songwriter Kara DioGuardi has been added as one of the judges . . . Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 8 p.m. on FOX.

B. MAKE 'EM LAUGH traces the history of American humor from silent-movie slapstick to SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE satire . . . according to TV GUIDE, "It's as much a cultural history as an entertainment smorgasbord with some terrific interviews, including Matt Groening declaring that 'Bart Simpson is the son of [LEAVE IT TO BEAVER'S] Eddie Haskell.' " . . . airs Wednesday at 8 p.m. on PBS and the next two Wednesdays, too . . . check local listings because times and dates on PBS shows often varies.

C. I'm hoping that A&E runs THE BEAST on Thursday night at 10 p.m. on A&E . . . Patrick Swayze, unfortunately not in very good health, stars as an unconventional FBI agent.

D. FLIGHT OF THE CONCORDS returns for a second series . . . this show features zany New Zealanders who sing songs and crack deadpan jokes . . . Sundays at 10 p.m. on HBO.

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6. Handyman special

My realtor took a client to a handyman special. The place was great, but nobody could understand why it was so cheap . . . that is, until the water main was turned on and water gushed from the ceiling.

Dripping wet, the client put a positive spin on the showing. "Nice house," he said. "It's even self-cleaning."

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7. Websites

A. Want to know what to pack when you go away? If so, please click:

<http://upl.codeq.info/>

This is a very useful website that creates a packing list for you based on information you provide regarding your trip and intentions/plans.

B. There are several versions of "The Mom Song" online, but the following is one of my favorites:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6P2w5GkXmU>

It also contains the words; e.g., if you want to sing along!

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

<http://www.blainesworld.net>

Next to BLAINESWORLD, my favorite online publication is THIS IS TRUE . . . this is a weekly syndicated newspaper column by Colorado humorist Randy Cassingham that reports on bizarre-but-true news items from legitimate newspapers from around the world (never "tabloids"). Each story ends with commentary by Randy--a tagline which is humorous, ironic or opinionated.

You can get a FREE subscription by going to "Blaine's Best," on the left and then "This Is True."

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8. Computer tip

If you're using Internet Explorer (and probably other browsers, too), click on any toolbar at the top of your screen . . . you'll get the option to show the Menu Bar, Links or the Status Bar--or all three . . . play around with these a bit; e.g., to determine what you want to show and what you don't want to show . . . personally, I like having all three available to me.

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9. Some folks have all the luck

Two guys went to a gas station that was holding a contest: a chance to win free sex when you filled your tank. They pumped their gas and went to pay the male attendant.

"I'm thinking of a number between one and ten," he said. "If you guess right, you win free sex."

Okay," agreed one of the guys, "I guess seven."

"Sorry, I was thinking of eight," replied the attendant.

The next week they tried again. When they went to pay, the attendant told them to pick a number.

"Two!" said the second guy.

"Sorry, it's three, said the attendant. "Come back and try again."

As they walked out to their car, one guy said to the other, "I think this contest is rigged."

"No way," said his buddy. "My wife won twice last week."

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10. A quote I like

Failure is the opportunity to begin again more intelligently.--Henry Ford (1863-1947), American industrialist

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11. Thought for the day

You just have to love the beginning of Lee Iacocca's latest book (WHERE HAVE ALL THE LEADERS GONE?):

Am I the only guy in this country who's fed up with what's happening? Where the hell is our outrage? We should be screaming bloody murder. We've got a gang of clueless bozos steering our ship of state right over a cliff, we've got corporate gangsters stealing us blind, and we can't even clean up after a hurricane much less build a hybrid car. But instead of getting mad, everyone sits around and nods their heads when the politicians say, "Stay the course."

Stay the course? You've got to be kidding. This is America, not the damned Titanic. I'll give you a sound bite: Throw the bums out!

You might think I'm getting senile, that I've gone off my rocker, and maybe I have. But someone has to speak up. I hardly recognize this country anymore. The President of the United States is given a free pass to ignore the Constitution, tap our phones, and lead us to war on a pack of lies. Congress responds to record deficits by passing a huge tax cut for the wealthy (thanks, but I don't need it). The most famous business leaders are not the innovators but the guys in handcuffs. While we're fiddling in Iraq, the Middle East is burning and nobody seems to know

what to do. And the press is waving pom-poms instead of asking hard questions. That's not the promise of America my parents and yours traveled across the ocean for. I've had enough. How about you?

I'll go a step further. You can't call yourself a patriot if you're not outraged. This is a fight I'm ready and willing to have.

My friends tell me to calm down. They say, "Lee, you're eighty-two years old. Leave the rage to the young people." I'd love to--as soon as I can pry them away from their iPods for five seconds and get them to pay attention. I'm going to speak up because it's my patriotic duty. I think people will listen to me. They say I have a reputation as a straight shooter. So I'll tell you how I see it, and it's not pretty, but at least it's real. I'm hoping to strike a nerve in those young folks who say they don't vote because they don't trust politicians to represent their interests. Hey, America, wake up. These guys work for us.

WHO ARE THESE GUYS, ANYWAY?

Why are we in this mess? How did we end up with this crowd in Washington? Well, we voted for them -- or at least some of us did. But I'll tell you what we didn't do. We didn't agree to suspend the Constitution. We didn't agree to stop asking questions or demanding answers. Some of us are sick and tired of people who call free speech treason. Where I come from that's a dictatorship, not a democracy.

And don't tell me it's all the fault of right-wing Republicans or liberal Democrats. That's an intellectually lazy argument, and it's part of the reason we're in this stew. We're not just a nation of factions. We're a people. We share common principles and ideals. And we rise and fall together.

Where are the voices of leaders who can inspire us to action and make us stand taller? What happened to the strong and resolute party of Lincoln? What happened to the courageous, populist party of FDR and Truman? There was a time in this country when the voices of great leaders lifted us up and made us want to do better. Where have all the leaders gone?

THE TEST OF A LEADER

I've never been Commander in Chief, but I've been a CEO. I understand a few things about leadership at the top. I've figured out nine points--not ten (I don't want people accusing me of thinking I'm Moses). I call them the "Nine Cs of Leadership." They're not fancy or complicated. Just clear, obvious qualities that every true leader should have. We should look at how the current administration stacks up. Like it or not, this crew is going to be around until January 2009. Maybe we can learn something before we go to the polls in 2008. Then let's be sure we use the leadership test to screen the candidates who say they want to run the country. It's up to us to choose wisely.

So, here's my C list:

A leader has to show CURIOSITY. He has to listen to people outside of the "Yes, sir" crowd in his inner circle. He has to read voraciously because the world is a big, complicated place. George W. Bush brags about never reading a newspaper. "I just scan the headlines," he says. Am I hearing this right? He's the President of the United States, and he never reads a newspaper? Thomas Jefferson once said, "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers,

or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate for a moment to prefer the latter." Bush disagrees. As long as he gets his daily hour in the gym, with Fox News piped through the sound system, he's ready to go.

If a leader never steps outside his comfort zone to hear different ideas, he grows stale. If he doesn't put his beliefs to the test, how does he know he's right? The inability to listen is a form of arrogance. It means either you think you already know it all, or you just don't care. Before the 2006 election, George Bush made a big point of saying he didn't listen to the polls. Yeah, that's what they all say when the polls stink. But maybe he should have listened, because 70 percent of the people were saying he was on the wrong track. It took a "thumping" on election day to wake him up, but even then you got the feeling he wasn't listening so much as he was calculating how to do a better job of convincing everyone he was right.

A leader has to be CREATIVE, go out on a limb, be willing to try something different. You know, think outside the box. George Bush prides himself on never changing, even as the world around him is spinning out of control. God forbid someone should accuse him of flip-flopping. There's a disturbingly messianic fervor to his certainty. Senator Joe Biden recalled a conversation he had with Bush a few months after our troops marched into Baghdad. Joe was in the Oval Office outlining his concerns to the President--he explosive mix of Shiite and Sunni, the disbanded Iraqi army, the problems securing the oil fields. "The President was serene," Joe recalled. "He told me he was sure that we were on the right course and that all would be well. 'Mr. President,' I finally said, 'how can you be so sure when you don't yet know all the facts?'" Bush then reached over and put a steadying hand on Joe's shoulder. "My instincts," he said. "My instincts." Joe was flabbergasted. He told Bush, "Mr. President, your instincts aren't good enough." Joe Biden sure didn't think the matter was settled. And, as we all know now, it wasn't.

Leadership is all about managing change--whether you're leading a company or leading a country. Things change, and you get creative. You adapt. Maybe Bush was absent the day they covered that at Harvard Business School.

A leader has to COMMUNICATE. I'm not talking about running off at the mouth or spouting sound bites. I'm talking about facing reality and telling the truth. Nobody in the current administration seems to know how to talk straight anymore. Instead, they spend most of their time trying to convince us that things are not really as bad as they seem. I don't know if it's denial or dishonesty, but it can start to drive you crazy after a while. Communication has to start with telling the truth, even when it's painful. The war in Iraq has been, among other things, a grand failure of communication. Bush is like the boy who didn't cry wolf when the wolf was at the door. After years of being told that all is well, even as the casualties and chaos mount, we've stopped listening to him.

A leader has to be a person of CHARACTER. That means knowing the difference between right and wrong and having the guts to do the right thing. Abraham Lincoln once said, "If you want to test a man's character, give him power." George Bush has a lot of power. What does it say about his character? Bush has shown a willingness to take bold action on the world stage because he has the power, but he shows little regard for the grievous consequences. He has sent our troops (not to mention hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqi citizens) to their deaths--for what? To build our oil reserves? To avenge his daddy because Saddam Hussein

once tried to have him killed? To show his daddy he's tougher? The motivations behind the war in Iraq are questionable, and the execution of the war has been a disaster. A man of character does not ask a single soldier to die for a failed policy.

A leader must have COURAGE. I'm talking about balls. (That even goes for female leaders.) Swagger isn't courage. Tough talk isn't courage. George Bush comes from a blue-blooded Connecticut family, but he likes to talk like a cowboy. You know, My gun is bigger than your gun. Courage in the twenty-first century doesn't mean posturing and bravado. Courage is a commitment to sit down at the negotiating table and talk.

If you're a politician, courage means taking a position even when you know it will cost you votes. Bush can't even make a public appearance unless the audience has been handpicked and sanitized. He did a series of so-called town hall meetings last year, in auditoriums packed with his most devoted fans. The questions were all softballs.

(to be concluded next week)

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12. Advance planning department

A. Don't miss a rare opportunity to hear and see legendary composer and lyricist Stephen Sondheim and one of his greatest proponents, NEW YORK columnist and former theatre critic Frank Rich, share the stage for an evening of conversation. Mr. Sondheim and Mr. Rich will engage in a live, unscripted conversation, reminiscing about Stephen Sondheim's career, legendary collaborations, inspirations, and rich theatrical and cinematic resumé.

Sunday, January 18 at 8 p.m. at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York City, NY.

Tickets are available by calling 212.721.6500 or visit:

<http://www.lincolncenter.org>

Use code PLAYBILL at checkout to save \$10 on all tickets.

B. On Saturday, February 7, at 8 p.m., David Brahinsky and Friends (Guy DeRosa, Sarah Houtz, Joe Pepitone, Phil MacAuliffe) will present a concert entitled:

CANADIAN SPIRITS II: Songs of Leonard Cohen, Joni Mitchell, Gordon Lightfoot, Neil Young and Stan Rogers.

At PCYH, The Princeton Center for Yoga and Health
Montgomery Professional Center, 50 Vreeland Dr., Skillman, NJ.

Call for directions and/or tickets: 609.924.7294 or 609.443.1898.

\$12 in advance (or member)/ \$15 at the door.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.princetonyoga.com>

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and that peace resumes in Israel . . . also, make it a great week!

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BLAINESWORLD

#640

1.5.2009

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1. Reflections

A. Cynthia, my beautiful bride, and I are adjusting nicely into our Southern lifestyle . . . people here are just so friendly . . . on New Year's Eve, for instance, we got invited to a gathering at the home of some folks we had just met . . . it turned out to be a very nice evening.

We also learned a lot about the area . . . I especially liked this one bit of advice that I got from Vic (one of our hosts) about how best to plan retirement . . . he mentioned that he had attended an informative weekend at the Center for Creative Retirement on just that topic . . . and what he most remembered was that it's important to set a date for retirement--then stick by it.

As we discover Asheville, we are exploring various religious services . . . on Sunday, we went to Jubilee--a self-proclaimed unique Community of Faith . . . it was just that . . . there was a lot of music and a lot of warmth . . . I particularly liked the question that Howard Hanger, the minister of spiritual guidance and ritual, suggested that you ask when you look into the mirror: Who do you think you are? . . . he then said that how you answer that will very much determine your day.

Howard--in discussing how religions differ--had us laughing with this one joke he told:

Jews don't recognize Jesus as the Son of God.
Methodists don't recognize the Pope as the Ruler of the Church.
Jubilants don't dress up for church on Sundays.
Baptists don't recognize each other in Hooters.

For more information about Jubilee, please click:

<http://www.jubileecommunity.org/>

B. After Jubilee, we went to a a restaurant next door that had been highly recommended: Laughing Seed Cafe . . . it serves international vegetarian cuisine.

Cynthia enjoyed her vegetable omlette and organic carrot juice . . . I liked the biscuit I had, along with a fruit smoothie known as Freaky Tiki . . . it contained strawberries, coconut milk, pineapples, papaya, lime and banana.

For more information, please click:

<http://www.laughingseed.com>

It turns out, however, that the meal was as expensive a one as we've ever had . . . turns out the very friendly hostess had a pair of shoes on that Cynthia liked . . . when asked where they had been purchased, we were told Discount Shoes . . . so naturally we had to go there.

And as could be expected, Cynthia just had to buy a pair of shoes . . . that said, I must admit that this is quite an operation . . . prices seemed about 20-25% less than we've seen elsewhere (e.g., for Dansk, Rockport, etc.), and the selection was huge . . . salespeople were friendly, too.

We even got to have a nice chat with Albert Morgan, the owner, who told us about his new store right next door: Country Casuals . . . this place has clothing for work or play and features such brands as Wrangler, Carhartt, etc. . . . I even wound-up buying two pairs of jeans for my now svelte 33 size.

For more information, Discount Shoes is located on 1266 Bevard Road, Asheville; 828.667.0085 . . . Country Casuals is located at 1255 Brevard Road; 828.667.9976.

C. Is it just me--or are jars and packages becoming more difficult to open? Cynthia recently brought a large jug of Aloe Vera Juice from Earth Fare and couldn't open it . . . nor could I . . . so I went to the Internet and did some research on the topic.

I found many useful ideas at this website:

http://www.democraticunderground.com/discuss/duboard.php?az=view_all&address=105x5986113

However, my two favorites [providing a response to the question posed by a person who couldn't take a stuck top off a can of spaghetti sauce]:

Put on a nice clean white shirt. Then try and open it. Works every time. Red sauce just rushes out to get all over that nice white shirt.

Break the jar and pick the glass outta the sauce.

Alas, no mater what we tried, nothing worked . . . so Cynthia wound up bringing the jug back to Earth Fare and nobody at the store could open it either . . . they then got another two jugs from the shelves that couldn't be opened either . . . finally, on the third try, they found a jug that could be opened.

D. As we move into 2009, I thought you'd get a kick out of this past year . . . so here's a recap I thought you'd enjoy:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWiXy55OHyY>

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

This week, it goes to Shane Davis--an account executive with TSACHoice.

That's the company that took care of all the TV, phone, wiring and computer needs for our new home . . . it was a real pleasure to be able to take care of all these arrangements (many of them being made when we still lived in New Jersey) with just one person.

Shane was great on finding out our needs, returning calls and being flexible when changes were needed; e.g., when we upgraded both our TV and phone choices.

We were also appreciative of the help provided by John Davis . . . he was the home technology specialist that Shane arranged to do most of the installation work.

Shane can be reached at 828.225.3307 or via email, sdavis@tsachoice.com . . . methinks if you work with him, you won't be disappointed!

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2. FYI

Contesting tickets in NYC (and elsewhere, too)

Any driver who challenges a parking ticket--in person, in writing or online--is offered a substantial, guaranteed reduction for most fines, under a program the city quietly introduced in 2005.

Plead guilty to parking at an expired meter in Midtown, for example, and agree to forgo a hearing, and the city will immediately reduce the fine from \$65 to \$43. No questions asked.

But most people who get tickets, about 80 percent by city estimates, do not challenge them and still simply pay the full fine.

SOURCE:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/02/nyregion/02parking.html?pagewanted=all>

You may have to be an online subscriber to see the above. You can register for free by clicking:

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Even if you don't have to register to see the page, you may want to register anyway. THE NEW YORK TIMES often has articles that you'll want read and/or save.

MY TWO CENTS:

The above procedure works.

I recently got a parking ticket in NYC and wrote to explain the situation.

By return mail, I got a form that offered a \$20 reduction if I pled guilty and waived my right to a hearing.

I did just that . . . and immediately made "no more parking tickets" one of my 2009 resolutions.

By the way, not immediately pleading guilty works with other tickets as well . . . if you get a speeding ticket and go to court to contest it, for example, you can often plea bargain with the prosecutor . . . the result will often mean less points for you (though you may have to pay a larger fine) . . . you really have little to lose.

FYI, part 2

* Carole in New Jersey [commenting on my proposed business card, in which my title will be Rewirement Expert-in-Training]:

My husband's "card" isn't quite so classy. His just reads, "I'm retired. Don't call me. I'll call you."

* Patricia in Pennsylvania (with a JOB/INTERNSHIP POSSIBILITY):

New non-profit needs help in the following areas:

admin. assistant to make phone calls to local hospitals, schools, etc.
help with putting our message on social networking sites
managing and creating website
posting things on You Tube
videotaping presentations
taking a few professional photos . . . and touching them up!
assistance creating press materials
PR
help with creating Powerpoint presentations

IS THERE A COLLEGE CLASS THAT WOULD LIKE TO "ADOPT"
THIS PROJECT? ARE YOU A HELPFUL INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS
TIME AND SKILLS TO OFFER?

I am available to come to your college class and tell the students about the project. College professors and students, please call. Thanks.

Our non-profit's mission is to destigmatize depression and other mental illnesses and to offer programs to the community to help those suffering and their families.

Please see our website:

<http://www.speakingaboutdepression.com>

or call Patricia Gallagher, Executive Director, at 267.939.0365.

* Marie in Indiana:

I thought you might want to include this information in your next newsletter about how to find and connect with local businesses for free from your home:

<http://www.google.com/goog411/>

LET ME KNOW:

If you check it out, what you think of it . . . my initial reaction is that it seems to be another winner from Google, but I haven't really gotten to use it yet.

* Linda in Pennsylvania:

Had dinner at Paul's new restaurant last week. It was very good.

MORE ON THE RESTAURANT:

It is run by Paul Licitra, a longtime mutual friend. in the same location as his previous place . . . if it's anything as good as that was, you'll be in for a delightful dining experience whenever you go there . . . the location:

Tuscany At The Towpath House, 18 West Mechanic St., New Hope, PA 18938 . . . phone: 215.693.1599.

* Jayne in New Jersey:

Just read your BLAINESWORLD. You look like you're having a great time and enjoying your new life in NC. Cynthia looks great, too!

I have been off from work for the last 10 days and enjoying it. Saw 3 movies: MARLEY AND ME: Very cute. If you're a dog lover, you would enjoy it.

BENJAMIN BUTTON: Slow and very long. Story was ok.

SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE: thought it was really good, but didn't know anybody in the movie.

* Marie in New Jersey [commenting on the latter film]:

Just wanted to let you know that the male lead is one of the main characters in the BBC series, "Skins." Perhaps some of your readers have seen that show; the season finale just aired a week or two ago. I'm sure it will be back as it was quite popular (and a little twisted). I am planning to see the film and enjoyed your review.

* Michael in Pennsylvania:

I do appraisals, so please feel free to refer the reader from last week--and others . . . to reach me, your best bet is to call to 215.547.6196.

In addition, I thought you'd want to see this website:

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

It is a service that helps you with traffic tickets, so if you get a lot of them (or have done so in the past), you might want to check it out.

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3. Southern living

If I ever forgot that I now live in the South, the last line of an obituary in our local paper certainly set me straight.

It read: "In lieu of flowers, please send fried chicken."

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4. Reviews

A. If you're in the mood for a sweet romantic comedy, catch Jim Carrey in YES MAN . . . it's the story of a loser who begins to turn his life around after participating in a seminar designed to help him say "yes" to all opportunities that come his way . . . the only problem is that he can't ever say "no" . . . when Zooey Deschanel (a Debra Winger lookalike) enters the film, it really takes off . . . she is just terrific, much like she has been in such other pictures as ELF, ALMOST FAMOUS, etc. . . one scene, in particular, had me laughing out loud . . . Carrey puts a glass of wine on a Tempurpedic bed he has just purchased to see if it will spill when he jumps up and down . . . it didn't and damned if that wasn't also the case with my own Tempurpedic bed (I tried a similar experiment) . . . rated PG-13.

B. Now out on DVD is TRAITOR, a somewhat convoluted political thriller that's watchable because of the fact that Don Cheadle stars in it . . . he turns in another solid performance--this time as a devout American Muslim who begins to show up on the FBI's radar because he's seemingly always near terrorist bombings . . . Guy Pearce (an actor so good in MOMENTO and not in nearly enough films since then) plays the agent tracking him down . . . the story began as a concept that Steve Martin--yes, the comedian/actor--developed . . . rated PG-13.

IF YOU LIKE READING MOVIE REVIEWS:

Then also check out those from Michael Dequina, a longtime BLAINESWORLD reader and online friend . . . they can be accessed by clicking: <http://www.themoviereport.com/>

If you go there, you can even get on his FREE online mailing list to have his weekly reviews delivered directly to your mailbox . . . that option can be found on the right of his homepage.

C. Jim Donovan, author of STOP LIVING PAYCHECK TO PAYCHECK (see also Section 11), asks this provocative question on the back of his book: Would you like to know how to make money without leaving your present job or risking your savings--even if you're starting from scratch with little or no money?

If the answer is "yes," then this is a title that you should read right away. . . and even if you aren't sure of your answer, you still might want to get hold of it just to get you thinking.

Donovan begins with a review of attitudes about money--and why it is important to allow abundance . . . he writes that it is important:

* To see yourself as a positive, generous, wealthy person. Affirm, "I am wealthy and use my wealth for good for myself and others."

From there, he stresses the need to take action:

* One of the things that prevents many people from changing

their money situation is the belief that they need to know everything before starting. Start first, refine later. Jump in and get your feet wet.

But Donovan just doesn't make suggestions; he also presents specific ways to do this via providing a service business, eBay, network marketing, Google AdSense, etc. . . . the key is to always remember:

* Whatever you do, in any transaction, make sure it's a win for everyone. If it's not, then it's not a win for anyone. There are no exceptions to this. A good deal always benefits all parties.

I also liked his advice on getting ahead, in general:

* As my friend and hero Charlie "Tremendous" Jones said: "In five years, you will be the same person that you are today with two exceptions, the books you read and the people that you hang out with." Being around people at network marketing gatherings is a good way to immerse yourself in positive energy on a regular basis.

Though STOP LIVING is just 100 pages in length, it is packed with useful ideas that make it the ideal gift for both children and grandchildren, friends and even yourself.

To obtain your own copy, please click: <http://www.paychecktopaycheckbook.com>

D. If you freeze when you go on a job interview, join the crowd . . . lots of other folks do, too.

I've even had this happen to me, at times, so I was intrigued by the premise of 101 GREAT ANSWERS TO THE TOUGHEST INTERVIEW QUESTIONS, third edition--a CD version of the book written and read by Ron Fry.

What surprised me was the fact that I learned a lot more than just the rote answers to questions . . . Fry also covers what to do both before and after the interview, and he offers many useful suggestions that just aren't used by all job-seekers.

For example:

* When asked, do you have any questions . . . never say "no." The interviewer will assume you're not interested. Some possibilities to consider: Can you give me a formal job description? Does this job lead to other jobs in the company? What happened to the other person who had the job?

* Send thank you notes to every interviewer you meet. (He even shows you how to write them!)

* Never accept an offer the time it is offered.

Yet as I was listening, I found myself wondering how he would recommend answering the one question that always throws me: What salary do you expect?

He suggests to first make sure you know what is typical for the industry . . . when you do, then you can respond, "I'd expect

something in the broad range of (cite two figures with the bottom one being the lowest you'd consider accepting).

101 GREAT ANSWERS got me thinking, which is always a good sign . . . in addition, I'll always remember how to respond to this other typical question: Why are you leaving your present job? the author suggests:

* Be positive. The key word to remember is "more." You want more responsibility, more challenges, more opportunity and finally as a consequence of those other mores, more money.

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5. TV alert

A. Look for the return of two weekly shows:

* NIP/TUCK, one of my guilty pleasure favorites, has its fifth season premiere on Tuesday at 10 p.m. on FX; and

* DAMAGES returns with William Hurt joining Glenn Close in this twisty legal drama . . . Wednesday at 10 p.m. on FX.

B. CYRANO DE BERGERAC, the Broadway version of the show, airs on GREAT PERFORMANCES on Wednesday at 8 p.m. on PBS . . . check local listings because PBS times and stations often vary.

C. HOWIE DO IT has Howie Mandel doing his thing in a hidden-camera series . . . if it's anything like his appearances on THE TONIGHT SHOW, it should be quite funny . . . Friday at 9 p.m. on NBC.

D. DANE COOK: ROUGH AROUND THE EDGES features the comedian in a sold-out Madison Square Garden contest . . . Sunday at 10 p.m. on COMEDY CENTRAL.

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6. Football--finally making sense (BLOND JOKE ALERT)

A guy took his blond girlfriend to her first football game. They had great seats, right behind their team's bench. After the game, he asked her how she liked the experience.

"Oh, I really liked it," she replied, "especially the tight pants and all the big muscles, but I just couldn't understand why they were killing each other over 25 cents."

Dumbfounded, her date asked, "What do you mean?"

"Well, they flipped a coin, one team got it and then for the rest of the game, all they kept screaming was, "Get the quarterback! Get the quarterback!"

"I'm like thinking . . . Helloooooo? It's only 25 cents."

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7. Websites

A. To help you understand the different types of people in the world, please click:

<http://www.frontiernet.net/~jimdandy/specials/sweettators/>

This is an oldie--sometimes called "Sweet potatoes"--but goodie, and it still has a lot of truth to it . . . you can enjoy it with or without the sound.

B. If you're upset with the economy or anything else that's happening in the United States, you can take action by clicking:

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

WHAT'S FAIR IS FAIR:

The above is funny, regardless of your political affiliation . . . but if you disagree, feel free to email me and share your thoughts . . . even better, come up with something that pokes fun at President-elect Obama, and I'll try to run that too.

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

If you're new to BLAINESWORLD (the website and/or newsletter), you can meet some of my friends and relatives by viewing some of the pictures from past issues . . . go to "Blaine's Best" on the left, then "Pictures" . . . when you do, make sure your sound is on so you can hear what's arguably the greatest rock song of all time!

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8. Computer tip

Is your email inbox close to overflowing?

If so, here's an easy tip to get rid of a lot of stuff--quickly.

Do a search of your email inbox for these letters: Fwd . . . you can usually do this by looking for a Search option; in AOL, it is called Quick Find.

If your mailbox is anything like mine, you'll probably have a bunch of stuff there . . . included will be many jokes and other stuff that might be mildly interesting; i.e., if you had the time to read it all . . . but if you don't, then just delete it . . . dare I say it, without reading the material first.

Here's a related tip: If you want folks to read stuff from you, don't just forward it . . . process the email that you want to send along, then cut and paste it to get rid of all the times that it has been forwarded to you (and also all the names other than your own) . . . then eliminate the Fwd, put in a more descriptive subject heading, include your name and you're on your way!

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9. Dogs and cats are better than kids

As a follow-up to last week's item ("Message for non-pet owners"), non-pet owners should consider that dogs and cats:

1. Eat less.
2. Don't ask for money all the time.
3. Are easier to train.
4. Normally come when called.
5. Never ask to drive the car.
6. Don't hang out with drug-using people.
7. Don't smoke or drink.
8. Don't want to wear your clothes.
9. Don't have to buy the latest fashions.
10. Don't need a gazillion dollars for college.
11. If they get pregnant, you can sell their children.

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10. A quote I like

Do or do not. There is no try.--Yoda in THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

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11. Thought for the day

Your most creative time
by Jim Donovan*

There is a time when we're at our most creative, productive and powerful. A time when we have complete access to all of our resources and can solve virtually any problem.

A time when the great inventors of our time talked about having had their "ah ha" ideas and where many of our most pressing problems have been solved.

It is that time in our lives when we have total access to our power and can tap into the Source of "All that is," for help with anything in our lives.

The time that I am referring to is our dream time.

Those precious hours just after we drift off to sleep.

This is some of the most creative time we have available to us.

Unfortunately, most people prepare themselves for entering this time by watching late night news programs just before retiring for the night. While I have nothing against TV news programs and even worked on The ABC Evening News years ago, I am totally against watching news just before you go to bed.

This is the absolute worst thing you can do. Think about the imagery that you are taking with you into your dream state. Vivid images of war, murder, tragedy and mayhem of every kind.

This is what people are giving their subconscious mind to work with during the time of their most heightened productivity.

It's no wonder so many people are unhappy and depressed. How could you not be?

For those of you who have a habit of watching late night news, I will challenge you to an experiment. For the next 30 days, in place of the late night news, use that time to listen to a self-help audio program or read an inspiring book.

If you do this for just 30 days, I personally guarantee you that your life will improve.

By substituting positive, uplifting ideas in place of all the negative ones that you are getting from the TV news, you will be giving your subconscious mind thoughts, words and images of the kind of life you want to be living.

You will be giving it the fuel to ignite your dreams, and it will pay you back by showing you ways to achieve them.

You will be drifting off to sleep with images of your goals and a positive feeling about achieving them. This will have a dramatic effect on your creativity and outcomes. Don't be surprised if you start waking up with new, empowering ideas that will propel you toward even greater success.

These images will provide your subconscious mind with a clear picture of what you want. Since your subconscious acts on whatever commands you give it, by virtue of the laws of the universe, it will begin bringing it towards you.

I expect to hear from you in a month or less, telling me about all the great things that are occurring in your life.

To help you get started, go to:

<http://www.jimdonovan.com>

and subscribe to my Jim's Jems newsletter. As my way of welcoming you, I offer a free ebook or audio recording.

PS. If you must watch the news, please do it earlier in the evening so that you are not processing all the negativity during your most magical time. Better yet, don't watch it at all.

* Excerpt from STOP LIVING PAYCHECK TO PAYCHECK (see also Section 4C) by Jim Donovan, published with his permission. This excellent

book is available at: <http://www.paychecktopaycheckbook.com>

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12. Advance planning department

A. You are invited to Newtown Arts Company's Pick Your Seat Party:

Sunday, January 11th at 4 p.m.

Join us at the historic Newtown Theatre, 120 North State Street, Newtown PA for the annual Pick Your Seat Party. Enjoy a selection of wine, soft drinks, cheese and chocolates. Find your seat for the 2009 six-show season of live theater. If you have already purchased season tickets, you may pick up your tickets at the party. If you have not purchased tickets, you may do so at the party. Individual tickets go on sale starting Jan. 12th.

Newtown Arts Company 2009 Season:

"The Importance of Being Earnest," Feb. 12-18

"Little Women, " Apr. 16-22

"Barefoot in the Park," June 11-17

"Sweet Land, " Aug. 20-26

"Laura," Oct. 15-21

"Meet Me in St. Louis," Dec. 3-9

To order tickets online, visit:

<http://www.newtownartscompany.com>

To use a credit card call, call 1.800.838.3006 (surcharge applies). For info: 215.860.7058.

B. From January 26 to February 8, see the best of Off-Broadway for only \$20!

Here is your chance to catch up with shows you may have missed, get a sneak peek at the next big show or revisit a favorite--all for only \$20 each!

Since Off-Broadway has performances to fit everyone's schedule, you can see more than one: on Saturday for example, you can see Gazillion Bubble Show at 11, Altar Boyz at 2, Forbidden Broadway at 4, The Fantasticks at 8 and Sleepwalk with Me at 10:00!

Where else can you see five shows in one day, for less than the price of ONE BROADWAY TICKET?

HOW IT WORKS:

For TWO WEEKS ONLY, from Monday, January 26 through Sunday, February 8, tickets for all 20at20 shows are only \$20, starting 20 minutes before show time. Just go to the box office of the show you want to see 20 minutes before it begins and say, "20at20." You'll get your ticket to a real New York theater experience!

For more information, please click: <http://www.20at20.com/>

C. To all comedians, actors, improvisers and storytellers:

I am looking for story tellers at Friendly Grounds Coffee House in Flemington, NJ for:

Thursday, February 12th

Thursday, March 12th

Thursday, April 9th

Some important information:

- * Story tellers can experience a new venue for story telling.
- * Stand-up comedians have the opportunity to exercise a "creative muscle" beyond your current stand-up comedy act.
- * Real people from all walks of life can share their true stories.
- * Actors and writers can experience creating the beginnings of a one-person show in front of a real audience.

For more information, please go to:

<http://www.louderthanwordstories.com>

Or please feel free to contact me if you're interested in appearing:

Joey Novick
908.892.6859

D. International House of Pancakes is offering FREE pancakes on Feb. 24 in celebration of National Pancake Day.

This will be the fourth year that IHOP has celebrated the national event, with nearly 1,400 IHOP restaurants throughout the United States giving guests a free short stack of buttermilk pancakes from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Find the restaurant in your area by clicking here:

<http://ihop.know-where.com/ihop/>

Diners will be asked to donate what they would have paid for the free pancakes, or more, to their local children's hospital or another charity. IHOP is hoping to raise \$1 million for Children's Miracle network, a nonprofit helping children's hospitals and other causes.

Last year, IHOP gave away more than 1.5 million pancakes and raised more than \$875,000 for charities.

PS. Please join me in praying that we soon get our remaining soldiers back from Iraq and that peace resumes in Israel . . . also, make it a great week!

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