

# Reader's Digest

MARCH/APRIL 2022

Pandemic  
**SILVER  
LININGS**  
YOUR STORIES

**QUICKSAND. MUDSLIDE. INSIDE A WHALE.**

# I SURVIVED!

A DRAMA IN REAL LIFE

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GOODALL**  
on Optimism

*From the book  
THE BOOK OF HOPE*

**New Rules of  
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By CHARLOTTE  
HILTON ANDERSEN

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**THINGS  
ABOUT  
Meatless  
Meat**

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# Reader's Digest

A Trusted Friend in a Complicated World

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DEAR READER

# Hope & Resilience



Hiking and fort building with my sons.

SPRING IS IN the air, but this year it feels different. Like many families, we filled the last two years of the pandemic with movie marathons, game nights, and long hikes. Now life feels as if it is slowly, carefully, opening up again. While I'm ready for whatever the new normal looks like, I don't want to lose these activities. Family game night and Sunday hikes are here to stay in our household.

I'm not the only one who discovered a positive side to quarantine. We asked for your thoughts and were overwhelmed with stories of the ways you found a bright side in these tough times. You can read some of our favorites in "Pandemic Silver Linings" on page 84. Elsewhere, we looked at the families who got out of the house and headed to the Great Smoky Mountains to see the dazzling light show created by rare fireflies (page 96). Of course, there's no one better to talk about the great outdoors than legendary conservationist Jane Goodall. She writes

about finding hope in nature in our excerpt of her latest, *The Book of Hope* (page 70).

This issue is as much about resilience as it is about hope. In "I Survived" (page 58), we hear from people forced to fight for their lives in incredible situations, from being swallowed by a whale to trapped in quicksand. We also talked to brave nurses who are struggling to carry on after the past two years in a health-care system that's pushed to the brink (page 74).

We're also introducing a new section, The RD List, where we'll talk about books, movies, and more (page 109). Consider it a place to find recommendations for family movie night or your book club, which, fingers crossed, will soon return to meeting in person for the first time in a long time. **R**

*Jason Buhrmester,*  
CHIEF CONTENT OFFICER

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# LETTERS

NOTES ON  
PAST ISSUES



## Angels in Action

Your story about the kindness of strangers around the holidays (*December/January*) struck a chord. We've been to nearly every state in our RV. People often ask about our favorite thing from our travels. We've seen so many beautiful things in this country but are always awed by the many friendly people willing to help. There's so much more than the negativity on the news. The good always outweighs the bad.

—JANEY HATHCOCK *Lenoir, North Carolina*

### New Rules of Laundry

For years, our clothes had a sour smell. Laundry was an all-day event. Thanks to the Laundry Guy's advice (*December/January*), no more sour smell (thanks, warm water), and laundry takes a fraction of the time (the joys of the express cycle). Much better!

—EILEEN OSGOOD  
*Lebanon, Tennessee*

### Stretch Yourself

Reading about the benefits of stretching (*December/January*) brought back memories from my 35 years as an elementary school teacher. When kids got too antsy to focus, we'd stop and do the "face dance." They made the worst faces possible and had a great time doing it. I couldn't help but join them. Soon

everyone was ready to go back to work.

—BILL HALSTEAD  
*Dowling, Michigan*

### The Food on Your Plate

Two days before Thanksgiving, I was looking for a simple but festive vegetable dish. The December/January issue of *Reader's Digest* had just arrived. Your roasted garlic broccoli recipe was a huge hit. I expect it will become a staple on our future Thanksgiving menus.

—AGNES GABRIS  
*Martinez, California*

### What a Waste!

While this article gave useful examples of misspent tax dollars (*December/January*), we should also look at the places we under-invest. Resilience to the climate emergency, infrastructure, public transportation, and education—almost every part of society, except perhaps the military. Yes, let's spend tax money wisely, but also invest in one another.



We'll reach our highest potential only if we properly fund areas that benefit all of us. If we won't invest in America, who will?  
—EDWIN ANDREWS  
*Malden, Massachusetts*

**Is Dry January Right for You?**

Dry January (*December/January*), no way. Thirty-one days of suffering. I wait for February—only 28 days.  
—JIM ROUNTREE  
*Grants Pass, Oregon*

**Dear Reader**

Your editor's letter about deceased loved ones visiting via cardinals (*December/January*) resonated. Cardinal whistles are my late husband's hello to me. He was a master flute

and piccolo player and a fine whistler. When he heard cardinals call, he'd whistle a response and draw them near.  
—LOIS SCORGIE  
*Eau Claire, Wisconsin*

**You're Breathing All Wrong**

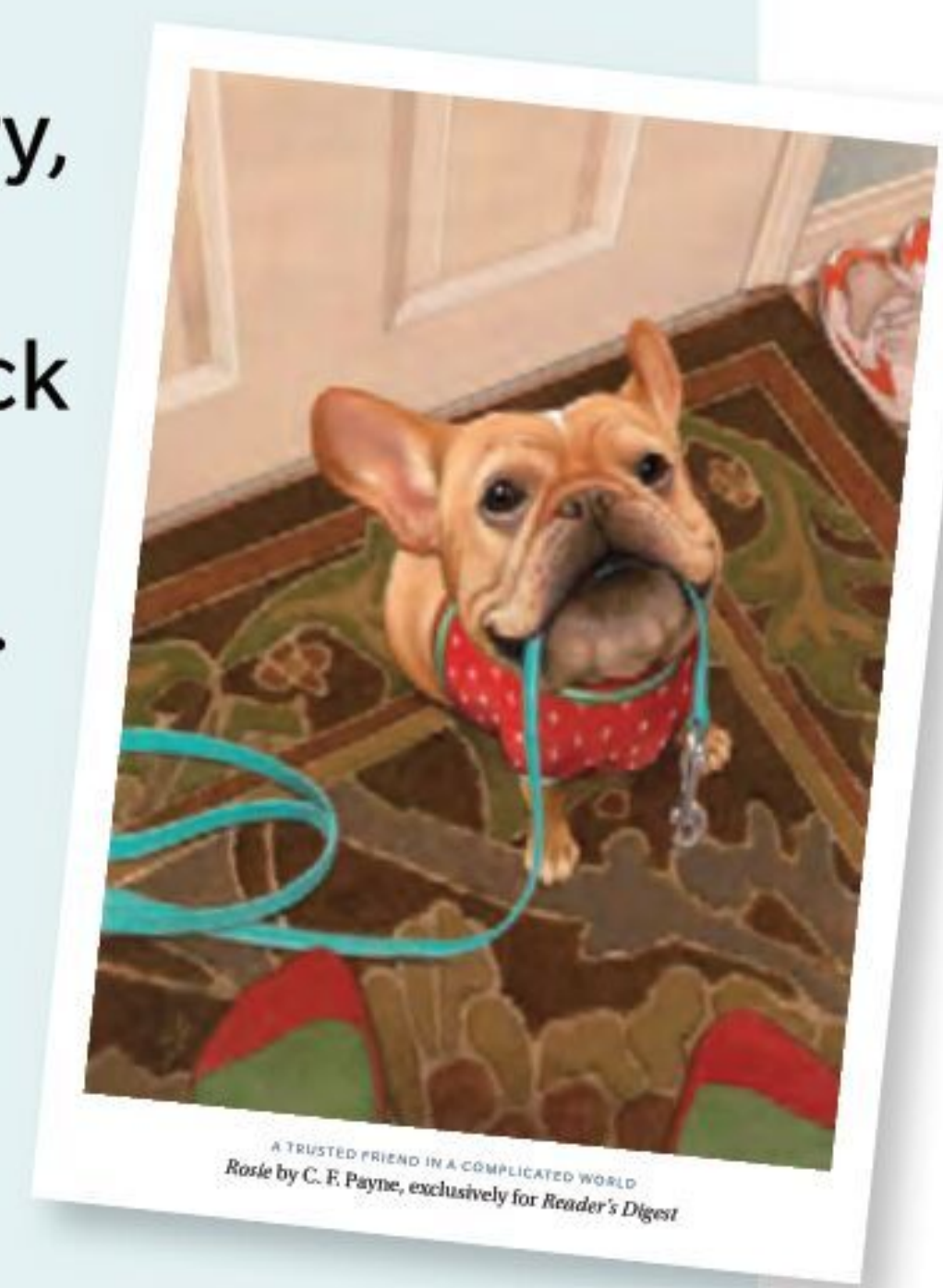
This article about techniques to breathe better (*December/January*) reminded me of my heavy snoring. Surgery to remove my uvula and head harnesses brought no relief. Then, a wonderful solution, to my wife's relief: three inches of paper medical tape across my lips. One problem: It's difficult to open my mouth should my wife call out to me during the night.  
—GARY WANGSGARD  
*North Logan, Utah*

**YOUR MOVE, MERRIAM-WEBSTER**

◆ Your story about the made-up word *orbisculate* (*December/January*) reminded me of a word my old roommate and I used. Rather than carry the trash down two stories, we moved the bin so we could "flig" it out the window. Instead of "take out the trash," it's much quicker to say "flig it!"  
—Paul Winch  
SOUTH BEND, INDIANA

◆ My family gets a kick out of words I make up. More than a walk, less than a hike? That's a *wike*. Then there's *transsanliteraphobia*, the fear of being stuck on a bus or train without something to read.  
—Mary Jo Nispel  
TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

**Calling All Creatives!** To celebrate RD's 100th anniversary, we asked artists to illustrate our slogan: A trusted friend in a complicated world. We began with C. F. Payne, who illustrated our back cover for years; his *Rosie* (shown at right) appeared in February. This issue, flip to page 120 for Jenny Kroik's *Reading with Gertrude*. Now we're asking what a trusted friend in a complicated world means to you, however you interpret it: a photo, illustration, GIF, painting, you name it. Go to [rd.com/trustedfriend](http://rd.com/trustedfriend) to submit and see terms. Your creation might appear in the magazine and on social media, RD.com, and even RD merch.



C. F. PAYNE

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# Unlock the Hidden Power of Metabolism to Burn Stubborn Belly Fat

A healthy metabolism is the master key to everything. Here is an easy way to achieve a faster metabolism, a higher fat-burning rate, and a healthier body



## Jamie Luu, RDN, LDN

Jamie is a Registered Dietitian and Nutritionist specializing in weight management and nutrition communication.

**M**etabolism, which runs the whole biological system of the body, can be slowed or weighed down by bad diets and poor nutrition and is at the root of many diseases. The answer to a stronger metabolism starts with fueling your body with the right combination of better nutrients. An innovative scientist-developed low-glycemic and high-protein supplement called Almased, can help your body achieve more by unleashing the power of your metabolism.

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*"I lost 45 lbs  
and have kept  
it off! I feel  
amazing, and  
love what I see  
in the mirror."*

SONDRA W.

BEFORE

A breakthrough 2020 study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found that Almased helps people gain more energy, burn more fat and lose more weight than regular diets.

The researchers showed that Almased boosts thermogenesis — the sign of a higher metabolic rate. So Almased reduces the tendency to gain fat. This metabolic advantage is like the benefit of an extra 30 minutes on the treadmill every day!

The newest study conducted at the University of Alberta sheds light on how, in a previous 2018 weight loss study led by Dr. Aloys Berg, participants who fully committed themselves to drinking Almased were able to drop weight more effectively than people who only followed a low-calorie diet and exercised. Not only did their waist size and body composition change, but they also lost body fat instead of muscle mass and water weight.

Both studies tell us by just adding the proper fuel to increase our metabolism, an avalanche of improvements can follow. And there's more. Metabolism is also a driver of the immune system.

### Almased and Weight Control

In a group of overweight but otherwise healthy adults, the body's responses to a

breakfast with Almased were compared to responses after a high-carb meal.

Researchers found that Almased reduced hunger and appetite, in addition to helping the body feel more full. The authors said "This may explain the specific benefit of [Almased] for weight control."

The results showed "significant benefits" compared with conventional low-calorie diets.

More recently, a group of scientists tested Almased in overweight or obese men with metabolic syndrome and insulin resistance.

In this trial, called "The Breakfast Study," after an overnight fast participants received either Almased or a standard breakfast. Four hours afterwards, all subjects ate a standard lunch.

The results? The appetite levels were greatly decreased in the supplemented group.

The authors saw these benefits even up to several hours after breakfast — in fact until after lunch — what is known as the "second meal effect."

In a study with overweight women, researchers proved that a diet with Almased resulted in weight loss and improved body composition over 24 weeks.

Science shows that Almased — by itself and as part of a healthy diet — can unleash the true power of metabolism.

Individual results may vary. These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These statements and the product of this company are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Consult your physician before implementing any new diet, exercise and dietary supplement programs, especially if you have preexisting medical conditions or are taking prescribed medications.

## THE FINAL RESULTS

“Before I found Almased, I was very overweight. One day, after reading about the science and great reviews on Almased, I decided to give it a try. Right away, I felt my sweet cravings go down and I could not eat as much simply because Almased helped me feel satisfied. After a couple of months, I lost 45 lbs and have kept it off! I feel amazing, and love what I see in the mirror. I can't say enough about Almased. The protein and vitamins in Almased have also supported my overall health and wellness. I recommend it to everybody.” **SONDRA W.**

**Almased blends high-quality non-GMO soy, honey, and yogurt, for a formula so safe that even people with diabetes can use it. Supported by over 30 years of scientific research, Almased:**

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**RESTORES WELLNESS BY SUPPORTING GUT HEALTH AND IMMUNITY** thanks to Almased's natural fermentation process of high-quality non-GMO soy, yogurt and honey.

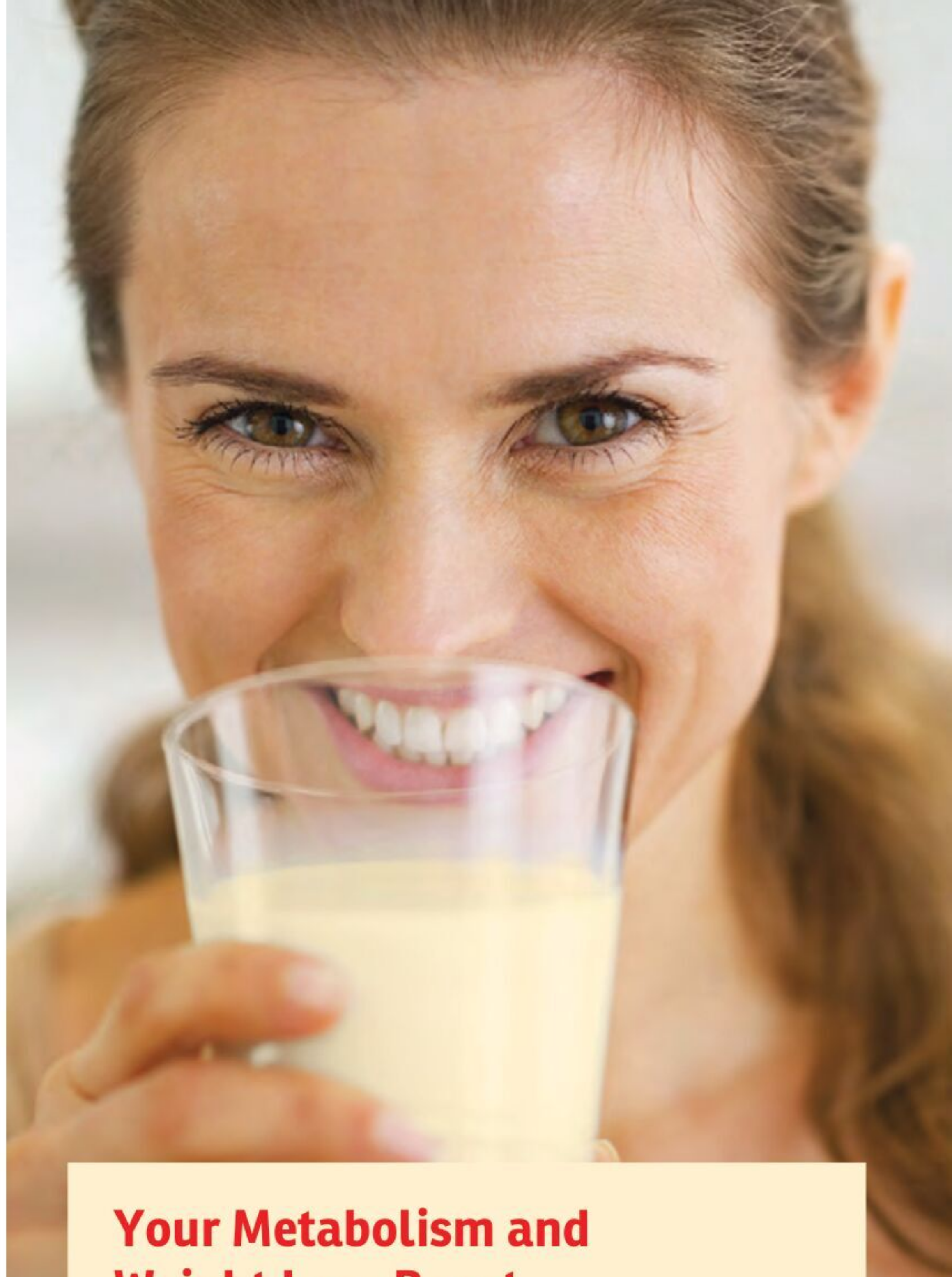
## HOW TO USE ALMASED

Almased mixes easily in any liquid. Just add water, skim milk or plant-based milk in a shaker bottle, scoop in Almased, drop in flavor extracts or spices, and you're ready to go!



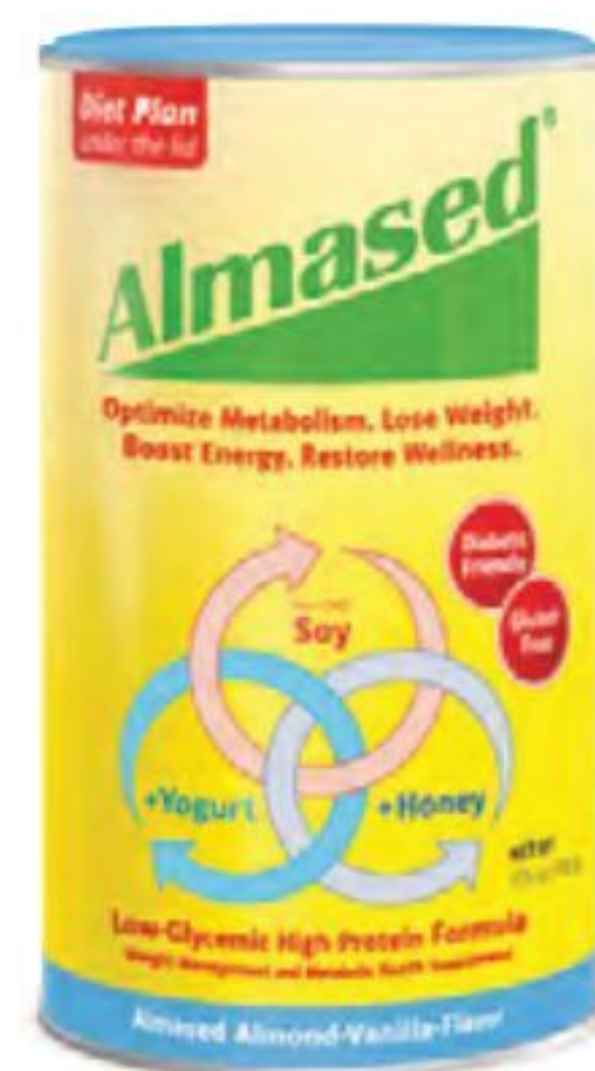
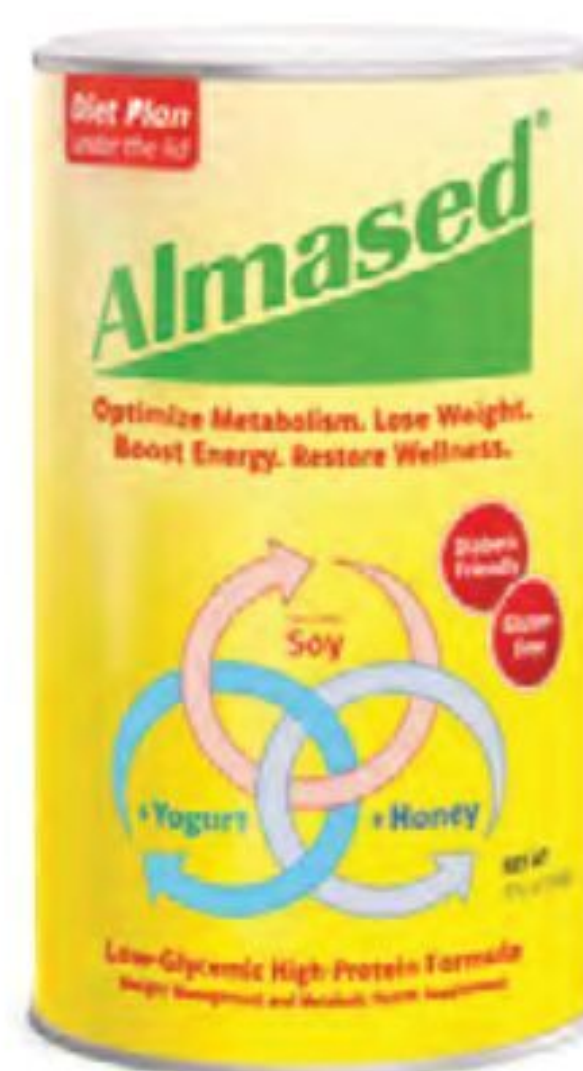
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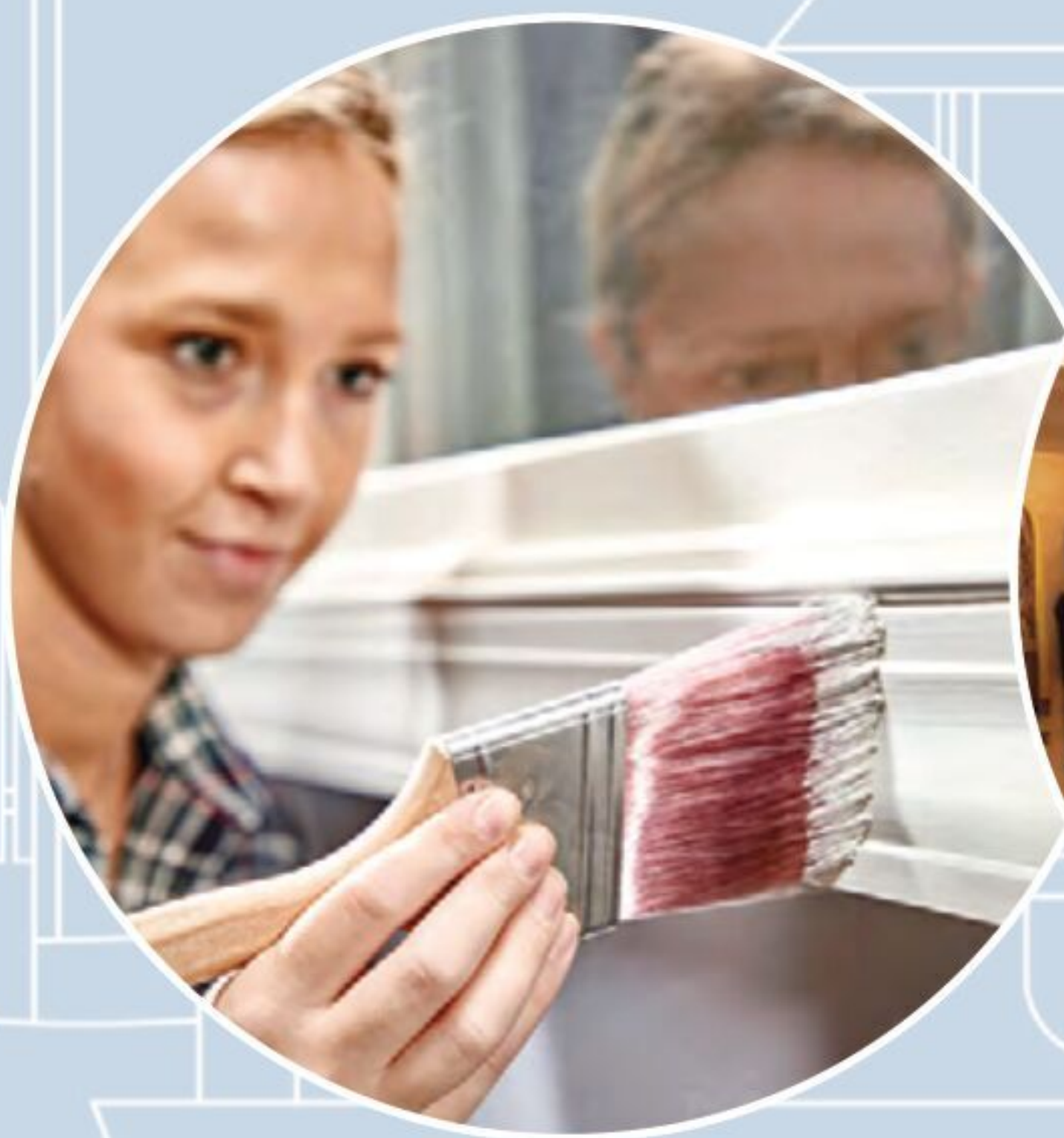
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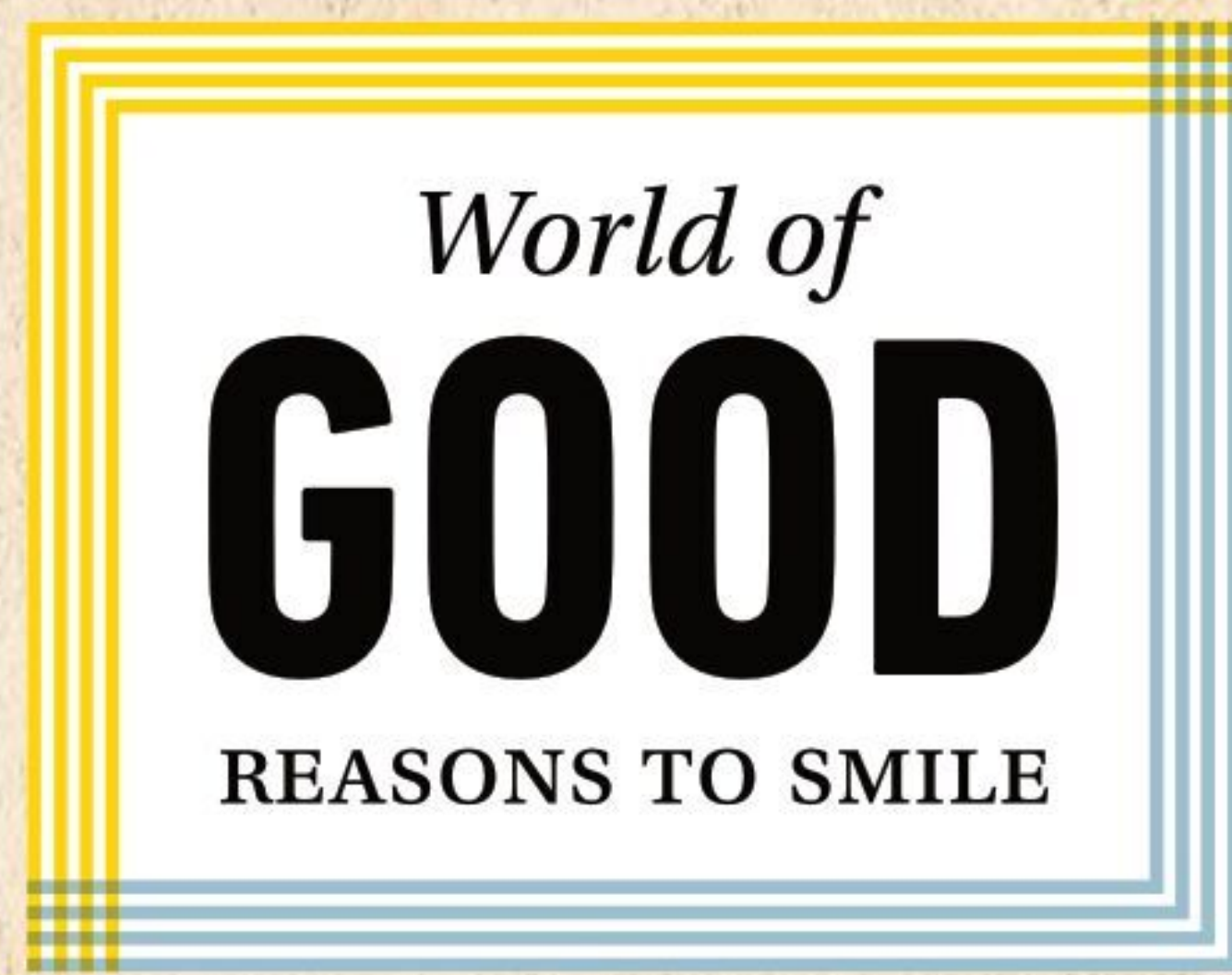


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SOLD



## Dial a Rhyme

**I**N BISBEE, ARIZONA, stands an old phone booth. Open the bi-fold doors and use the rotary dial to call a number from the booth's directory. You'll be connected to a lyrical voice, one of around 100 local and famous poets reading their work, like the evocative "Waiting" by Jesse Sensibar: "I know what it feels like to wait so long you forget over the years you were even waiting. Except that every once in a while you catch yourself looking out the window to see if they have finally returned."

Like the verse you may hear when you call, entry is free. The Telepoem Booth is the brainchild of artist Elizabeth Hellstern, 46, who has also set up booths in Dubuque, Iowa; Santa Fe, New Mexico; at New Mexico Highlands University; and near Penn State. "Hearing the poet reading his own poetry brings it to life," she says. "It conveys a lot of human emotions. And so does a telephone call." **R**



## EVERYDAY HEROES

# The Alligator Wrestler

*A spectator at a reptile exhibit becomes part of the show when the star attraction attacks its handler*

BY *Rebecca Meiser*

**D**ONNIE WISEMAN almost didn't go to his niece's fifth birthday party last August. He was worn out after working long hours at his construction job. But the party was being held at Scales and Tails Utah, a reptile and bird center in suburban Salt Lake City. Ever since childhood, Wiseman has been infatuated with reptiles. "They're now the closest thing we have to a dinosaur," he says. So, he skipped a nap and went with his wife and six-year-old stepson.

When they arrived at Scales and Tails, they were led to a small indoor area with a pool of water surrounded by nine-foot-tall viewing windows. Inside was the center's star attraction,

an 8-foot-long, 150-pound alligator named Darthgator. He swam around the pool before resting his head on a two-foot-wide platform. It was feeding time, and the hungry gator was staring expectantly through the glass door at his trainer, Lindsay Bull.

For safety's sake, Bull, 31, wanted Darth off the ledge before beginning the show. Entering the enclosure, she held out an arm and yelled "Back!" Uncharacteristically, Darthgator responded by snapping open his jaw to reveal all 80 of his teeth.

Outside the enclosure, awestruck kids pressed their faces against the windows. Wiseman was right there with them, eager for the show to start.

Bull, left, with Wiseman.  
“Words can’t express how grateful I am,” she says.



To get Darthgator back in the water, Bull placed her left hand under his jaw and tried to manually scoot him backward, a technical move she'd performed before. But today, Darth wasn't having it. He rolled his head to the side, surprising Bull. Her hand slipped out from under his jaw, and Darth clamped down on it.

An alligator's bite measures 2,980 pounds of pressure per square inch (psi). To put that in perspective, a lion's bite has a psi of 1,000. So Darth would have had little trouble

## HE STRADDLED THE ALLIGATOR'S BACK, PRESSING ALL OF HIS 180 POUNDS INTO IT.



dragging Bull into the pool of water. She knew she couldn't stop him from going into a death roll, a dreaded maneuver where alligators spin rapidly to subdue their prey, so she allowed herself to be pulled into the pool.

Outside the enclosure, some wondered if this was part of the show. Not Wiseman. Sensing something was wrong, he threw open the glass door and climbed inside.

"Jump on his back!" Bull gasped. Wiseman leaped from the platform to straddle the gator's back, then lay flat, pressing down with all of his 180-pound body weight.

"Push your fists into the top of his

snout!" said Bull. Wiseman did as he was told.

Keeping Darth's mouth shut shifted the power dynamic, and the gator suddenly went from predator to prey. "With Donnie on his back, I knew Darth would eventually let me go," says Bull. For the next minute or two, they waited. When Darthgator finally eased his grip, Bull quickly pulled her hand out of his mouth and was helped from the enclosure by a bystander.

That left Wiseman alone in the tank atop the alligator. Bull calmly shouted directions: "Move your hands from his snout to his neck! Sit up, then push off from his back to stand and get to the platform!" Wiseman cautiously sat up. But in releasing some of the pressure from Darth's back, the power dynamic shifted again, and Darthgator began to thrash. Wiseman leaped off him and onto the platform, scrambling out of the enclosure.

Bull received 38 stitches on her hand and was treated for a torn wrist tendon and a chip in her thumb bone. Though recovered, she hasn't stopped thinking about Wiseman. "He reacted to a situation he didn't have to react to," she says.

Aside from a few scratches, Wiseman was more shaken than injured. He admits that during his time astride the alligator, a thought kept popping into his mind: "One mistake and I'll be a statistic." Still, he says, "I'm just glad I was there." **R**



# Chipping Away at Poverty

BY *Andy Simmons*

**E**RADAJERE OLEITA THINKS she may have a partial solution for two of our country's persistent problems: garbage and poverty. It's called the Chip Bag Project. The 26-year-old student and environmentalist from Detroit is asking a favor of local snack lovers: Rather than toss your empty chip bags into the trash, donate them so she can turn them into sleeping bags for the homeless.

Chip eaters drop off their empty bags from Doritos, Lay's, and other favorites at two locations in Detroit: a print shop and a clothing store, where Oleita and her volunteer helpers collect them. After they sanitize the chip bags in soapy hot water, they slice them open, lay them flat, and iron them together. They use padding and liners from old coats to line the insides.

It takes about four hours to sew a sleeping bag, and each takes around 150 to 300 chip bags, depending on whether they're single-serve or family size. The result is a sleeping bag that is "waterproof, lightweight, and easy to carry around," Oleita told the *Detroit News*.



**Oleita makes a waterproof sleeping bag.**

Since its start in 2020, the Chip Bag Project has collected more than 800,000 chip bags and, as of last December, created 110 sleeping bags.

Sure, it would be simpler to raise the money to buy new sleeping bags. But that's only half the goal for Oleita—whose family moved to the United States from Nigeria a decade ago with the hope of attaining a better life—and her fellow volunteers. "We are dedicated to making an impact not only socially, but environmentally," she says.

And, of course, there's the symbolism of salvaging bags that would otherwise land in the trash and using them to help the homeless. It's a powerful reminder that environmental injustice and poverty often go hand in hand. As Oleita told *hourdetroit.com*: "I think it's time to show connections between all of these issues." **R**

# YOUR TRUE STORIES

IN 100 Words

## It's a Lock

I owned an auto repair shop in a small town in Wisconsin. People would drop off their cars for repairs outside of business hours and then pick them up later in the day. One morning I came to work to find a customer's car with a note sitting on the driver's seat. The note read, "Lloyd, I hid the keys under the seat." Sure enough, there they were, "hidden" for anyone who read the note to find.

—Lloyd Chase,  
SCHROEDER, MINNESOTA

**TO READ MORE** *true stories* or submit one, go to **RD.COM/STORIES**. If we publish yours in the magazine, it could be worth \$100.

## Words on the Street

I have a friend from Germany, but we both now live in Oregon. When my friend was a newcomer, she did a lot of shopping downtown. She had a habit of writing down the name of the street where she parked. One day she called me, frantic, saying she had walked for almost half an hour and couldn't find her car. "There are so many streets with the same name!" she said. Dubious, I asked her to tell me the street name. In her heavy German accent, she said, "VON VAY!"

—GERRY LOTT *Beaverton, Oregon*



## Maybe You Can Put a Price on It

My six-year-old daughter, Rona, listened intently as the speaker at our church told of the hardships people endured in the country where she was ministering. It was the day after Rona's birthday, and her grandmother had given her some money. When the offering basket

came around, Rona reached into her pocket, pulled out her birthday money, and put it in the basket. "Your grandmother wanted you to use that to buy something nice for yourself," I said. "I did," Rona replied with a big smile. "I bought happiness."

—Joyce Petrichek,  
FINLEYVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

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## BEST PET PALS

## Bella and Her Butterflies

PLEASANTON, CALIFORNIA

**O**NE SUMMER DAY, the bushes in our backyard began whimpering and whining and making all sorts of commotion. Or rather, our pit bull mix, Bella, was in the bushes whimpering and whining and making all sorts of commotion. Our 11-year-old daughter, Kaitlin, discovered her sniffing and pawing at a branch, where several caterpillars munched away.

My husband and I worried that our backyard—frequent hangout of birds, squirrels, and neighborhood cats—wasn't the safest environment for vulnerable caterpillars. So we got a butterfly house where the caterpillars could safely metamorphose.

Each day, when we took the butterfly house to the backyard, Bella moved with it. Each night, when we brought it back inside, Bella followed, then slept

under the table on which it rested. We don't know why Bella was so attached, but she was there for every step of the budding butterflies' transformation.

Finally, the caterpillars turned into beautiful monarch butterflies. Surprisingly, Bella didn't seem worried when Kaitlin released them. In fact, Bella seemed to understand that this was part of the cycle. It wasn't until one last butterfly wouldn't fly away that Bella expressed concern. She gently rested her head near the reluctant flier, which crawled onto her nose. Bella lifted her head, pointed her nose, and let out one of those breathy dog sighs. Off the monarch fluttered, seemingly needing a little push from a friend to begin her migration. **R**

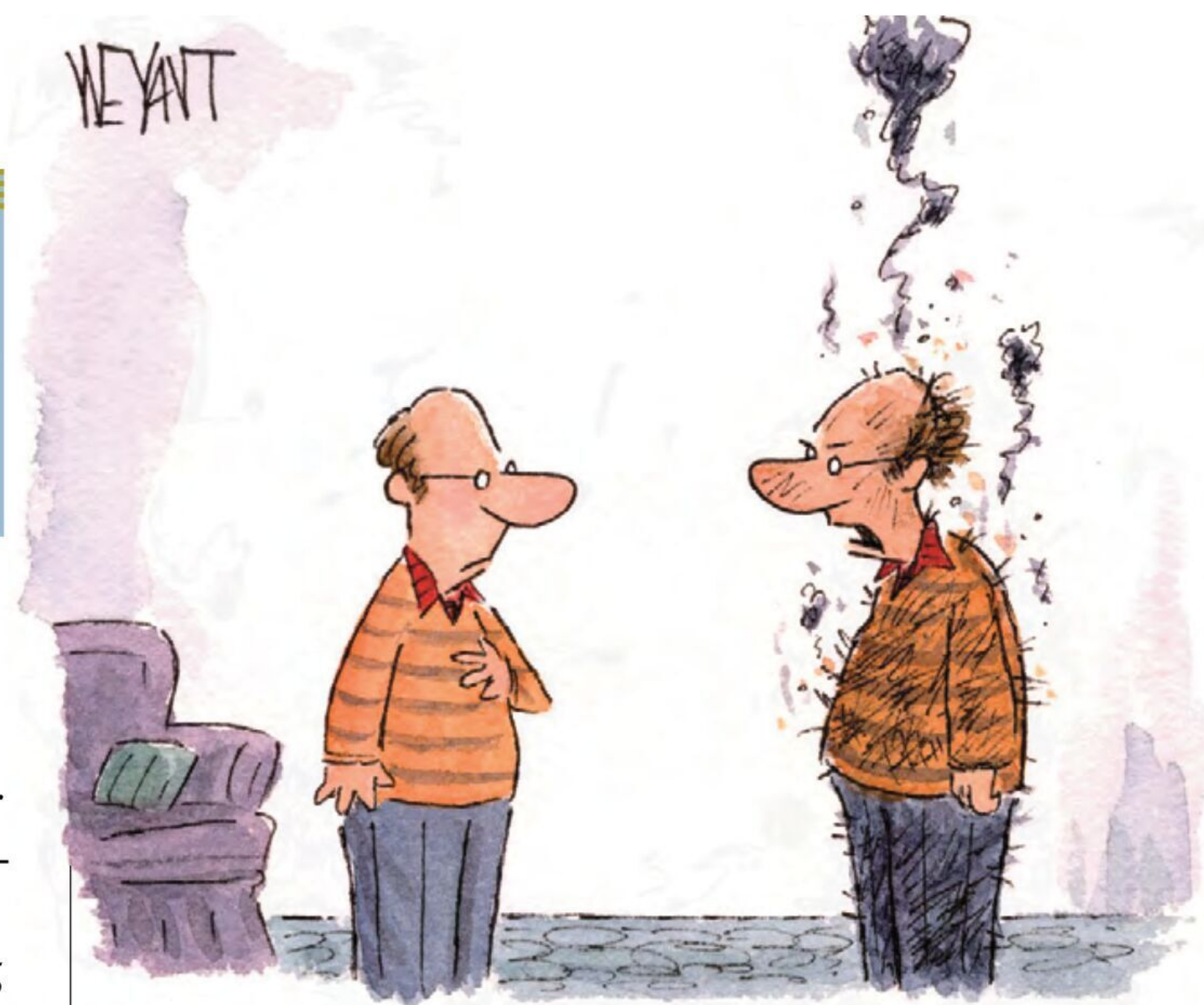
—Nominated by VICTORIA  
LORREKOVICH-MILLER

## Who's Your Favorite Furry Friend?

True friendship can cross distance and time—and kingdom, phylum, and genus. America's Best Pet Pals is a nationwide search for extraordinary animals and their unlikely besties. That could mean their favorite human, littermate, or any critter they've cozied up to—the more surprising, the better. See terms and submit your story, photos, and videos at [rd.com/petpals](https://rd.com/petpals). Our picks may appear in print, online, and on social media. Happy tails!



**LIFE**  
IN THESE  
*United States*



"I'm from the future. You left the toaster on."

**Aging: What's the Alternative?**

◆ I've never felt older than when my 9-year-old son said, "It must have been interesting to have been alive in the late 1900s."

—DWIGHT DUNWOODY  
*Rochester, Indiana*

◆ I stopped referring to my parents as elderly after someone told me, "Well, they'd have to be now, wouldn't they?"

—SHARON SOLLARS  
*Sedona, Arizona*

◆ I was complaining to my father about the horrors of turning 50. He replied, "Know what's worse than turning 50? Having

your kid turn 50." That shut me up.

—M.G.  
*Fair Oaks, California*

**I was very** pregnant when my husband and I visited our ob-gyn for a routine appointment. When the doctor noticed that the baby's heart rate was slow, he decided that I should be induced. Or, as my husband, for whom English is a second

language, explained to my mother, "The doctor wants to seduce her."

—SARAH B.  
*Lakewood, New Jersey*

**I asked my** four-year-old, "What would you like to do today?"

He shook his head and said, "I don't know, but I definitely do *not* want to do anything interesting."

—JENN BYSTRY  
*Irvine, California*

**Redditors reveal** the dimmest bulbs they've encountered:

- ◆ A woman I know bragged on Facebook that she scored 84 on her IQ test. She thought it was out of 100.
- ◆ I had a guy proudly tell me that he could

write with his left and right hand equally well. He said it was because he was "amphibious."

- ◆ Toward the end of the movie *King Kong*, my then-girlfriend asked, "Is this based on a true story?"

**I'd be fine with a ghost in the house if each time a bloody message appeared on a wall it was something helpful like YOUR KEYS ARE IN THE FRONT DOOR.**

— @LIZHACKETT

## APRIL FOOL!

In 1978, photographer Mark Gubin took a tub of white paint and wrote "Welcome to Cleveland" on his rooftop in block letters large enough to be read by airplane passengers about to land at the nearby airport. The sentiments (which are still there) were very kind, except



for one thing—Gubin lives in Milwaukee. Gubin doesn't have a good explanation when people ask why he did what he did. As he told a reporter at TMJ4 in Milwaukee, "I say 'It was Wednesday.'"

**While my friend** and I were waiting in the Ritz-Carlton lobby, we spotted opera great Andrea Bocelli. My friend was so excited that he ran up to Mr. Bocelli, grabbed his hand, and started pumping it vigorously, all the while proclaiming, "I am a huge fan of yours, Mr. Pavarotti!" Thankfully, Mr. Bocelli saw the humor.

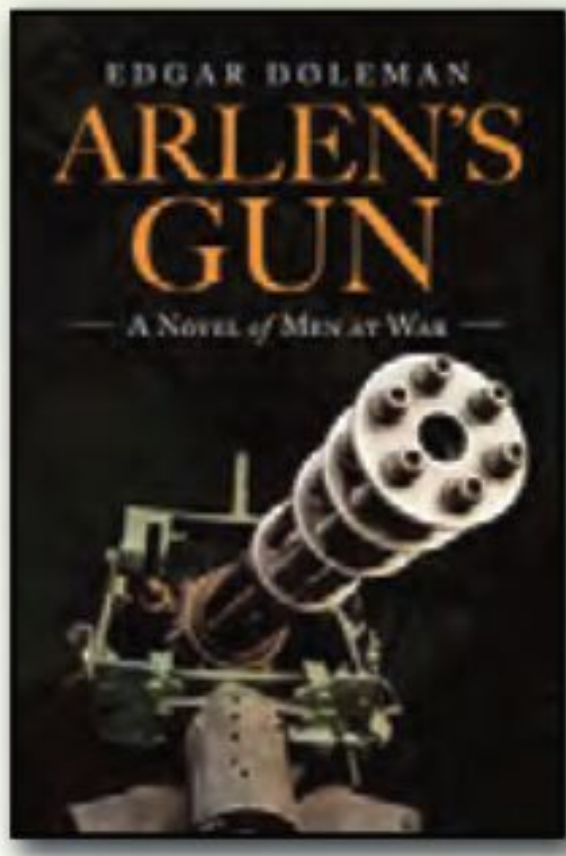
—DEB WEIDENHAMER  
*Phoenix, Arizona*

**I once attended** a wedding on short notice. My wife signed the card for us, and because they were my friends, she accidentally addressed it to the bride and their cat, because I had talked about their cat more than I had my friend.

— @FREE\_MATTRESS

**YOUR FUNNY STORY** could be worth \$\$\$.  
*For details, go to*  
**RD.COM/SUBMIT.**

## Find your inspiration.



### Arlen's Gun

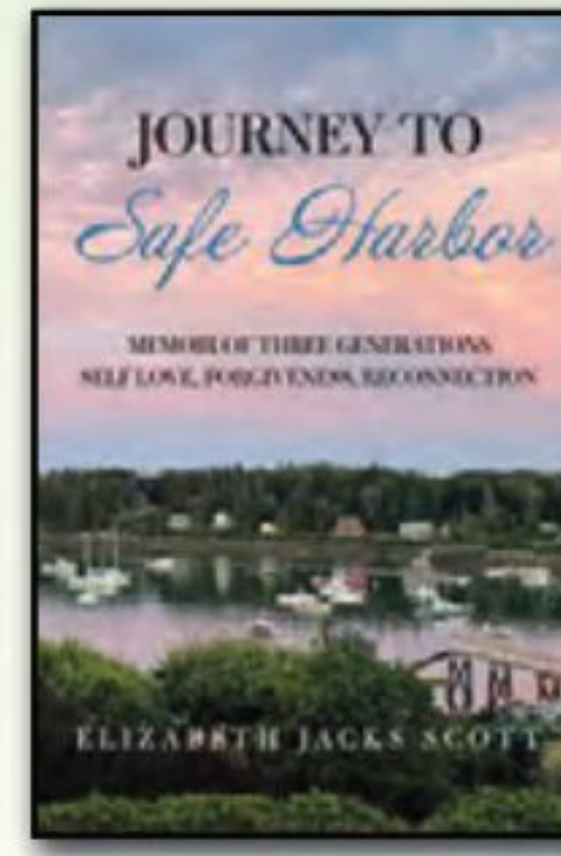
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### Journey To Safe Harbor

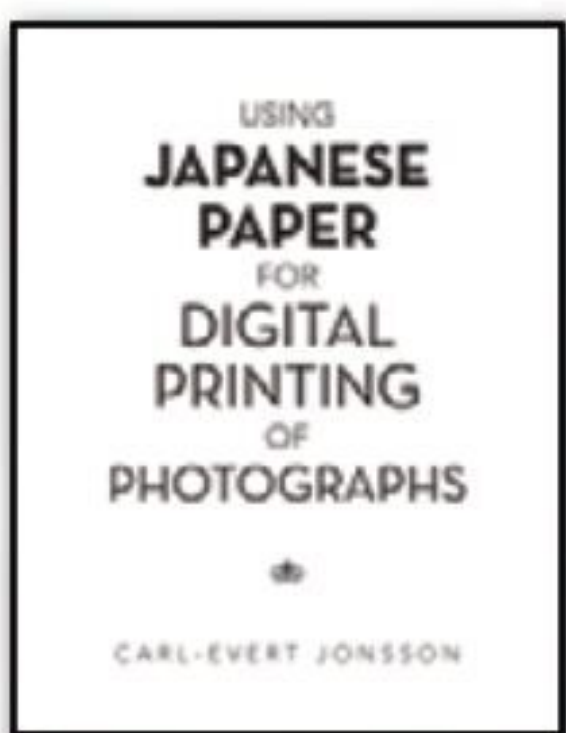
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### Gardening

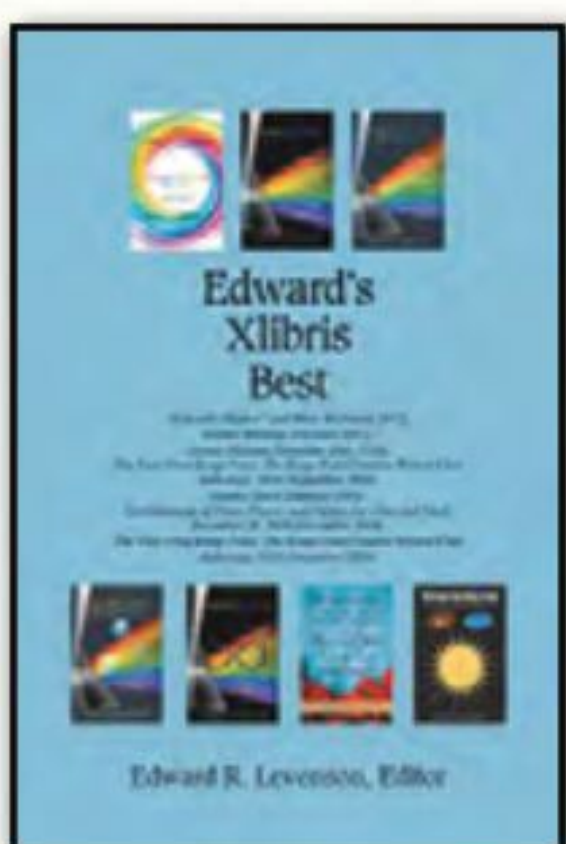
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### Learning to Dance in the Rain II

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*We Found a*

**FIX**

HELPS, HACKS,  
& HOW TO

## 1 **GARDENING** **Rearrange Outdoor Plants**

You've been waiting all winter. Your garden is finally blooming again. And ... you wish you could move that rooted perennial three feet to the left. To make it easier to shuffle things around, buy a bunch of empty planting pots, all the same size, then place your new vegetation in doubled-up pots instead of directly in the ground. If you want to rearrange, just pull up the top pot with the plant inside and plop in a different one instead. This makes it easier to bring plants indoors for the winter too.



TMB STUDIO

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY *K. Synold*

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23



## 2 **HOME** A Surefire Stud Finder

When using a stud finder, first hold it up to *yourself* to make sure it's working. If not, or if you just can't find a stud finder, pick up your measuring tape. Most use large red numbers or black diamonds, triangles, or arrows to signify the distance between studs. Start at the wall corner, and any spot a signifier lands on should have a stud underneath. Don't believe us? Notice they all fall on multiples of 16, the number of inches apart that studs are typically spaced for interior walls.

## 3 **TECH** Turn E-Mail into a Time Capsule

Don't let every photo, video, and memory of your new baby or grandchild exist only in your phone. Create a special e-mail address and send every photo, achievement, and memory to that address (logging in every few months so the account isn't closed for inactivity). When the young one is old enough, share the password to the electronic "baby book" you made.

## 4 **CAREER** Separate Work from Home While Working from Home

If you're a member of the new remote workforce, here's an easy tip to help you focus: Use one Internet browser for official business and a different one in your downtime. This way, shopping sites and social media won't distract you when you're trying to focus, helping you end the workday more quickly so you can make happy hour in Club Living Room.

---

## 5 **FOOD** Keep Foods Fresher Longer

If your groceries always spoil before you finish them, it's time for a 180. After opening a jar of spaghetti sauce (or anything you want to finish later), put it back in the fridge upside down. Inverting jars creates a vacuum that slows the growth of food-spoiling bacteria—just make sure the lid is sealed tightly before flipping it.

## 6 **TRAVEL** A Booking Trick for Cheaper One-Way Airfares

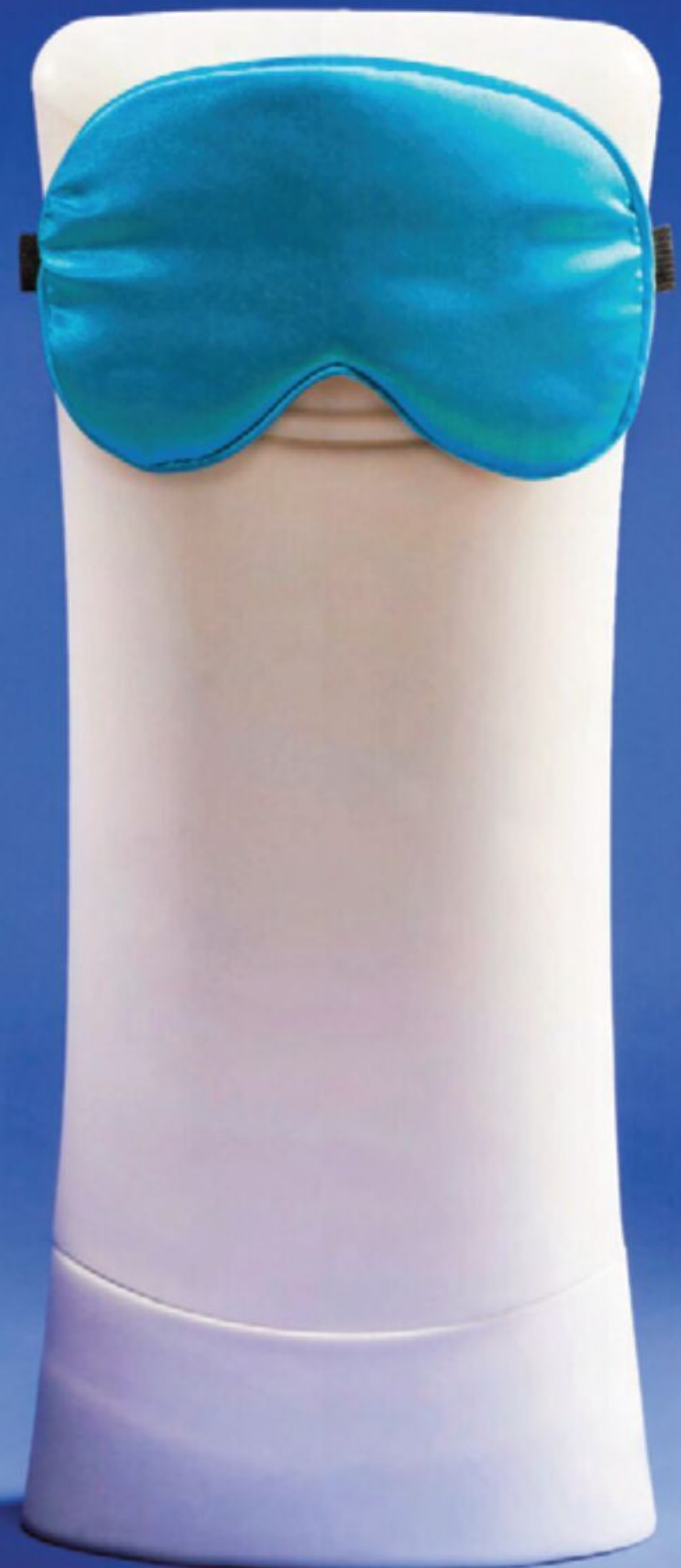
Do you want to be a part of it (New York, New York) but can't swing Big Apple plane fare? Try booking a one-way ticket that connects there—say, to Columbus—then just get off in New York and stay off. Airline algorithms charge more for direct flights into high-cost destinations than connecting flights to low-cost ones, says Lee McMillan, CEO of Peak-Season, a job-hunting site for avid travelers. It works only for one-way trips but is applicable to most high-cost destinations, not just the city that never sleeps.

## 7 **PETS** Save a Hallway Runner from a Four-Legged Runner

Has your dog been diagnosed with an incurable case of the zoomies, with side effects such as constantly disheveling the living room rug? Does your cat think it's endless fun to mess up the bath mat day after day? Here's a simple, secure solution: Velcro the corners of your rugs and mats to the floor to keep them from rumpling, no matter how much your pets (or kids) gallop across them. That way, the rug will stay in place whatever the turbulence but is still easily removable when it's time to clean.

## 8 **HEALTH** The Case for Deodorizing at Night

If you typically apply antiperspirant in the morning before heading out to interact with others, we appreciate and salute you. But you should actually swipe it on before bed. Antiperspirant keeps underarms dry by temporarily plugging sweat pores. Since you're sweating less overnight, you absorb more antiperspirant than you would rushing around in the morning, making it much more effective. **R**



BOARDING PASS

# IS YOUR BLADDER ALWAYS TAKING YOU ON A TRIP OF ITS OWN?



**Urgency**



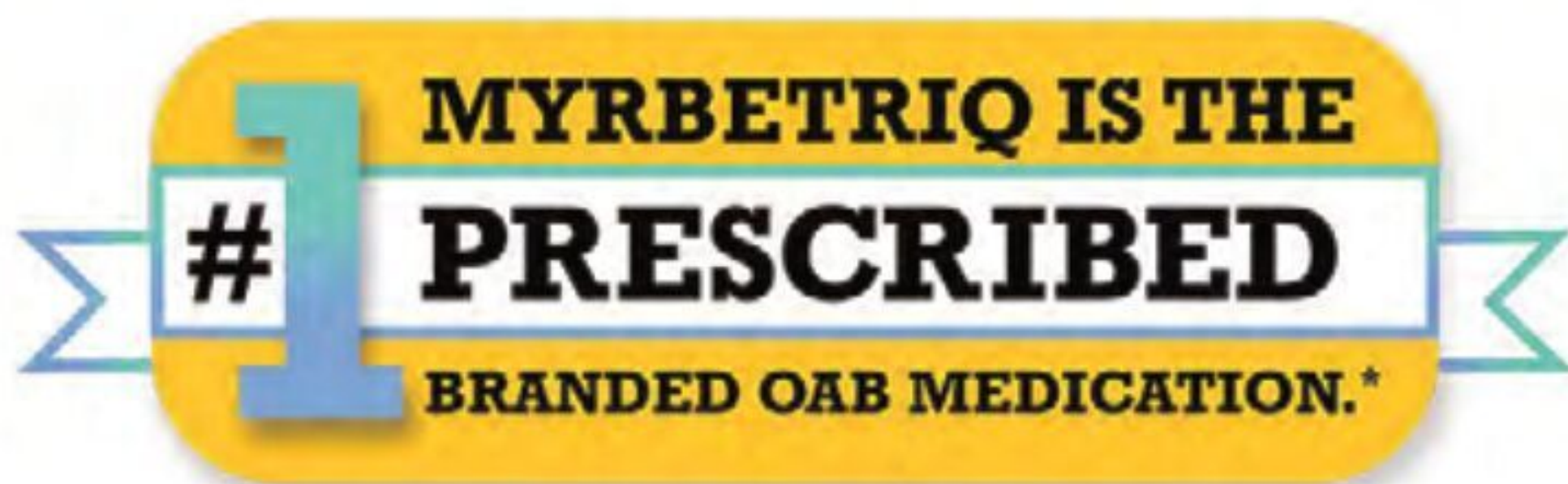
**Frequency**



**Leakage**

Take charge of your overactive bladder (OAB) symptoms by talking to your doctor about Myrbetriq today.

In clinical trials, those taking Myrbetriq made fewer trips to the bathroom and had fewer leaks than those not taking Myrbetriq. Your results may vary.



\*Based on 24-month TRx shares for all branded OAB medications, IMS Health National Prescription Audit, January 2019–December 2020. THIS INFORMATION DOES NOT IMPLY SAFETY OR EFFICACY OF ANY PRODUCT; NO COMPARISONS SHOULD BE MADE.



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## USE OF MYRBETRIQ

MYRBETRIQ® (mirabegron extended-release tablets) is a prescription medicine for adults used to treat overactive bladder (OAB) with symptoms of urgency, frequency and leakage.

## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

Do not take MYRBETRIQ if you are allergic to mirabegron or any ingredients in MYRBETRIQ. MYRBETRIQ may cause your blood pressure to increase or make your blood pressure worse if you have a history of high blood pressure. You and your doctor should check your blood pressure while you are taking MYRBETRIQ. Call your doctor if you have increased blood pressure.

MYRBETRIQ may increase your chances of not being able to empty your bladder. Tell your



## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION (continued)

doctor right away if you have trouble emptying your bladder or you have a weak urine stream. MYRBETRIQ may cause an allergic reaction with swelling of the face, lips, throat or tongue with or without difficulty breathing. Stop using MYRBETRIQ and go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take including medications for overactive bladder or other medicines especially thioridazine (Mellaril™ and Mellaril-S™), flecainide (Tambacor®), propafenone (Rythmol®), digoxin (Lanoxin®) or solifenacin succinate (VESIcare®). MYRBETRIQ may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how MYRBETRIQ works. Before taking MYRBETRIQ, tell your doctor

about all of your medical conditions, including if you have liver or kidney problems.

The most common side effects of MYRBETRIQ include high blood pressure, pain or swelling of the nose or throat (nasopharyngitis), urinary tract infection, and headache.

**For further information, please talk to your healthcare professional and see Brief Summary of Prescribing Information for Myrbetriq® (mirabegron extended-release tablets) on the following pages.**

**You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch) or call 1-800-FDA-1088.**

Find us on Facebook  
and visit [Myrbetriq.com](http://Myrbetriq.com)



**Myrbetriq®**  
(mirabegron extended-release tablets)  
25 mg, 50 mg

# ***Important Facts About MYRBETRIQ<sup>®</sup>*** ***(mirabegron extended-release tablets) Rx Only***

## ***Active Ingredient***

Myrbetriq (mirabegron extended-release tablets) 25 mg, 50 mg

## ***Purpose***

Overactive Bladder (OAB) Symptoms Treatment

## ***Uses***

Myrbetriq (meer-BEH-trick) is a prescription medication used to treat adults with the following symptoms due to a condition called overactive bladder: ■ Urge urinary incontinence: a strong need to urinate with leaking or wetting accidents ■ Urgency: a strong need to urinate right away ■ Frequency: urinating often

## ***Warnings***

**Do not** take Myrbetriq if you are allergic to mirabegron or any of the ingredients in Myrbetriq. See the end of this summary for a complete list of ingredients in Myrbetriq.

## ***Serious Side Effects***

■ **increased blood pressure**—You and your doctor should check your blood pressure while you are taking Myrbetriq. Call your doctor if you have increased blood pressure  
■ **inability to empty your bladder (urinary retention)**—Tell your doctor right away if you are unable to empty your bladder  
■ **angioedema**—Myrbetriq may cause an allergic reaction with swelling of the lips, face, tongue, or throat with or without difficulty breathing. Stop using Myrbetriq and go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.

## ***Tell your doctor about all of your medical conditions, including:***

■ liver problems or kidney problems ■ very high uncontrolled blood pressure ■ trouble emptying your bladder or you have a weak urine stream ■ if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if Myrbetriq will harm your unborn baby. Talk to your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. ■ if you are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if Myrbetriq passes into your breast milk. Talk to your doctor about the best way to feed your baby if you take Myrbetriq.

**Myrbetriq may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how Myrbetriq works. Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take,** including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Tell your doctor if you take: ■ thioridazine (Mellaril™ or Mellaril-S™)

■ flecainide (Tambocor<sup>®</sup>) ■ propafenone (Rythmol<sup>®</sup>) ■ digoxin (Lanoxin<sup>®</sup>) ■ solifenacin succinate (VESIcare<sup>®</sup>)

## ***Most Common Side Effects***

■ high blood pressure ■ pain or swelling of the nose or throat (nasopharyngitis) ■ urinary tract infection ■ headache

Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away, or if you have swelling of the face, lips, tongue or throat, hives, skin rash, or itching while taking Myrbetriq.

*These are not all the possible side effects of Myrbetriq. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist. **You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088 or [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch)***

## ***Directions***

■ Take Myrbetriq exactly as your doctor tells you to take it ■ Take 1 Myrbetriq tablet 1 time a day ■ Take Myrbetriq with water and swallow the tablet whole ■ Do not chew, break, or crush the tablet ■ You can take Myrbetriq with or without food ■ If you miss a dose of Myrbetriq, take it as soon as possible. If it has been more than 12 hours since taking the last dose of Myrbetriq tablets, skip that dose and take the next dose at the usual time ■ If you take too much Myrbetriq, call your doctor or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away

**Keep Myrbetriq and all medicines out of the reach of children.**

## ***Inactive Ingredients***

Butylated hydroxytoluene, hydroxypropyl cellulose, hypromellose, magnesium stearate, polyethylene glycol, polyethylene oxide, red ferric oxide (25 mg Myrbetriq tablet only), and yellow ferric oxide.

**For more information about Myrbetriq, talk to your health care provider.**

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**057-4598-PM 4/21**

 **Myrbetriq<sup>®</sup>**  
(mirabegron extended-release tablets)  
25 mg, 50 mg



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HOW TO

# Know How Much to Tip

*New rules of gratuities*

BY *Charlotte Hilton Andersen*

FOR YEARS, JESSICA and Eric Miller of Ogden, Utah, have lived down the street from their favorite sandwich shop. Despite its being so close to home, they preferred to dine in, and always tipped generously when they did. But, of course, they didn't get to dine in during much of 2020. The cafe temporarily closed at the start of the pandemic, then reopened—for takeout orders only. So the Millers' new routine became to order online, go pick up their food, and eat it at home. Tipping never crossed their minds.

That is, until the day they drove up and a waitress ran out to meet them.

"I was wondering if I'm doing something wrong," she said, "because you never leave a tip."

This caught the couple off guard. Eric attempted to explain: "Because we aren't being waited on, we didn't think tipping was necessary."

That made it worse. "She stormed

off," Jessica says. "We weren't trying to be cheap. We just didn't know."

The pandemic has been particularly hard on people who work for tips. Some haven't been able to do their jobs at all, while others don't interact with customers the same way. In either case, "Tips dried up, causing a lot of people to suffer," says Toni Dupree, a professional etiquette coach.

Meanwhile, many customers felt the need to tip more because of the new risks and hardships that essential service workers suddenly faced.

"There was no rhyme or reason," says Dupree. "We were tipping based on emotion, and that may not have had anything to do with the service."

That service also became harder to assess. What (if anything) do you give to waitstaff who aren't technically waiting on you, to delivery drivers who now stop at your house several

times a week, or to people who do your grocery shopping for you?

Just as many services have changed, so should tipping, says Lisa Grotts, author of several etiquette books. Some old standards no longer seem fair, and several newer ones will apply long after the pandemic is over.

Some new rules of tipping that are likely here to stay:

**Give more if you can.**

It's common for tips to be divided between all the workers at a store or restaurant, not just those who interact directly with customers. So giving generously ensures a fairer tip for all.

**Think outside the (cash) box.**

You can also "tip" with a thank-you note or a homemade gift when a business (or your budget) doesn't permit gratuities. Consider writing a review online, making sure to name names.

**Treat business owners differently.**

A practice of the past, tipping the boss separately is no longer necessary. But if she provides you your service, tip her as you would any of her workers.

As for specific situations, here's what the experts recommend:

**FOOD AND DRINKS**

*Restaurant workers*

**OLD RULE:** Leave a tip only when you dine in.

**NEW RULE:** Always tip, even for takeout.

**TIP:** 15 to 20 percent when you dine in, and 10 to 15 percent on takeout or delivery orders.



*Bartenders*

**OLD RULE:** \$1 per drink.

**NEW RULE:** Give more, and tip after each round since bartenders often split tips with everyone on their shift.

**TIP:** \$2 per drink, or 10 to 15 percent of the total tab.

*Baristas*

**OLD RULE:** Leave your change.

**NEW RULE:** Give at least a dollar.

**TIP:** \$1 per drink, or more if your order is complicated.

*Personal shoppers*

**OLD RULE:** N/A. Many of these services, such as grocery pickup, are newer.

**NEW RULE:** Tip, and do it in the app, since you are unlikely to interact directly with your shopper.

**TIP:** 10 to 15 percent. If a tip is already included, add a few dollars extra.

**HOME DELIVERIES**

*Package delivery drivers*

**OLD RULE:** Don't tip.

**NEW RULE:** Show appreciation if you get deliveries more than once a week.  
**TIP:** Drinks, snacks, or \$5 to \$20 if a package is particularly heavy or large. Postal workers cannot accept cash or gifts worth more than \$50 per year. UPS tells drivers to decline tips unless a customer insists. And FedEx prohibits employees from accepting cash or cash equivalents (such as gift cards).

### *Furniture delivery people*

**OLD RULE:** Give a few dollars.  
**NEW RULE:** Give more, especially for large items and if they install or assemble something, or remove old items.  
**TIP:** \$20, or 15 percent of the price.

### *Flower delivery drivers*

**OLD RULE:** The person who places the order tips those who deliver flowers (and other specialty items).  
**NEW RULE:** You can't assume the gift giver already tipped, so if you're lucky enough to get such a delivery, pass the goodwill along in the form of a tip.  
**TIP:** \$5 to \$10.

## PERSONAL SERVICES

### *Ride-share drivers*

**OLD RULE:** Tip in cash.  
**NEW RULE:** Ask your driver. The Lyft and Uber apps let you add gratuities, but some drivers prefer cash.  
**TIP:** 15 to 20 percent.

### *Pet care providers*

**OLD RULE:** Don't tip.  
**NEW RULE:** Dog walkers, pet groomers,

and pet sitters should be tipped, but not veterinarians or vet techs.  
**TIP:** 10 to 15 percent.

### *Hairstylists*

**OLD RULE:** 10 percent.  
**NEW RULE:** Extra cleaning protocols mean extra work. Acknowledge that with a bigger tip.  
**TIP:** 15 to 20 percent, plus \$5 to \$10 for an assistant who shampoos your hair.

### *Home service providers*

**OLD RULE:** Don't tip.  
**NEW RULE:** Tip at your discretion. Painters, plumbers, repair people, and other home maintenance types generally include their labor in the price, but give a bit more if you feel their service was extraordinary.  
**TIP:** A small gift, a note, or \$10 to \$20.

### *Hotel housekeepers*

**OLD RULE:** Tip at the end of your stay.  
**NEW RULE:** Many hotels now do housekeeping by request only, so tip every time you ask them to come.  
**TIP:** A few dollars per night, plus \$5 for any extra requests, such as asking for additional toiletries.

Next time you're unsure whether a gratuity is in order, follow this simple rule: When in doubt, tip. The novelist George Eliot asked, "What do we live for if not to make the world less difficult for each other?" Dupree adds: "Tipping well is one way to make things easier for someone else." **R**

HUMOR *in*  
**UNIFORM**

**My third grader's** teacher assigned the following prompt: "Veterans Day honors the men and women who have served in our armed forces. Do you think you would like to serve in the military one day? Explain."

Here is Justin's response: "Yes, I would like to serve in the military someday. I would like to serve chocolate chip ice cream, strawberry, chocolate, and vanilla ice cream. I would ask, 'What kind of flavor would you like?' I'd also ask, 'What kind of cone do you like?' That's what I would like to serve in the military."

—ADEL DIORIO  
*Portland, Michigan*



"So, the memo said '21-gnu salute,' huh?"

**At the Marine Corps Officer Candidates School,** an instructor told us how all the physical training they would put us through would come in handy once we left the service. "When we get through with you," he said, "you should be able to whip any

civilian in a fight. And if you can't do that, you can surely outrun him."

—DAVID NELSON  
*Houston, Texas*

**YOUR FUNNY MILITARY story could be worth \$\$\$.** For details, go to [RD.COM/SUBMIT](http://RD.COM/SUBMIT).

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# Pass the Peas, Please

BY *Kate Lowenstein*  
AND *Daniel Gritzer*

**T**HE SLEEPLESS PRINCESS in Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale was far from the only aristocrat to fuss over a pea. In 16th- and 17th-century France, the vogue vegetable sent the nobility into a tizzy. So great was the craze around eating these bright green mini-treats in the spring-time that Madame de Maintenon, the second wife of King Louis XIV, wrote one season:

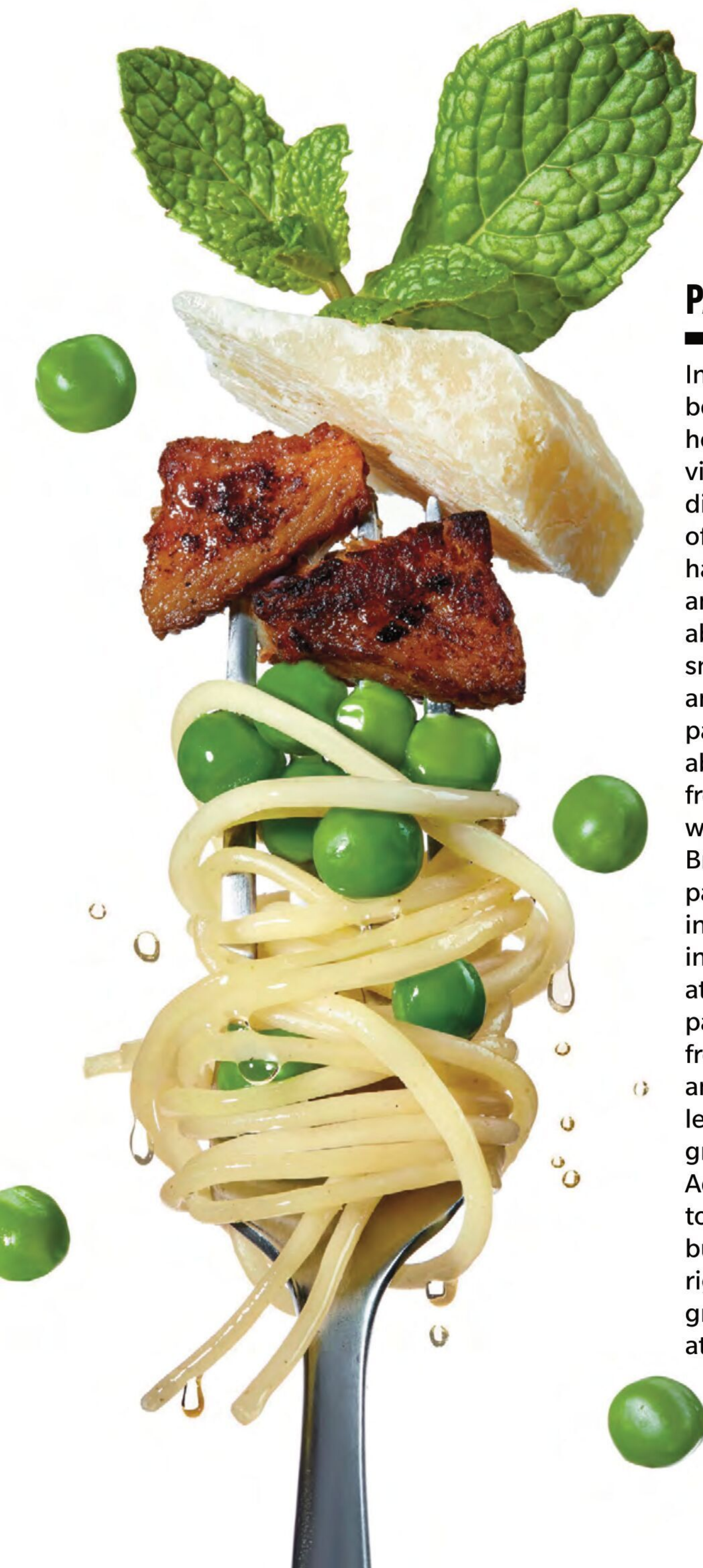
"The question of peas continues. The anticipation of eating them, the pleasure of having eaten them, and the joy of eating them again are the three subjects that our princes have been discussing for four days ... It has become a fashion—indeed, a passion."

Peas are among the oldest crops in human history, though exactly what constitutes a pea is a little hard to pin down. Just about anything we call

a pea—whether a garden pea, snow pea, chickpea, or peanut—grows in a pod and is a member of the larger legume family called *Fabaceae* (generally pronounced "fuh-'bay-see-ee"). That's the same family from which fava beans get their name. The peas we eat when fresh, green, and sweet—including garden peas, snap peas, and snow peas—are usually members of the *Pisum* genus. That also goes for green split peas, which tend to be sold dried rather than fresh, and are frequently cooked into soup and porridge. Other types of peas, such as chickpeas and peanuts, belong to different genera.

Sweet pea season is tantalizingly short. The tender stalks and pods pop up as the winter months start melting into spring; within a few weeks, the plants are overgrown and the peas not nearly as tasty. In fact, as soon as you pick a pea off the vine, its sugars start converting to starch, rendering it less delicate and sweet. Hence why peas are so commonly sold frozen—freezing them when freshly picked preserves a lot of their desirable qualities. Had the court of Louis XIV enjoyed the luxury of refrigeration, they might not have spent a few weeks every spring losing their minds over some tiny green vegetables. **R**

*Kate Lowenstein is a health journalist and the editor-in-chief at Vice; Daniel Gritzer is the culinary director of the cooking site Serious Eats.*



## PASTA E PISELLI

In a large (4- or 5-quart) heavy-bottomed pot over medium-high heat, add 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil and  $\frac{1}{4}$  pound diced pancetta; cook, stirring often, until most of the pancetta has lightly browned all over and most of its fat has rendered, about 7 minutes. Add 1 minced small yellow onion; cook, stirring and scraping the bottom of the pan, until the onion is softened, about 4 minutes. Stir in 1 pound frozen peas, followed by 3 cups water and a large pinch of salt. Bring to a boil, then add 1 pound pasta. Cook, stirring and scraping, until pasta is al dente, adding more boiling water  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup at a time as needed to keep the pasta just submerged. Remove from heat, then season with salt and stir in about 15 torn mint leaves followed by  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano. Add boiling water if necessary to give the sauce a thickened but brothy consistency. Serve right away, sprinkling with more grated Parmigiano-Reggiano at the table.

13 THINGS

# Serving Up the Sizzle on Plant-Based Meat

BY *Michelle Crouch*



**1** IF YOU tried veggie burgers years ago and dismissed them as rubbery, flavorless hockey pucks, it's a good time to give meat substitutes another chance. You can find plant-based versions of chicken, pork, sausage, and deli cuts, as well as seafoods such as tuna and shrimp. Newer varieties mimic the look, flavor, and texture of the real thing. Some even "bleed" like beef and give off that signature sizzle as they cook.

**2** CLEARLY, PLANT-BASED proteins aren't just for vegetarians and vegans. Impossible Foods and



Beyond Meat—two of the biggest names in the industry—report that more than 9 out of 10 of their consumers also eat meat. And while only 5 percent of Americans are vegetarians, many more—about a quarter—say they eat plant-based meat fairly often.

**3** IF YOU'RE new to meatless meats, you could start by substituting veggie versions of ground meat into your favorite tacos, chili, stew, or pasta sauce, or by topping a salad with faux chicken strips. "It's pretty easy to incorporate vegan meats into something like that," says Gena Hamshaw, a registered dietitian. "It's a different story with a burger, because the burger is the star of the show."

**4** BUYER BEWARE: Mock meats can be high in sodium and can have as much saturated fat and as many calories as real meats. As for protein,

the amount in veggie burgers ranges from about 4 to 20 grams (3 ounces of beef contains 22 grams), but the better protein options tend to have more saturated fat.

**5** MANY MEATLESS manufacturers don't disclose their total emissions, but research shows they generate a lot less greenhouse gas compared to their meat equivalents. One study found that making the Beyond Burger uses 99 percent less water, 93 percent less land, and nearly 50 percent less energy than making a quarter-pound beef burger does.

**6** WHETHER OR not these products can be called "meat" depends on where they're sold. A growing number of states have banned plant-based companies from using the word on their product labels—even with a qualifier such as "vegetarian."

Lawmakers say they don't want consumers to be tricked into buying fake meat by mistake. Some food manufacturers have challenged the law in court, saying it limits free speech and is intended to protect the meat industry.

**7** THE BIGGEST meat producers in the United States (Tyson Foods) and in the world (JBS) both now sell their own entirely plant-based lineups. It's a smart sideline: Sales of plant-based meats soared to \$7 billion in 2020, and Bloomberg predicts the market will skyrocket to \$74 billion by 2030—a 957 percent surge.

**8** EVEN FAST food is jumping on the bandwagon. Burger King has the Impossible Whopper. McDonald's is testing a Beyond burger called the McPlant. And KFC is working on fake fried chicken as finger-lickin' good as the original.

**9** YOU CAN make your own meatless chicken with only two ingredients, as millions of TikTok users learned in a video that went viral last year. Just mix together flour and water, then knead it and rinse it under more water to wash out the starch. You'll get a dough that looks (and sort of tastes) like chicken. The trick is a version of a meat alternative called seitan ('say-tan), or wheat gluten, which has been around for centuries.

**10** "BIG MEAT" has launched an advertising campaign against its plant-based competitors. The Center for Consumer Freedom, which is funded by the food industry, has placed full-page ads in newspapers with the headline "What's

hiding in your plant-based meat?"

**11** IMPOSSIBLE FOODS spent years developing a molecule called heme (rhymes with seem), which gives its products a bloody red appearance and beefy taste. (For many who find meat unpalatable, heme will be similarly unappetizing.) The nonprofit Center for Food Safety filed a lawsuit challenging FDA approval of heme, but an appeals court later upheld the decision to declare it safe to eat.

**12** THE NEW frontier of meat alternatives is lab-grown, also called cultured or cell-based meat. Grown in test tubes from the stem cells of animals, they are still animal products, but they don't

require breeding, raising, or slaughtering. A plant-based option is mushroom meat, which mimics the texture of whole cuts such as steaks, and slices and serves like them too.

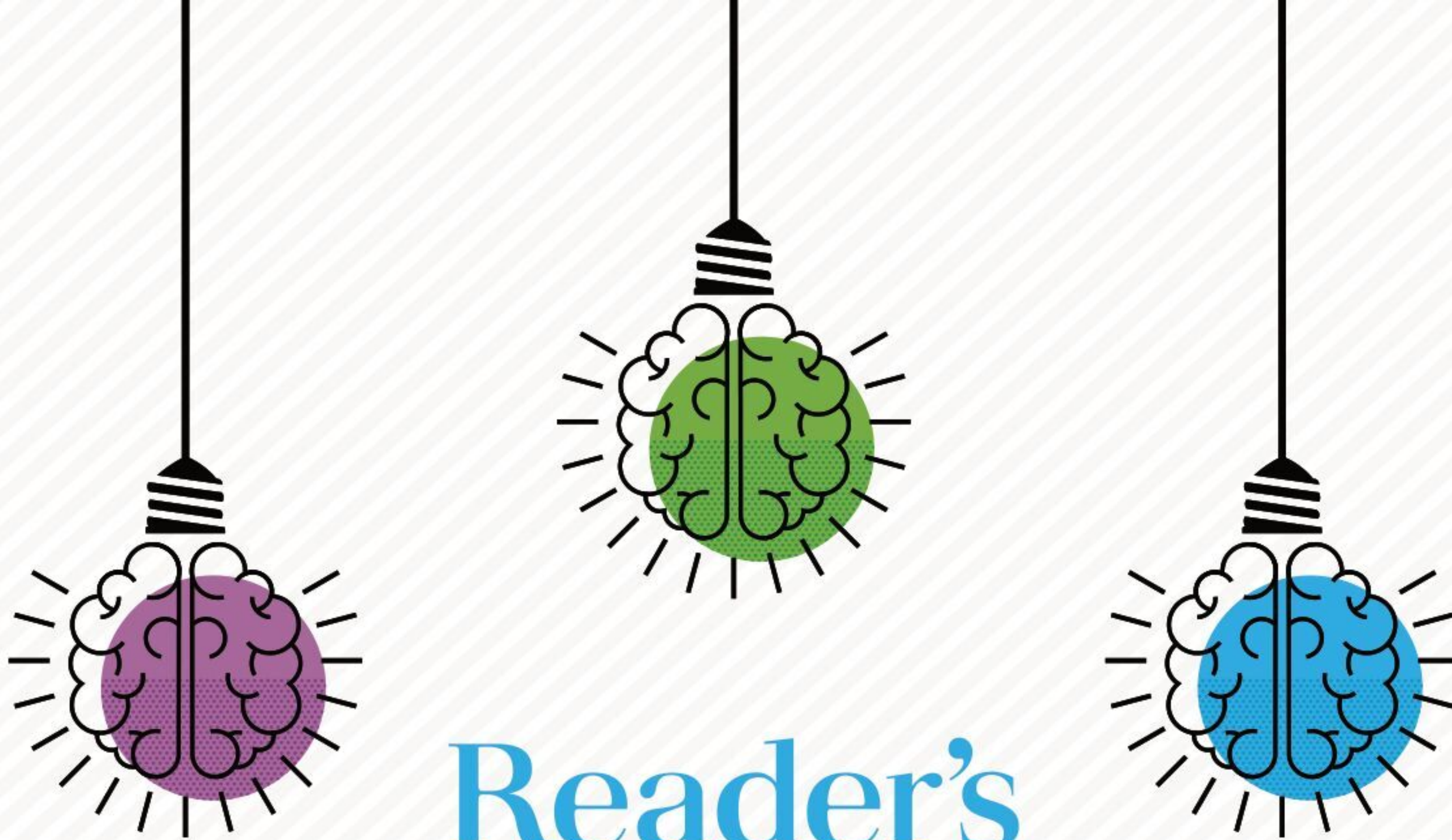
**13** NEW ALTERNATE meats get all the attention, but don't forget about old standbys such as tofu and tempeh, or simply making your own patties out of whole grains and vegetables. Beans and lentils are excellent protein substitutes, says Kari Hamerschlag, deputy director of food and agriculture at Friends of the Earth, a nonprofit environmental organization. "They're nutritious, inexpensive, and far more sustainable than any of the processed meatless substitutes on the market today." **R**



### **In Want of a Wife**

**I've never been married, but I've had a few near Mrs.**

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Reader's  
Digest

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ALL  
in a Day's  
**WORK**

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

When we returned to our client's office, he looked alarmed. "What happened to you?"

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

—JUNE RAINBOW  
*Robins, Iowa*

**A woman** approached me at the bank wanting to buy a savings bond for her granddaughter who was being baptized. Not sure



**"What's this I hear about large quantities of ice, fish, and small sea creatures being purchased by your department?"**

how much she wanted to spend, I asked, "What denomination?"

She replied, "Protestant."  
—BARBARA CONAGE  
*Schuylkill Haven, Pennsylvania*

**The journal** *Annals of Improbable Research* awards the annual Ig Nobel prizes in recognition of some very real

yet very weird achievements in science, politics, and more. In 2020, the Ig Nobel Peace Prize went to the governments of India and Pakistan for an activity one might call Diplomatic Ding-Dong Ditch, in which diplomats ring each other's doorbells in the middle of the night and run away before anyone

has a chance to answer. For 2021, the peace prize went to American researchers for testing the hairy hypothesis that humans evolved beards to protect themselves from punches to the face.

**Scene: Bookstore.**

I answer the phone...

**Me:** “Hi, this is [Bookstore]. Can I help you?”

**Caller:** “Yes, do you have *Ulysses* in stock?”

**Me:** “We have it in paperback and hardcover. Do you want to make a reservation?”

**Caller:** “What is the author’s name?”

**Me:** “It’s James Joyce.”

**Caller:** “J-A-M-E-S-J-O-Y-C-E, ten letters... Thank you! I’m doing a crossword, and I needed the answer to this.” \*click\*

SOURCE: NOTALWAYSRIGHT.COM

**DO YOU HAVE A FUNNY workplace story? It could be worth \$\$\$.** For details, go to [RD.COM/SUBMIT](http://RD.COM/SUBMIT).

One of the McDonald’s staff just told me they didn’t know who Grimace was, and my brain went haywire, and I blurted out “He WORKS here.”

—@BEA\_KER

**HOW TO APPEAR SMART IN BUSINESS MEETINGS**

◆ If someone says “About 25 percent of all users click on the button,” quickly chime in with “So about 1 in 4?” Everyone will nod their heads in agreement, secretly envious of your quick math skills.

◆ There comes a point in most meetings when everyone is chiming in except you. This is a great point to go “Guys, guys, guys—can we take a step back here?” Follow up with a quick “What problem are we really trying to solve?” and boom! You’ve bought yourself another hour of looking smart.

◆ After the engineer utters his divine words, chime in with “Let me just repeat that,” and repeat exactly what he just said. Now his brilliance has been transferred to you.

◆ Ask “Will this scale?” no matter what it is. No one really knows what that means, but it’s a good catchall question.

◆ Ask the presenter to go back a slide. It doesn’t matter where in the presentation you shout this out. It’ll immediately make you look as if you’re paying closer attention than everyone else is.

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# What Do Your Stomach Pains Mean?

*Where—and how much—it hurts offer clues to what the problem might be*

—  
 BY Susan Jara

**W**HAT A LOT of us refer to as stomachaches or tummy troubles can indicate many different things that are happening in the abdomen, not all of which actually affect the stomach. Usually the discomfort we're feeling is due to a bit of indigestion or gas, or an uncomfortable but fairly harmless intestinal virus (the "stomach flu"). But certain symptoms may signal something more serious. If you experience any of these pains—or any abdominal pain that's

severe or persists beyond a few days—see a doctor so you can get your digestive tract running smoothly again:

**Heartburn:** Burning pain in the center of the abdomen

This feeling is all too common after a big greasy meal. The key word is “burning,” says Lawrence J. Brandt, MD, a gastroenterologist at Montefiore Medical Center in Bronx, New York. And it’s typically coupled with a bitter taste in your mouth. Acid reflux is the regurgitation of partially digested liquids or foods that have mixed with stomach acid. This acidic mix makes its way into the esophagus and throat, causing a burning sensation. A survey published in the journal

*Gastroenterology* in 2019 reported that nearly a third of American adults suffered from heartburn each week. Occasional heartburn is nothing to worry about. But chronic heartburn—known as acid reflux or gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)—can lead to more serious problems, including damage to the esophagus, if left untreated. An over-the-counter antacid should immediately dampen heartburn symptoms. If it doesn’t, you might be dealing with something else.

**Ulcer:** Dull burning pain, often in the upper part of the abdomen

This is the hallmark sign of a peptic ulcer, and usually comes with bloating, burping, poor appetite, and weight

I TRIED IT...

**Hypnosis to Beat a Sugar Addiction**



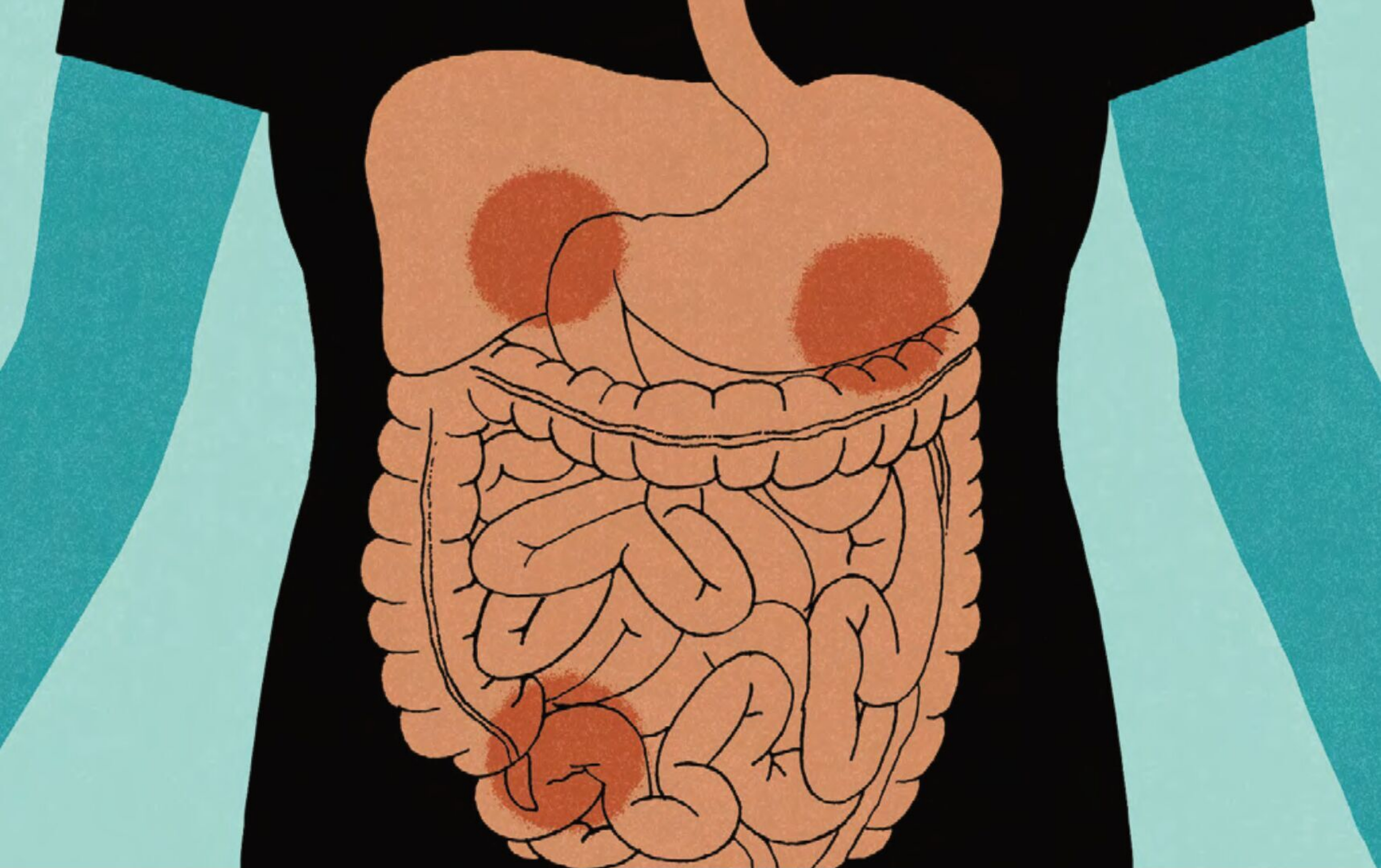
**All my life, I’ve been a sugar fiend.** And with two young kids at home, it’s sometimes impossible not to have candy in the house. One Easter, I really indulged. I didn’t even enjoy it. Afterward, I thought about why I was eating the candy and couldn’t come up with a good answer. So I consulted Richard Barker, a Florida-based hypnotist. During our session, he had me focus on a single point, then close my eyes, relax, and listen. When I had sugar cravings, he said, I would opt for something healthier, and I would do this because I wanted to live a long life. When the session ended, I felt refreshed and happy.

As for the cravings, the next day I still had them, but I didn’t indulge. I passed on the bowl of Hershey’s Kisses a coworker kept on her desk and instead made a cup of tea. It was as if a switch had been flipped.

I had only that one session, so it’s difficult to say if I’m cured. But I definitely feel that hypnosis put me on the right track for better health. —Anne L. Fritz

MATT\_BENOIT/GETTY IMAGES





loss. The pain can often be relieved by eating or by taking antacids. Peptic ulcers are sores on the lining of the stomach or top of the small intestine. And despite what you've likely heard, they're not caused by stress. Instead, you can blame one of two major culprits: *Helicobacter pylori* (or *H. pylori*), a bacterium that damages the mucous coating of the stomach, or the overuse of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as aspirin and ibuprofen. Symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, blood in the stool, chest pain, or back pain indicate you should see a doctor right away.

**Appendicitis:** Sharp pain in the lower right side of the abdomen  
This kind of “stomach” pain could spell appendicitis, especially if you

also have a low-grade fever, constipation or diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting, according to the Mayo Clinic. If you do have appendicitis, the pain will likely increase whenever you move around or take deep breaths, cough, or sneeze. Appendicitis happens when the appendix becomes inflamed and filled with pus, often from an infection. Treatment usually requires surgery to remove the appendix before it ruptures and spreads infection throughout the abdominal cavity.

### **Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS):** Cramping in the lower abdomen

If you're experiencing ongoing abdominal pain accompanied by bloating, gassiness, and a change in bowel habits—either constipation or

diarrhea—it could be irritable bowel syndrome. “IBS is probably one of the most common gastrointestinal disorders that a gastroenterologist sees,” says Dr. Brandt. IBS affects about 12 percent of the U.S. population, with more women than men diagnosed with the disorder. Though the cause is unknown, problems in brain-gut communication may contribute. The condition shouldn't cause weight loss or rectal bleeding, says Dr. Brandt. Those are signs that something else is going on.

### **Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD):**

#### **Abdominal pain and cramping, rectal bleeding**

These painful symptoms often indicate inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), which includes Crohn's disease (chronic inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract) and ulcerative colitis (inflammation in the innermost lining of the large intestine). These conditions have similar symptoms, which can make it difficult for doctors to make a diagnosis, according to the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America. Besides abdominal pain, cramping, and bleeding, other symptoms of IBD can include diarrhea, weight loss, kidney stones, vitamin D deficiency, and electrolyte abnormalities. (IBS doesn't cause those symptoms.) About 3 million Americans have Crohn's or ulcerative colitis, according to the foundation.

### **Gallstones: Discomfort around the belly button**

If this type of pain is coupled with dull pain near the shoulder and seems to act up after eating fatty meals, gallstones may be to blame. And if you're female and older than 40 and you've had children, you're at greater risk than the rest of the population. This is because spikes in estrogen, common during pregnancy, may cause these tiny stones to form in the gallbladder. Gallstones can go undetected for years and are generally painless unless they get stuck in the cystic duct (a tube that connects the gallbladder with another tube that carries bile from the liver), says Dr. Brandt.

### **Diverticulitis: Sudden pain in the lower left area of the abdomen**

If such abdominal pain strikes suddenly, along with gas, it may signal diverticulitis. This is another form of inflammation, this time of small pouches called diverticula, which can form in the large intestine. Diverticulitis is a fairly common gastrointestinal disorder among older adults and is usually caused by eating a diet too low in fiber. About half of the U.S. population over age 60 have it. Most people don't have any symptoms, but when symptoms do occur, they usually include abdominal pain on the left side, fever, nausea, cramping, and a change in bowel habits (constipation or diarrhea).

# Ways to Build Resilience

BY *Russell McLendon*



**B**EING RESILIENT ISN'T about avoiding misfortune, but rather how we respond to it. Resilience means “doing well in the face of risk or adversity,” says Suniya Luthar, PhD, cofounder of Authentic Connections, a company that helps teach resilience and well-being.

Recently we’ve all needed to draw on our resilience. “We all get depleted from time to time, and the pandemic has drained the resilience capacity of nearly everyone, at one time or another,” says Ann Masten, PhD, a professor of child development at the University of Minnesota.

Even if you consider yourself resilient, you may need a booster dose in especially hard times. To build

resilience, the experts suggest the following:

## **Nurture relationships**

Set up and maintain a support network before you need it, says Michael Ungar, PhD, author of *Change Your World: The Science of Resilience and the True Path to Success*. When adversity strikes, a supportive friend with good listening skills can make a big difference. And if you want your friends and family to support your resilience, remember to support theirs too.

## **Find a sense of purpose**

“When somebody needs you, you just cope with stress that much better,” Ungar says. Your sense of purpose doesn’t have to come from school or work; it can also come from hobbies or volunteer projects, like growing a backyard vegetable garden or cleaning up litter in a neighborhood park.

## **Don’t try to banish misfortune completely**

Resilience usually refers to how we handle serious adversity, Masten says, but our reactions to big problems may be informed partly by the many smaller setbacks we face in daily life. “Everyday stress probably helps us learn how to handle bigger challenges and gradually optimize our adaptive systems,” she says. **R**



News FROM THE  
**WORLD OF  
MEDICINE**

## **SPENDING TIME OUTDOORS IS GOOD FOR YOUR BRAIN**

We know that getting some fresh air can be a mood lifter, but now a German study gives us insight into why. When researchers scanned city dwellers' brains, they discovered that those who spent more time outside had a larger volume of gray matter in the right prefrontal cortex—the area involved in planning thoughts and actions. Of course, the stakes for getting outside could be even higher than a mood shift: Earlier studies have found that less prefrontal gray matter is linked to depression. If you're not naturally inclined to leave the coziness of your home, make it a goal to spend at least two hours outside every week.

## **A Nature-Inspired Wound Glue**

Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) were searching for a better way to quickly seal wounds in critical lifesaving situations. They looked to an unusual place for inspiration: barnacles, the small sea creatures that attach firmly to rocks, ship hulls, and other wet, dirty surfaces. By mimicking the properties of the barnacles' sticky proteins, the MIT team created a bio-compatible glue that can adhere to human tissues even when covered in blood, forming a seal within 15 seconds. This is far faster than the several minutes it takes for sutures or patches with blood-clotting features to do the same. After some more study, the product should be available around the world for first responders facing emergency situations.



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## Exercise Builds Bones and Protects Against Cancer

While it may seem counterintuitive, a British study has found that people who suffer from osteoporosis—a condition that causes bones to become fragile and break easily—could benefit from exercising more. Researchers found that exercising slows osteoporosis by accelerating the formation of new bone cell tissue and removal of old. Exercise may also help ward off cancer by activating a tumor suppressor gene, which leaves less room for cancer cells to invade. Many hospitals recommend that cancer patients exercise for up to 150 minutes a week, as it boosts energy and strength while reducing pain and anxiety.

## BERRIES PROMOTE GOOD BLOOD PRESSURE

A study from researchers in Germany and Ireland reveals that eating foods rich in flavonoids—such as berries, pears, and apples—creates a virtuous cycle inside your body that lowers blood pressure. These plant compounds increase the abundance and diversity of good bacteria in the gut. This in turn helps your body better metabolize the next flavonoids to come along, enhancing their natural medicinal effects.

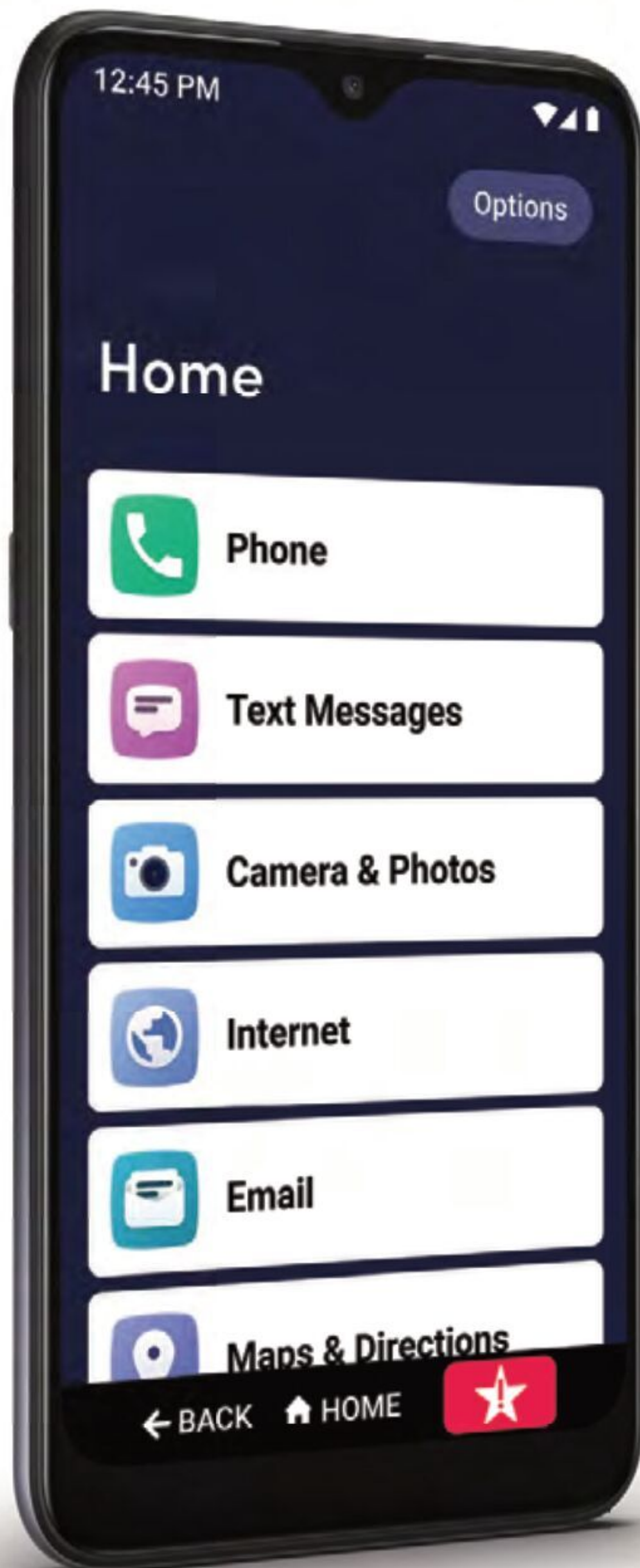


## A Deadly Spider Venom That Can Save Lives

Australian scientists have discovered a potentially lifesaving treatment for heart attack victims. Incredibly, it comes from the venom of the world's deadliest spider. Existing treatments reduce blood clots, but they don't block the "death signal"—what doctors call the body's inability to send blood, and thereby oxygen, to the heart after an attack. Because of its effect on cell acidity, a protein produced by the Fraser Island (K'gari) funnel-web spider blocks the death signal, allowing more heart cells to survive. As well as giving heart attack victims better outcomes, the drug now being developed could also extend the life of donor hearts used for organ transplants. **R**

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**LAUGHTER**  
THE BEST *Medicine*

- Why is it** that all our most profound thoughts come while our hair is wet? These "Shower Thoughts" on Reddit are proof:
- ◆ Your stomach thinks all potato is mashed.
  - ◆ A group of squid should be called a squad.
  - ◆ I will be the last person to die in my lifetime.
  - ◆ This "spring forward" thing would be a lot more popular if we moved the clocks ahead at 2 p.m. on a Monday.

No offense to the von Trapps, but if I go to a lavish party and seven kids just start singing about how they have to go to bed, I'm using that time to refill my drink.

— @1FOLLOWERNODAD



BULLY IN THE CHINA SHOP

**In his latest book, *A Carnival of Snackery*,** humorist David Sedaris shares jokes that his fans tell him. One of his favorites goes like this:

It's late at night and a man is getting ready

for bed when he hears a knock on his door. He opens it and looks down to see a snail.

"I'd like to talk to you about buying some magazine subscriptions," says the snail.

Furious at being disturbed, the man rears back, kicks the snail as hard as he can, and storms off to bed.

Two years later there comes another knock. The man answers and again finds the snail,



who looks up and says, “What the @#\$% was that all about?”

**The attorney enters** his client’s jail cell and announces, “I have some good news and some bad news.”

“What’s the bad news?” his client asks nervously.

“The bad news is, your blood is all over the crime scene, and the DNA tests prove you did it,” says the lawyer.

“What’s the good news?”

“Your cholesterol is only 130.”

—Submitted by

JACOB ALLEN  
*Farmville, Virginia*

**The first woman** to have a baby was probably like “*Whaatt the ... !!!!*”

—@SPINUBZILLA

**YOUR FUNNY JOKE,** list, or quote could be worth \$\$\$\$. For details, see page 2 or go to [RD.COM/SUBMIT](http://RD.COM/SUBMIT).



Calling fans of lousy writing! Here are intentionally bad first lines for nonexistent novels taken from the annual Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest:

◆ Brigid O’Hanion was the fairest flower of Southern womanhood, and Lt. Lance Beauregard was almost blind with lust for her, but after he slipped off her hoop skirt, unbuttoned her lacy blouse, untied her corset, dove beneath the rustling crinoline petticoats, and laboriously inched off her pantalets, he realized his mood had shifted and he now wondered if there was still some cold ham on the sideboard downstairs.

—RANDALL CARD

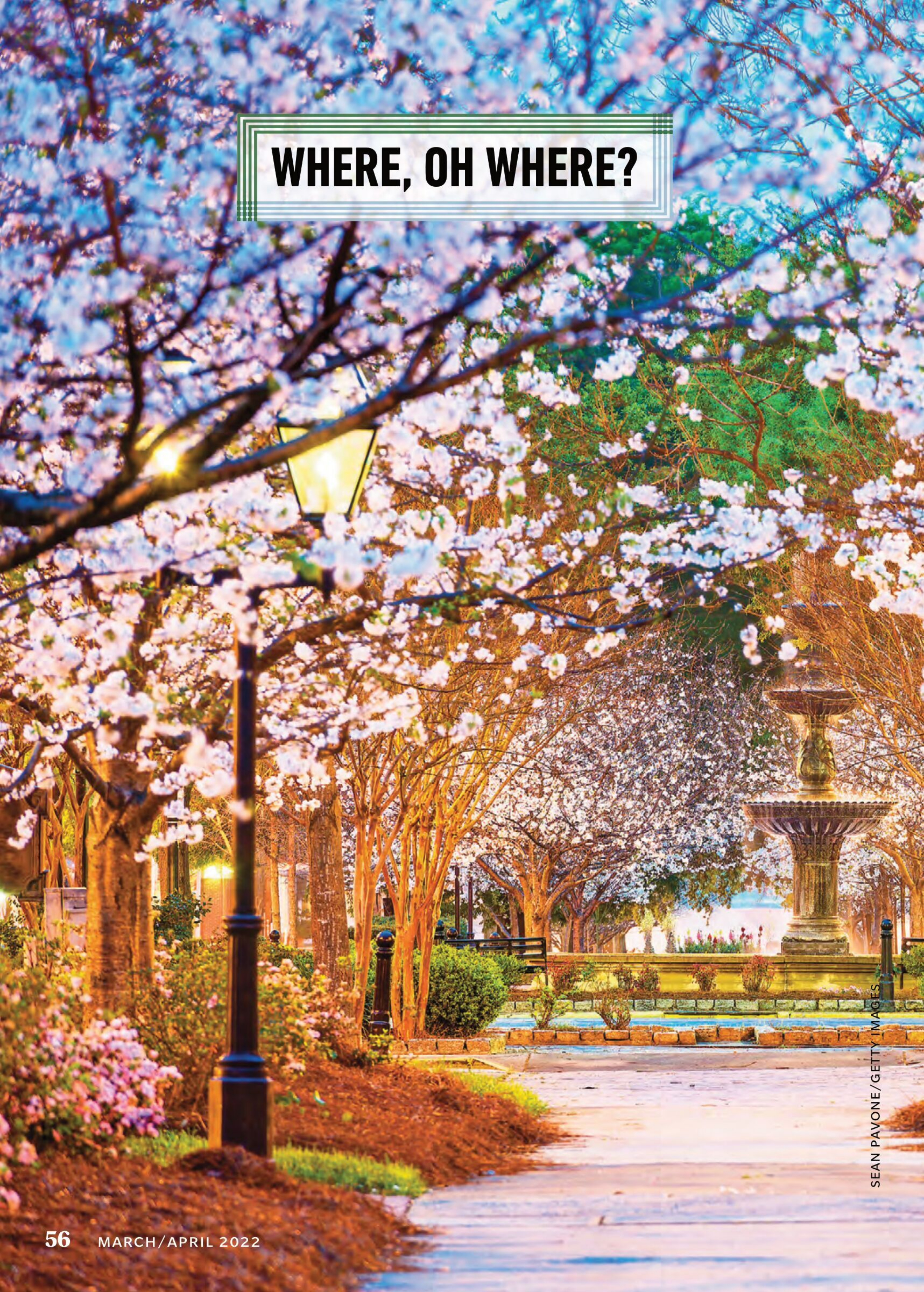
◆ His voice rang out sweet and loud, like maple syrup that had achieved speech and wished to push its deeply held political beliefs on others.

—PAUL KOLLAS


◆ After commandeering the Black Dog Saloon for a day and a half to lay out every map, zoning ordinance, and land deed in the Territory, and after checking and rechecking their cartographic calculations, Tumbleweed Mulligan and Johnny “Trigger” McAllister were forced to admit that there might just be room in this town for the both of them.

—BEN CONNOR

# WHERE, OH WHERE?



SEAN PAVONE/GETTY IMAGES



**S**PRING HAS SPRUNG! The arrival of March means the blooming of cherry blossoms, and for 40 years, this city—with its more than 350,000 Yoshino cherry trees—has celebrated the season with an annual festival the locals call “the pinkest party on earth.” The park pictured here plays host to many of the main events and now shares its name with the festival’s founder, Carolyn Crayton, who also organized the planting of many of the trees around this area, referred to by congressional records as the Cherry Blossom Capital of the World. Where is it? (*Answer on PAGE 119.*)

- A** Washington, DC
- B** Macon, Georgia
- C** Aiea, Hawaii
- D** St. Louis, Missouri



# SURVIVED!

***WHEN FACED WITH CERTAIN DEATH,  
YOU NEED BRAVERY, DETERMINATION—  
AND PLENTY OF LUCK. THE STORIES OF  
FOUR PEOPLE WHO LIVED TO TELL.***





## ***I SURVIVED BEING SWALLOWED BY A WHALE***

JULIE McSORLEY, 56, PHYSICAL THERAPIST

I live with my husband, Tyrone McSorley, in San Luis Obispo, California, about three miles from the beach. Every few years, the humpback whales come into the bay for a few days while they're migrating. November 2020 was one of those times, so we took out our yellow double kayak to watch the wildlife. We paddled out the length of the pier and saw seals, dolphins, and

***OUR KAYAK LIFTED OUT OF THE WATER, AND LIZ AND I SLIPPED OUT INTO THE WHALE'S MOUTH.***

about 20 whales feeding on silverfish. We were in awe watching these graceful behemoths—each one about 50 feet long—breach and spray through their blowholes. We laughed when they turned their side fins so that it looked as if they were waving at us.

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

"No way," said Liz, now 65. She was not an experienced kayaker and was terrified that the kayak would

overturn while we were surrounded by hungry whales. "There's nothing to worry about," I assured her. "The craft is stable, and we can turn back anytime." After some cajoling, she finally agreed to join me. I didn't want her to miss this magnificent experience and regret it later.

Liz and I got out on the water at 8:30 the following morning. There were already about 15 other kayakers and paddleboarders in the bay. It was warm for November—about 65 degrees—so we wore T-shirts and leggings. After a half-hour, we had our first whale sighting just past the pier: two humpbacks swimming toward us. How amazing to be that close to a creature that size, I thought as the whales dipped under the waterline.

When whales go down after breaching, they leave what looks like an oil slick on the water. I figured if we paddled toward that spot, we'd be safe from the whales, since they'd just left. We followed them at a distance—or what I thought was a distance. I later found out that it's recommended to keep 300 feet away. We were more like 60 feet away.

Suddenly, we were being pelted. A tightly packed swarm of fish, known as a bait ball, started jumping out of the water into our kayak. Their movement sounded like crackling glass all around us.



What should have been a comical moment was actually terrifying. Their actions meant they were escaping the whales, which meant that we needed to get out of there too. But before we could paddle to safety, our kayak was lifted out of the water about six feet, bracketed by massive jaws. Liz and I slipped out of the kayak into the whale's mouth. My body was engulfed except for my right arm and paddle. Liz, meanwhile, was looking up directly at the whale's upper jaw, which she later described as a big white wall.

As the whale's mouth closed, Liz thrust her arm up to block it from crushing her. I felt the creature begin to dive and had no idea how deep we'd be dragged. Still, I didn't panic. I just kept thinking, I've got to fight this. I've got to breathe.

Whales have enormous mouths but tiny throats. Anything they can't swallow they spit right out. That included us. As soon as the whale dipped underwater, it ejected us, and we popped back up onto the surface about a foot apart. The entire ordeal lasted only about 10 seconds.

A few kayakers paddled over. One was a retired firefighter, who asked us if we had all of our limbs. "We thought you were dead!" he said.

We were not, of course. But I am much more aware of the power of nature and the ocean than I was before. Liz was shaken up, likening the ordeal to a near-death experience, and she says her whale-watching days are over. But even she had to laugh when she got home that afternoon and realized she'd brought back a souvenir. When she pulled off her shirt, six silverfish flopped out.

*As told to Emily Landau*



## **I SURVIVED FALLING IN QUICKSAND**

RYAN OSMUN, 37, PHOTOGRAPHER

It was February 16, 2019, at 8 a.m. when my girlfriend, Jessika McNeill, and I arrived at Utah's Zion National Park. We'd traveled from our home in Mesa, Arizona, to hike the nine-mile-long Subway Trail, so named because of its stunning tunnel-shaped



canyon. Halfway through our trek, which included climbing over boulders and fording streams, the sunshine gave way to a light snow. Soon after, we reached the rust-colored walls of the Subway Trail. A small pond stood in our way, with the trail continuing on the other side. Because the pond looked shallow, we began to wade through, with Jessika leading the way.

About five feet from the edge, her

front foot sank into the sandy bottom. Then she fell forward and both legs started to sink. I lunged, grabbed her under the shoulders, and pulled her out of the muck. She scrambled back to shore. But now I was sinking. The muck came all the way up to my right thigh and my left calf. I freed my left leg but couldn't budge my right.

Jess handed me a long stick we'd picked up earlier in the hike. I jammed it down the side of my leg and tried to





wiggle and pull it out. Nothing. I was mired in quicksand.

Jessika started scooping sand with both hands, but it was refilling faster than she could pull it out. “Don’t bother,” I told her. “You’re just wasting your energy.” While I was no longer sinking, I wasn’t getting out, either.

We couldn’t call for help because the only cell reception was back at the trailhead, five hours away over rough terrain. I told Jessika she had to hike back and call for help. She was scared—she had only ever hiked with me and was wary of hiking alone on a trail the National Park Service calls “very strenuous.” But we were out of options.

Thirty minutes after she left, it started to snow heavily. I zipped up my jacket and pulled my head inside. At some point I nodded off to sleep. I don’t know how long I was out, but I woke up with my upper body slipping backward into the quicksand. I quickly planted my stick into the dry ground, stopping my fall.

I was exhausted. If my entire body ever did fall in, I’d never get out. It had been about five hours since Jess left, and it was getting dark.

A few hours later, I saw a light through my jacket. I prayed it was a helicopter, but it was the moonlight shining over the canyon walls. At that point, I was soaking wet and knew I wasn’t going to make it. I started to think about what I could do to die faster. But I didn’t want to drown if

I fell backward again. That would be the worst way to go.

An hour later, another light shone across my eyes. A flashlight! I yelled for help. A man hollered back as he ran to me. He said that his name was Tim and that Jessika had gotten through to rescuers. He had hiked up, and the rest of his crew was an hour behind him.

When the three others arrived, they set up a pulley system to yank me out, tying an anchor strap around a boul-

***I GRABBED JESSIKA  
AND PULLED HER OUT  
OF THE MUCK. BUT NOW  
I WAS SINKING.***

der. Two of the rescuers held me under each shoulder as Tim wrapped a strap around my kneecap. A fourth rescuer worked the pulley. With each ratchet, it felt as if my leg was being ripped off. Tim dug into the sand and got a hand around my ankle and started pulling up. It was agonizing, but I could feel my leg moving. “Keep going!” I screamed.

Three more ratchets and my leg was freed. My rescuers dragged me to the side of the canyon because I couldn’t walk. I couldn’t even feel my leg.

It was too dark and snowy for a helicopter, so they got me into a sleeping bag and gave me pain medication.

Then we settled in for the night.

When I woke up at 6 a.m., snow covered the top of my sleeping bag, and flakes were still coming down. Around noon, the weather lifted, and my rescuers called in a helicopter.

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

*From outsideonline.com*

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GURBAZ SINGH, 18, STUDENT



When I was 13, I climbed my first mountain—a fairly gentle 3,900-foot peak near where I live in Surrey, British Columbia. I was overweight at the time and out of breath when I reached the summit. But I loved the challenge of conquering something bigger than myself. Soon I'd climbed nearly 100 peaks. My parents were happy I'd finally found a hobby.

I often go climbing with my friend Mel Olsen, whom I'd met in a Facebook group. Two years ago, on December 30, when I was 16, she and I drove to Oregon to tackle 11,240-foot Mount Hood.

It's safer to start winter climbs at

night when there's less risk of the sun melting the snowpack. That day, we started at 3 a.m., following the paths alongside the ski runs. The temperature was about 14 degrees, and we wore layers we could easily remove, knowing the exertion would make us warm. Along the way, we met two other climbers, and the four of us continued on together.

After about five hours, we reached Devil's Kitchen, a plateau at about 10,000 feet, just before the final push to the top. By this point, the wind conditions were nasty. My exposed skin felt as though it were burning. The other climbers decided to turn back, but Mel and I went ahead. We had ice axes, helmets, and crampons (ice cleats). We were prepared for the climb.

The trail we followed grew narrower and steeper. At around 9 a.m., we reached a patch of ice called an ice step. It was about three or four feet tall and sloped at a 75-degree angle. I volunteered to go first. I placed my left foot on the ice step.

You gain a sense of the ice when you stick your ax and crampons into it, and it felt good. Confident I was safe, I put my full weight on it. Suddenly, I heard a crack, and a whole slab of ice broke off the step, right under my foot.

In an instant, I fell backward. I could hear Mel calling my name as I tumbled down, bouncing off the rock face, and rolling down the mountain



as if I were a character in a video game. I remember thinking, This is it. You're done.

I stuck out my arms and legs, grabbing at anything. That stopped my somersaulting down the mountain, but I was still sliding. After a few seconds, I came to a stop on a shallow incline just above the Devil's Kitchen. I'd fallen 600 feet. My clothes were shredded, my helmet was broken, and my face was bloodied from cuts and scratches.

***I BOUNCED OFF THE ROCK  
FACE AND REMEMBER  
THINKING, THIS IS IT.  
YOU'RE DONE.***

I wanted to make sure I had all my faculties, so I asked myself, Where are you? *Mount Hood*. What's the date? *December 30*. Good. My brain wasn't scrambled.

Then I took a survey of my body to see where I was hurt, starting with my head, then my neck and arms. For the most part, I was fine, except that I was suffering from a sharp, agonizing pain in my left leg.

Later I'd learn that I'd fractured my femur and that the bone was slicing into my skin and muscle. Oddly, when I touched my left leg, I couldn't feel anything, so I frantically tried wiggling my toes. Fortunately, that worked—

at least I knew I wasn't paralyzed.

As Mel made her way down, I yelled for help, and other climbers came to assist me. A couple of them were trained EMTs. They splinted my leg and called Portland Mountain Rescue. Mel stayed by my side while I tried not to cry from the pain.

I'd been lying on the ice shivering and in agony for four hours by the time the rescuers reached me. They strapped me into a sled and pulled me down the mountain. I have a pretty high pain tolerance, but I screamed with each bounce.

At the bottom of Mount Hood, I was loaded into an ambulance and taken to a hospital, where I stayed for four days. The doctors told me it would be a year before I could climb again, but I was back on the trails within six months.

The fall has made me more cautious. One slip on a mountain can change everything. But the experience also made me grow as a person. There was a lot of media attention following the accident; strangers commented on the videos, calling me vile names and saying I'd put others in danger. Some said I should go back to India. I think handling all that at such a young age helped me mature.

Since the accident, I've climbed another 60 mountains. I'm not going to let one fall and its aftermath keep me from doing my favorite thing in the world.

*As told to Emily Landau*



## ***I SURVIVED BEING CAUGHT IN A MUDSLIDE***

SHERI NIEMEGEERS, 47,  
INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATOR



It was May 2018, and my partner, Gabe Rosescu, and I were taking a road trip in his little Hyundai Elantra from my home in Weyburn, Saskatchewan, to visit friends in Nelson,

British Columbia. It was our first trip together after six months of dating, meaning it would be an adventure on so many levels.

At around 5:30 p.m., we were driving along the Crowsnest Highway, a steep winding road that cleaves through the southern Canadian Rockies. I was texting my mother when I happened to look up in time to see an enormous tree in front of us on the highway—standing straight up! It

was being pushed along by a torrent of mud that was gobbling everything in its path. We didn't know about the recent flooding in the area, and now we were literally in the thick of it.

Gabe and I shot each other a look and said, "Oh, shoot." Understatement of the century. Within seconds, our car was somersaulting 900 feet down the cliffside.

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

The car had landed on a small ledge amid trees that had come down with the slide. On one side of us was the mountain. On the other, a steep drop of about 3,000 feet into a river.

I tried opening my door and was overcome by excruciating chest pain. I'd later learn that I'd suffered a broken sternum. In addition, my left ankle had been crushed and my foot was practically turned sideways. Gabe had broken his nasal and cheek bones, as well as his orbital bones, leaving him blind in his left eye. Parts of his skull were crushed and his scalp was nearly ripped off.

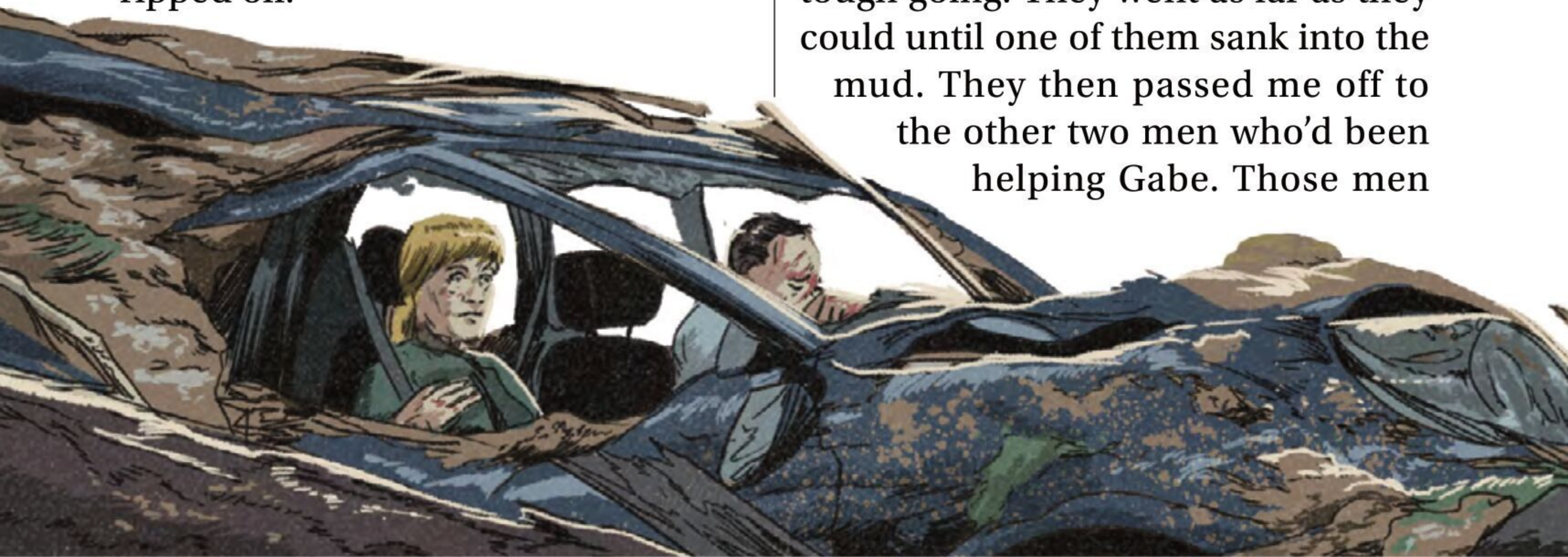
With the passenger and driver's side doors crushed shut, and my window impassable, the only way out was through the driver's side window. Neither of us remember doing it, but somehow we both managed to crawl out of that wreckage.

We sat on a log and considered our options. We had no phone signal, and it was 900 feet straight up back to the highway. All we could do was yell for help.

***IN SECONDS, OUR CAR WAS SOMERSAULTING 900 FEET DOWN THE CLIFFSIDE.***



Incredibly, someone responded. Four bystanders had spotted our car and were wading through the mud to us. Once they arrived, two of the men helped Gabe shimmy up the hill. Because of my injured foot, the other two had to carry me, with one man grasping me below my armpits and the other holding my legs. It was tough going. They went as far as they could until one of them sank into the mud. They then passed me off to the other two men who'd been helping Gabe. Those men



carried me while the unstuck man pulled his partner out of the mud. The second pair carried me until one of them sank into the mud and they passed me back off to the first two. This went on for about an hour: Carry me. Sink into the mud. Hand me off. Pull the other out.

By the time we reached the highway, at around 7 p.m., Gabe was in shock. He kept slipping in and out of consciousness. When the EMTs arrived soon after, they let us kiss goodbye from our stretchers before loading us into separate ambulances. I didn't think I'd ever see my boyfriend again.

I went to a nearby hospital, and Gabe was eventually airlifted to a trauma hospital 260 miles away. Along the way, they kept shocking him to

keep him awake so he wouldn't slip into a coma.

Gabe would be hospitalized for six weeks following surgeries to reattach his scalp. I was released ten days after my surgeon reconnected the main artery in my left foot. I'll walk with a limp for the rest of my life, and Gabe permanently lost the vision in his left eye. Otherwise, we're fine.

Before this all happened, we were happy-go-lucky people. Oddly enough, the accident and improbable rescue has made us even more positive. We're grateful to be alive. The experience also bonded us as a couple, and we haven't stopped taking road trips. A year after the accident, we drove back to the Crowsnest Highway and gave the finger to the mudslide.

*As told to Emily Landau* 



## Beat Them at Their Own Game

The hardest *Jeopardy!* questions are called triple stumpers because they elude all three of the game's contestants. How would you have done?

**Category: Jump Around!**

You "gotta" do this slang term to mean you're leaving; it's also good to get one in the polls.

**Category: Potpourri**

If you know the correct procedure, you "know" this, also a tool.

**Category: Talkin' Sports**

Your choice: Do or don't name this play in which the quarterback runs the ball and can choose to pitch it to another back.

(Answers: bounce, drill, option play)

ESQUIRE.COM





Goodall spends as much time as she can in nature.



# Growing HOPE

*The world's most famous living naturalist shares her reasons to feel optimistic*

---

BY *Jane Goodall and Douglas Abrams*  
with *Gail Hudson*

FROM THE BOOK **THE BOOK OF HOPE:  
A SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR TRYING TIMES**

“**J**ANE IS ALMOST 90 YEARS OLD,” you may be thinking. “If she is aware of what is going on in the world, how can she be writing about hope?”

On many days I admit that I feel depressed, days when it seems that the efforts, the struggles, and the sacrifices of so many people fighting for social and environmental justice, fighting prejudice and racism and greed, are fighting a losing battle.

But without hope, all is lost. It is a crucial survival trait that has sustained our species from the time of our

Stone Age ancestors. Certainly, my own improbable journey would have been impossible had I lacked hope.

Like all people who live long enough, I have been through many dark periods and seen so much suffering. I was in New York on that terrible day in 2001, that day when our world changed forever. I still can remember the disbelief, the fear, the confusion as the city went quiet save for the wailing of the sirens on the police cars and ambulances on the streets emptied of people.

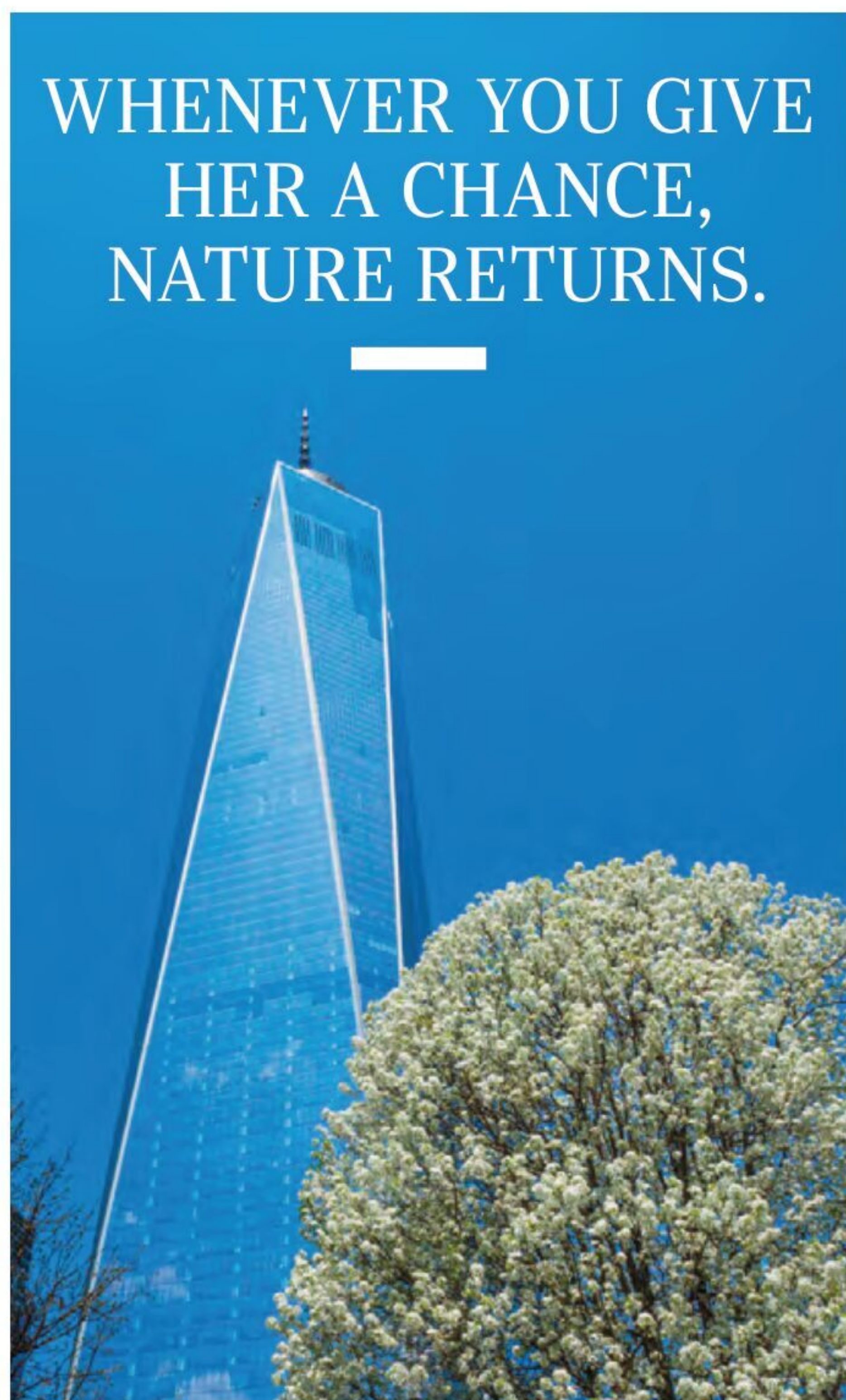
It was ten years after that day that I was introduced to the Survivor Tree, a Callery pear tree discovered a month after the collapse of the towers, crushed between two blocks of cement. All that was left was half a trunk that had been charred black, with roots that were broken and only one living branch.

She was almost sent to the dump, but the young woman who found her, Rebecca Clough, begged that the tree might be given a chance. And so she went to be cared for in a nursery in the Bronx. Bringing that seriously damaged tree back to health was not an easy task, and it was touch and go for a while. But whenever you give her a chance, nature returns.

Eventually the tree made it. Once she was strong enough, she was returned to be planted in what is now the 9/11 Memorial & Museum. In the spring, her branches are bright with blossoms. I've seen people looking at

her and wiping away tears. She truly is a symbol of the resilience of nature—and a reminder of all that was lost on that terrible day 20 years ago.

There's another, even more dramatic story about survivor trees. In 1990 I visited Nagasaki, the city where the second atomic bomb was dropped at the end of World War II. The fireball produced by the nuclear explosion reached temperatures equivalent to the sun—millions of degrees. Scientists predicted that nothing would grow for decades. But, amazingly, two



**A tree that nearly died on 9/11 blooms in the new World Trade Center complex.**

TOSHI SASAKI/GETTY IMAGES

500-year-old camphor trees had survived. Only the lower halves of their trunks remained, and from those most of the branches had been torn off. Not a single leaf remained on the mutilated trees. But they were alive.

I was taken to see one of the survivors. It's now a large tree, but its thick trunk has cracks and fissures, and you can see it's all black inside. But every spring, that tree puts out new leaves. Many Japanese regard it as a holy monument to peace and survival; prayers, written in tiny kanji characters on parchment, had been hung from the branches in memory of all those who died. I stood there, humbled by the devastation we humans can cause and the unbelievable resilience of nature.

What a fascinating world, the plant kingdom. And when you think about it, without flora there would be no fauna. There would be no humans. All animal life ultimately depends on plants. It's an amazing tapestry of life, where each little stitch is held in place by those around it.

Each time a species goes extinct, it is as though a hole is torn in that wonderful tapestry of life. And in more and more places, the tapestry is so tattered that it is close to collapse.

I try to make people understand how much we humans depend on the natural world. I learned from my hours in the rain forest how every species has a role to play, how everything is interconnected.

Last year, on the UN International Day of Peace, I took part in a very special ceremony in New York City, along with about 20 high school children from across America. We all gathered around the Survivor Tree—the tree who was rescued after she was crushed and wounded on 9/11. We looked up at the strong branches reaching toward the sky.

Only a short time before, they had been filled with beautiful white blossoms, and now the leaves were beginning to fall. We stood silently and prayed for peace on earth and for a new respect for animals and nature. I looked around at the young faces—the faces of those who would inherit the planet wounded by countless generations of humans.

And then I saw it. I saw the neat perfection of the nest of some small bird. I imagined the parents feeding the nestlings, the fledging, the final flight into the as-yet-unknown world. The children were also staring up at the nest. Some smiled, others had tears in their eyes. They, too, were ready to move out into the world.

The Survivor Tree, brought back from the dead, had not only put out new leaves herself but also nurtured the lives of others.

Now do you understand how I dare hope? **R**

FROM THE BOOK THE BOOK OF HOPE BY JANE GOODALL AND DOUGLAS ABRAMS WITH GAIL HUDSON, PUBLISHED BY CELADON BOOKS, AN IMPRINT OF MACMILLAN PUBLISHERS, LLC. COPYRIGHT © 2021 BY JANE GOODALL AND DOUGLAS ABRAMS.

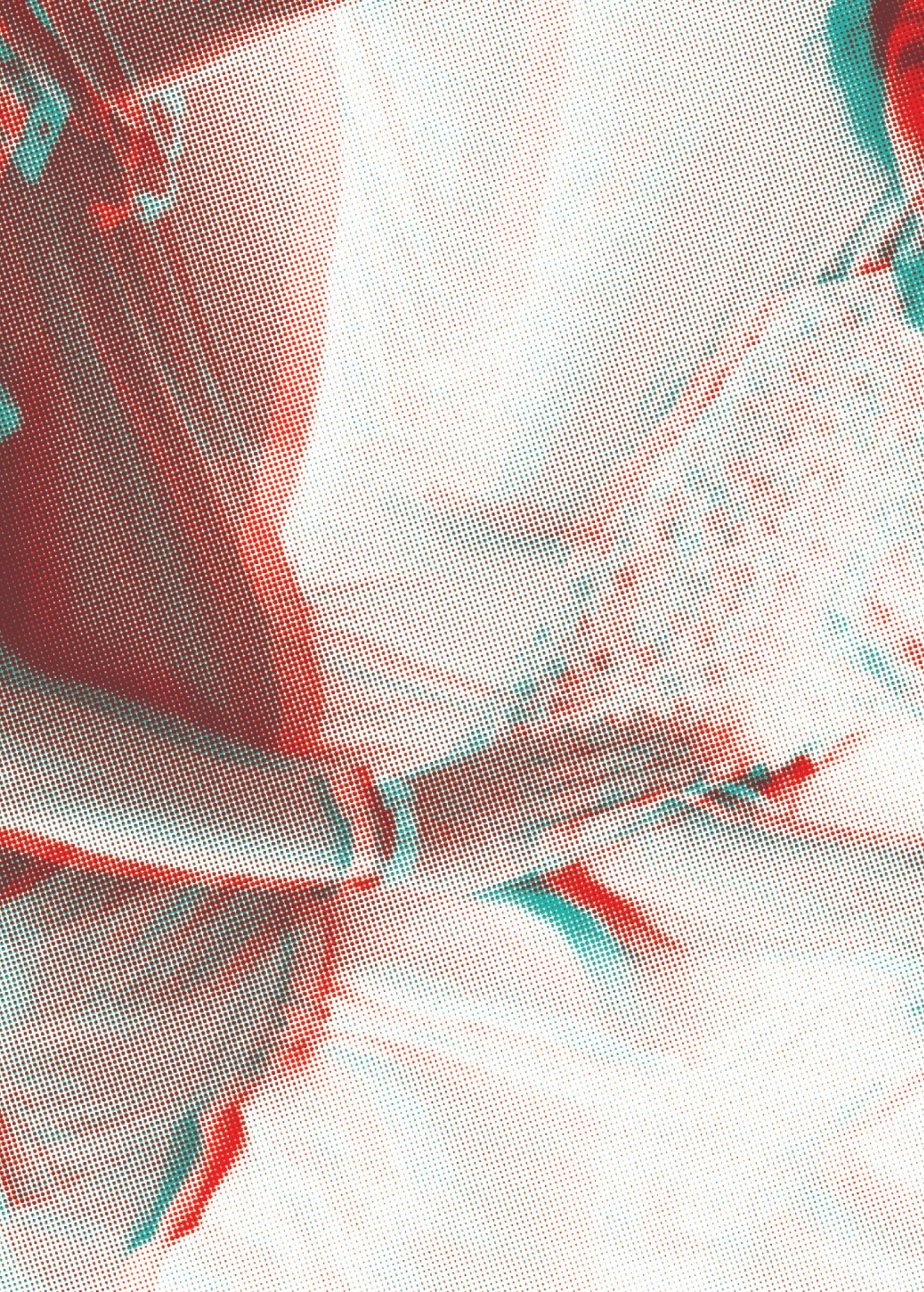


# Where Have All the NURSES GONE?

**The next health-care crisis  
could prove disastrous for  
patients and rural hospitals**

---

*BY Adam Piore*



## Sometimes Karla Theilen just wishes she could explain. That she could plop herself down by her patient's bedside, look him in the eye, and explain that she does care and is not ignoring him.

That she just had to intubate a guy down the hall, and the woman next door fell on the way to the bathroom. That she has four missed calls on her cell phone from another patient's daughter who just learned her dad is dying. That she hasn't eaten all day or had time to use the bathroom.

But Theilen, who as a traveling or contract nurse has worked in more than 30 hospitals across the American West over the past decade, knows she can't do that. It wouldn't be professional or compassionate to walk into a room and tell a patient that the hospital is woefully understaffed, that she has more on her plate than any one nurse could possibly handle—that “this is why I'm late. I had to deal with this situation.” That COVID-19 has pushed a system already plagued by chronic staffing shortages to the brink.

So she stays quiet and plows ahead. And at the end of the toughest days, she sits alone and asks herself the same question many nurses are asking themselves nowadays:

How much longer can I keep this up?

Theilen, who lives in rural Montana, got into nursing in 2009, she says, so she could help people navigate the most uncertain or frightening times of their lives. Caring for someone “stripped down into those vulnerable places of actual suffering,” Theilen says, makes her feel more human, resets her, and makes her life feel meaningful.

“You're connecting on a very elemental level,” she says. “For me, it has always brought me back to really the essence of what it is to be a human. It's vital to my existence.”

But lately, the job—and the feeling that she is failing her patients—has become unbearable. “It's not being asked to work hard,” she says. “It's being asked to do something that's impossible within a 12-hour shift.”

The fact is, in America today, there simply aren't enough nurses. Those who have stayed on the job are being asked to care for more patients than is safe for both the nurses and the patients.

In September, the American Nurses Association (ANA), which represents the nation's 4.2 million registered nurses, sent a letter to Secretary of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra, calling on him to declare the current "unsustainable nurse staffing shortage facing our country" a national crisis. As ANA President Ernest Grant explained in a news blast to the media, "The nation's health-care delivery systems are overwhelmed, and nurses are tired and frustrated."

## **IT WAS BREWING BEFORE COVID**

Even before the pandemic, burnout was bleeding the nursing field of some of its most promising talent. Of the more than 418,000 registered nurses who quit their jobs in 2017—three years before COVID hit—more than 30 percent cited stressful work environments and inadequate staffing. By December 2020, at COVID's height, 60 percent of nurses surveyed said they suffered from burnout, and a survey in early 2021 indicated that 30 percent considered quitting their jobs or leaving the profession altogether. These departures added to a shortfall that has been brewing for decades—one that is only expected to get worse.

By 2030, more than a quarter of the nation's roughly 4 million registered nurses will likely retire, this at a time when transformations in the field of health care and an explosion in the

nation's elderly population will require a net increase of an estimated 500,000 new positions.

In that sense, COVID simply provided a glimpse of a worst-case scenario—a preview of what we can expect should we fail to head off the impending crisis. In Texas, hospitals are staring down 23,000 unfilled registered nursing jobs, prompting state officials to launch an effort to recruit 2,500 nurses from outside the state. Louisiana had more than 6,000 vacant nursing positions even before the delta variant hit. Mississippi has lost 2,000 nurses since the pandemic began, while hospitals in Tennessee are down 1,000 staffers. In Georgia and Oregon, the situation became so extreme that officials were forced to mobilize the National Guard to assist in hospitals.

In small rural hospitals, particularly in the South and West, the situation has been catastrophic. Tyler Williams, president and CEO of Habersham Medical Center, a 53-bed hospital in Demorest, Georgia, says the nursing crisis had already begun to affect his institution prior to COVID. For years, his hospital has hired nurses fresh out of nursing school to staff its ranks, offering the opportunity for entry-level training in lieu of the higher salaries seen at larger institutions. But around 2018, the larger facilities began hiring nurses just out of school, too, paying an additional \$3 an hour. And since the pandemic began, Williams has





lost a fifth of his nursing staff, as those bigger hospitals have been luring them away by doubling their hourly rates and offering signing bonuses as large as \$30,000.

“There’s just a shortage all around,” Williams says. “We can’t keep up with that.”

The end result: Americans are likely to see higher medical costs, as well as increased financial strain on smaller rural hospitals, which could lead to a reduction in the number of available beds.

“This is the perfect storm,” warns Rhonda Maneval, executive associate

dean for academic nursing at Pace University in New York City. “The nursing shortage is here, and it’s going to continue to grow and become more acute, leaving people in our communities without enough trained professionals to meet their health-care needs.”

## A CASCADING PROBLEM

Public health officials have been warning for years that the United States is facing a demographic time bomb, what some have called a gray tsunami.



By 2030, every single member of the baby boomer generation, estimated at 73 million strong, will have reached retirement age—more than doubling the number of Americans over the age of 65 at the dawn of the millennium. These elderly adults are going to need a lot of health care, much of it complex.

Meanwhile, the average age of American nurses has risen to 51. And the anticipated retirement of a million nurses comes at a time when the health-care system is in the midst of a transformation that will require more nurses to face that gray tsunami.

The positive news is that many young Americans want to become nurses. Indeed, enrollment in nursing programs has been growing every year for the past 15 years, and today the United States is graduating more nurses than at any point in history, with nursing schools having doubled their output over the past 15 to 20 years. And for good reason—the average starting salary for a registered nurse straight out of college is \$54,790 per year.

Here's the catch: There aren't enough nursing schools to educate enough students to fill the projected 1.5 million nursing slots that will need to be filled by 2030. In 2020, a total of 80,521 qualified applications were not accepted at schools of nursing, primarily because of shortages of faculty, classroom space, and clinical sites, which give student nurses

much-needed real-life experience outside of the classroom.

"It's a complex problem," says Pace's Maneval. "We're not educating enough nurses at the baccalaureate level. But even if we did, we don't have enough faculty in graduate programs because it's not an 'attractive' career." Many nursing schools are turning to adjunct instructors, whose average starting salary is only \$8,000.

The educational bottlenecks are just one cause of the nursing shortage. Linda Aiken, who heads the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Health

## Sixty percent of nurses surveyed said they suffered from burnout.

Outcomes and Policy Research, says burnout is a far greater factor. She notes that about a third of all nurses are not working full-time. And she blames working conditions.

"Incentives in the marketplace could easily pull more nurses in," Aiken says. "Nurses are very responsive to market incentives," such as better compensation and flexible hours. Yet instead of trying to lure nurses, she argues, many hospitals are driving them away by cutting corners, either in the number of nurses on shift, or in the support personnel who would allow units to move smoothly.

How bad is it? In one pre-COVID study, Aiken and her colleagues surveyed most of the registered nurses in New York State, asking them how many patients they had taken care of the previous day. She found that more than 40 percent of hospitals were understaffed—which she defined as nurses caring for more than four patients. Some were taking care of more than ten. Such low

## **Patients in understaffed facilities had higher mortality and readmission rates.**



nurse-to-patient ratios lead to burnout.

In the two months prior to the 2020 pandemic surge, Aiken found that 50 percent of the nurses in New York State hospitals were already experiencing high levels of stress because there weren't enough nurses and support staff to shoulder the load. But more than being a morale buster, low ratios can also be dangerous.

The most important thing nurses do in a hospital is to act as a “surveillance system, which means they are trying to project who’s going to develop a complication before it happens,” Aiken explains. When a patient is in distress, it’s often the nurse who is the first to notice, sound the alarm, and call others in to save a life.

“But if you don’t have enough

nurses, you have no surveillance system, so you don’t identify impending problems early enough to correct them,” she says. She cites one study that looked at more than 74,000 Medicare patients who suffered from common conditions, such as congestive heart failure, pneumonia, strokes, and infections. They discovered that patients in understaffed facilities had higher mortality rates and higher readmission rates and were more likely to suffer from sepsis and infections than patients in fully staffed hospitals.

Of course, nurses do more than heal the body. Karla Theilen has found that in well-staffed hospitals, she has plenty of time to assess patients thoroughly, check their vital signs, attend to their personal hygiene (wash hair, brush teeth), and change bed linens. More importantly, she has time to connect with patients. Over the years, patients have confessed love affairs, talked about the children they had given up for adoption, and confided that they’d always wanted to be a painter or that they had regretted not having kids. Others just looked her in the eyes and told her, “What I know now is what’s really important.” Now, time to connect with patients is a luxury.

## **WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?**

A fix won’t be easy. But in its letter to Health and Human Services, the

American Nursing Association called on the agency to “convene stakeholders to identify short- and long-term solutions to staffing challenges.” Such solutions would include “payment equity” for nursing services, presumably as a way of overcoming geographic disparities in pay that are likely to hit rural hospitals in the South and West harder than others. Many have suggested that the federal government expand programs that provide aid to nursing schools in the hope of luring more faculty. Others would like to see mandatory nurse-to-patient ratios to lessen burnout (California is the only state that currently has them).

But all these solutions will require money. And whether the political will exists to appropriate the extra money to implement these solutions, or to impose new requirements on hospitals, remains an open question.

## AT ITS CORE, NURSING IS ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

Theilen and her colleagues recognize that working conditions aren't likely to get easier anytime soon. Even so, for now, she has no plans to leave the profession. Though serving as the face of a health-care system that is failing to meet the needs of patients is a painful reality, Theilen still has glimpses of why she loves her job.

Recently she sat with a COVID








**For now, Karla Theilen is sticking with nursing.**

patient who'd been intubated for three weeks and had awakened to learn that during his time in a medically induced coma, his house had burned down, killing his beloved dog. Theilen found him lying awake in the middle of the night. She quietly shut the door to his room and sat by his bed as he wept.

“It's the shared moments, when you have the time,” she says. “All of a sudden, you're in the moment with somebody, taking care of their needs, helping them. You don't think about what their politics are. You don't think about how they're dressed, where they work, how much money they have. Working as a nurse is a beating—such a beating—yet I'm compelled to do it because of those moments that are so good and so rich.” **R**




YOUR TRUE STORIES



# PANDEMIC SILVER LININGS

*If you wish you'd had a fast-forward button  
to push in March 2020, you're not alone.  
But some readers found a bright side.*



BY *Reader's Digest Readers*

ILLUSTRATIONS BY *Melissa McFeeters*



## Walking Buddies

My husband and I walk in our neighborhood every day. Early in the pandemic, we often passed a dog that would bark in greeting and bounce alongside us from inside an invisible fence. One day, the dog's owner was outside, and we told him we would be happy to take his dog along with us sometimes.

And just like that, we had a new companion on our miles-long jaunts. Marlie, a goldendoodle, trots down the road with her tail wagging and her head high. She knows "heel" very well—luckily for us—and will stop and point when she sees a squirrel or rabbit.

Nearly two years later, we still walk with Marlie almost daily, even through Wisconsin winters. She sits in the bay window facing our house each day around walk time, waiting to catch a glimpse of us coming down the street to get her.

—LISA YOUNG

*Stevens Point, Wisconsin*

## Meditation in Black and White

I always wanted to play the piano, but never thought I'd be able to learn. Desperate for something to keep my mind off nonstop COVID-19 news, I decided to teach myself, armed with nothing but a newcomer's enthusiasm and my son's basic keyboard. After two months, my slightly noticeable progress inspired me to buy a digital piano. Playing became my meditation.

More than a year later, I still learn something new each day.

I was so pleased by my growth and hope it can inspire others to learn new things at any age. In April 2021, I created a YouTube channel, "Jane's Hobbies," to showcase my piano progress and other hobbies. I also learned chess, and play with my husband or son almost every night.

And now, my most difficult challenge yet: English. It's my second language and I'm still learning every day. *Reader's Digest* is one of my favorite ways to practice, picking up skills, knowledge, tips, and ways to share love along the way. This has been my most productive year yet.

—JANE LI

*Saline, Michigan*

## A New Chance at Love

At the beginning of lockdown, I'd been widowed for three years after 45 years of marriage. My husband was in a Vietnam veterans group, and so was Bob. He'd been single since a divorce in 1980. I'd see Bob occasionally when I brought my taxes into his accounting office. He called me in March 2020 to remind me of my appointment, and asked if I'd like to join him at his church sometime. He sang in the choir. I also sing in my choir, so that sounded quite nice. I went in the next day to get my taxes done, and Bob made a little map to his church.

Before we even made it to Sunday, the world was in quarantine. No





dinners, movies, or church services. Bob and I started texting, sending letters via snail mail, and talking on the phone. We called it “phone dating,” as we spent hours every day getting to know each other and, yes, falling in love.

In June, it felt safe enough to meet. We wondered if it would feel weird to finally embrace—it didn’t. We kissed and knew we wouldn’t quarantine from one another any longer. At ages 67 and 72, we are looking to a permanent future together. We were blessed with new love in a pandemic.

—LINDA HAMILTON  
*Princeton, Minnesota*

### Learning to Sit Still

I never missed my 10 a.m. yoga class. I liked to be there early, pick the best spot to lay my mat, and do my warm-ups. Friends would trickle in, and we’d laugh and share our plans for the day. Then on to another class. Another outing. Another errand. Always on the go. I was like a bird—fly here, fly there, fly everywhere. Until the pandemic clipped my wings. And this bird perched on the windowsill and stared outside, forlorn. It took me a while to adjust.

I started practicing Spanish. I woke up early and dedicated time to writing while the birds sang outside. I



honed my photography skills and now have an enviable portfolio. I took up calligraphy and derive a great deal of joy from my self-taught hobby.

But most importantly, I became comfortable with solitude. Mindfulness was something I'd only read about but never practiced. During this pandemic, I made a new friend: me. And I like her. A lot.

—NATASHA C. SAMAGOND  
*Weston, Florida*

### **The Road Less Pedaled**

After spending two weeks on the couch, my husband and I decided to dust off our bikes. We started out

with no plan other than to move, enjoy the outdoors, and get off our devices. School was virtual, work was slow, and we were concerned for our health. Short rides got longer and longer. We found new roads, got lost, and enjoyed every minute.

Over time, we picked up cyclist lingo, bought the gear, learned the repairs, and pushed our limits. We conquered hills and slayed the miles. We found peace in the back roads with cows, wild turkeys, and horses, and discovered beauty you can't see from a car. The pandemic may be a dumpster fire, but it propelled us into a hobby we've loved since childhood.

We are now addicted, much healthier, and much closer.

—CHRIS MEYER

*Lafayette, Indiana*

### Ministering Hope

My niece Morgan came by my house one day to ask me a very important question: Would I officiate her wedding? I was delighted to become an ordained minister online and marry Morgan and her fiancé, Trent—albeit in a much smaller ceremony than they'd originally planned, to heed social distancing guidelines. Preparing for the wedding, reading scripture, and praying restored my faith.

—DEREK ROTH

*East Berlin, Pennsylvania*

### Teaching “Grandmagarten”

I had the pleasure of teaching elementary students for 25 years, retiring just before COVID hit. That summer, my

grandson was gearing up for his first year of school. Then it was moved online, and my grandson was very disappointed. He is shy and easily lost in the hubbub of 25 kindergartners competing for one weary teacher's attention.

We decided to have Grandmagarten every day to support his learning. We Zoom for an hour each day, having a blast practicing our ABCs and 123s. So far, I've learned that my grandson wants to be an astronaut when he grows up, that he is going to be the first American to walk on Mars, and that he is going to stop at the International Space Station on the way so he can study the nebulous planets. I live four states away from my grandson and would have never gotten this time with him otherwise. Grandmagarten has been one of the greatest silver linings of my life. **R**

—MELANIE ANDERSON

*Chubbuck, Idaho*



## You Just Blah Blah Blah All Day

Working from home gave America's children a glimpse into how their parents make a living. Here's how some of the youngest describe it:

**Claire, 5:** “She does grown-up homework. She works for cookies.”

*Parent's occupation: owner of a baking company*

**Cecilia, 6:** “She works for sales. She says ‘sales,’ and ‘they,’ and blah blah blah.”

*Parent's occupation: strategic account director*

**Cass, 6:** “My dad teaches when people should become members in something.

Both of them can't work at the same time—we only have one work closet.”

*Parent's occupation: associate professor of business economics*

In  
TUMMS  
We  
TRUST

*These tiny tablets have been  
providing relief to overfull  
tummies for nearly a century*

—  
BY *Bill Hangle Jr.*  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY *K. Synold*



**T**

HINK OF THE roaring twenties, and most of the things that come to mind are long gone: flappers, speakeasies, Model T's ... But one classic is still with us,

virtually unchanged: those little rolls of post-meal relief we call Tums.

Created in 1928 and brought to market two years later, Tums were part of a wave of early-20th-century consumer product innovations that included Scotch tape, Wonder bread, and Hostess Twinkies. Like those staples, Tums remains a bestseller. In fact, it's the top-selling brand-name antacid tablet in the nation; the company says it outsells Roloids by almost two to one.

Even before the pandemic, sales were on the rise, and during the pandemic, some varieties were in short supply—unsurprising, since the 4,000 people we polled in our annual Trusted Brands survey put Tums at the top of their list of chosen antacids.

While Tums now come in many varieties—with new twists on the original including gummies, smoothie flavors, and Naturals with no artificial flavors or coloring—the basic formula of calcium, sugar, and starch hasn't changed.

How do those simple ingredients translate into relief from a meal that's

left you miserable? Simple: by turning your roiling, boiling stomach acid into water. Typical indigestion, heartburn, or “sour stomach” is caused by rich or spicy foods, which stimulate that acid. It's a problem people have grappled with for thousands of years. The ancient Sumerians of southern Mesopotamia recorded their cure on clay tablets: sodium bicarbonate (better known as baking soda) mixed with milk and peppermint.

All antacids, both ancient and modern, use what chemists call a base. Acids and bases are two of the building blocks of chemistry. Acids contain hydrogen ions and bases contain hydroxide ions. Put the two together, and their ions bond to form H<sub>2</sub>O, or water. Different antacids rely on different bases, but they all work the same way, bringing hours-long relief starting within five to ten minutes.

Before Tums, most antacids came as powders (to be mixed with water), or as liquids such as Maalox, whose base is magnesium hydroxide, and Pepto-Bismol, which uses bismuth salts. Until the 1950s, Americans could even buy an antacid made from papaya enzymes: Johnson &

Johnson's Papoids, which, along with Tums, was one of the first to come in easy-to-pop tablet form. But while Papoids became obsolete, Tums have stood the test of time, thanks, in part, to their loyal customer base.



The factory where Tums are made, in 1946; “new” 1960s Tums ads in *Reader’s Digest*



Here are some fun facts about America’s favorite post-feast relief:

**THE FIRST TUMS WERE A GIFT FROM A HUSBAND TO HIS WIFE.**

Tums were invented by James Howe, a Missouri pharmacist, who made them for his wife, Nellie Howe. The two were preparing for a cruise, notorious then, as they are now, for loading down passengers with food and drink. (Funnily enough, Indiana chemist and Alka-Seltzer inventor Hub Beardsley brought his own tablets of baking soda and aspirin on a Mediterranean voyage that same year.) But the product’s name came from a nurse at a local military base, Jefferson Barracks, through a company-sponsored radio contest.

COURTESY GLAXOSMITHKLINE (LABORATORY)

**THEIR INITIAL PRICE TAG? JUST A DIME.**

Tums were originally sold in gold-colored tubes labeled “Tums for the Tummy.” That slogan was soon found on a range of promotional items including dessert spoons, calendars, clocks, and even tape measures.

**“TUMMY IN A JAM? TUMS SAY ‘SCRAM!’”**

Early Tums ads included catchphrases such as this and “Like Good Food? Don’t Appear Rude: Always Carry Tums” and “Even Hamburger Doesn’t Faze Me Now.” The company advertised on matchbooks, suggesting that the tablets be used “After Eating, Drinking, Smoking.” The now-famous “Tums, Tum-Tum-Tum, Tums!” song debuted in 1981.

## THE 14 OTHER MOST TRUSTED BRANDS

We teamed up with global market research firm Ipsos to find out which wellness companies Americans trust most. This year's survey included new categories: Fitness Trackers, Workout Apparel, and Hair Care. At least three in four consumers consider trust an important factor in their buying decisions, especially for over-the-counter medicines.

**Nutritional Drink/Meal Replacement**  
Ensure

**Multivitamin**  
Centrum

**Herbal Supplement**  
Nature Made

**Fitness Trackers**  
Fitbit

**Workout Apparel**  
Nike

**Hair Care**  
Pantene

**Allergy Relief**  
Benadryl

**CBD (cannabidiol)**  
Charlotte's Web

**Cold/Flu Remedy**  
Nyquil

**Cough Remedy**  
Robitussin

**Headache/Pain Reliever**  
Tylenol

**Healthy Cereal**  
Cheerios

**Health Insurance**  
Blue Cross  
Blue Shield

**National Pharmacy/Drugstore**  
CVS Pharmacy

### CHALK IT UP, FOR REAL.

If Tums have a chalky consistency, it's because they're literally made of chalk. Their base is calcium carbonate, a form of mineral calcium found in limestone, chalk, and marble.

### TUMS START OUT AS 2,000-POUND SUPER SACKS.

Those sacks contain a ton of sugar and calcium carbonate, which are mixed with water and starch. When the mix dries, it is fed into powerful compressors that squeeze it into tablets, using about five tons of force. Each of the Tums factory's 27 "tablet stations" can spit out up to 2,500 tablets a minute. They're then bottled or rolled up, and shipped around the world.

### THE TUMS FACTORY IS A ST. LOUIS LANDMARK.

Those tablets have been churned out of the same factory since day one. The factory's seven interconnected buildings take up a full city block. It's one of the last major manufacturers left in what was once a Midwestern industrial powerhouse.

### WORKERS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO POP 'EM LIKE CANDY.

At that factory, according to the Associated Press in 2004, "the tasty tablets sit in jars and bowls on desks. Workers will occasionally pop a couple into their mouths as a snack. 'It's almost like candy to us,' plant manager Glen Giles said." In Chicago, one bartender



actually made a cocktail out of the medicine: Gary Matthews of Drumbar mixed fruit-flavored Tums with a rogue's gallery of gut-boilers including cream, egg whites, red pepper, and some spicy sausage oil. "I wanted to make something that could potentially give someone heartburn and at the same time cure their heartburn," he said.

### FEEL THE BURN.

The Tums team's mission these days is to win over customers by challenging "adventurous" eaters to give themselves heartburn. Tums recently sponsored a YouTube series called "Hot Ones," which features celebrities sampling specialty hot sauces with such names as Hell Fire Detroit,



Beyond Insanity, and the Puckerbutt Pepper Company's Chocolate Plague. The company also gave away thousands of spicy chicken wings, part of a campaign called "Tums or Dare," aimed at people who like to eat hot stuff.

### SNAILS GOBBLE THEM TOO!

Tums have some unusual fans: snails. The calcium in Tums tablets is exactly what the slow crawlers need for strong, healthy shells. So owners regularly plop a few Tums tablets into their snail tanks to keep them happy, or grind them up to make the food they call "snail Jell-O." Snails love the stuff, owners say, but they recommend sticking with fruit flavors. The minty ones will burn a snail's foot. **R**



## Change a Letter, Ruin a Movie

Replace one letter and suddenly these films don't seem quite so fearsome:

*Apocalypse Cow*

*Bill Bill*

*HoboCop*

*Mortal Wombat*

*Top Nun*

*The Silence of the Lamps*

*The Whining*

BOREDPANDA.COM

# LIGHTING UP

*Lucky visitors to the Great Smoky Mountains are treated to dazzling light shows, courtesy of a special breed of firefly*

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BY *Leigh Ann Henion*  
FROM THE WASHINGTON POST

TRAVIS DOVE/THE WASHINGTON POST MAGAZINE

# THE NIGHT

# I'VE BEEN IN GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS

National Park for less than an hour when I'm mistaken for a woodland fairy. Even though I'm here to witness the ethereal phenomenon of synchronous fireflies—*Photinus carolinus*, a species famed for its ability to flash in unison—the association is surprising. After a pandemic period of virtual living, I'm feeling more like a haggard dweller of the modern world than an enchanted being. In fact, when I hear a stranger calling out from across the forest glen I'm wandering, it takes me a second to realize that she's addressing me. She waves me over and asks again: "Are you a magical creature?"

The woman gestures toward the two young children with her and says, "We saw you walk down to the river, and then you disappeared. I told the girls you must be magical. This whole place is magical. Reminds me of Narnia or something."

It does feel as if we've traveled through a portal to another realm. The woman is sitting on a porch stoop, but there's no porch. And there's a chimney nearby, but no house. To reach a trailhead in an area of the park known as Elkmont, we—along with hundreds of other visitors here to witness the synchronous fireflies' light show, which generally occurs in a two-week period around early June—had to walk along an avenue of mountain

cabins, abandoned after the park was formed. Remnants of the former settlement are visible everywhere, scattered among river-rounded stones and beds of fern.

In 2021, Tufts University released the first-ever comprehensive study of firefly tourism. Researchers found that, globally, one million people travel to witness firefly-related phenomena every year. Given that the synchronous fireflies of Elkmont are some of the most famous fireflies in the world—and that I live in their home region of southern Appalachia—coming across the study during lockdown made me think it was time to see these brilliant creatures.

The firefly event in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, which straddles this section of Tennessee and my home state of North Carolina, draws seekers from across the continent. Years ago, the National Park Service instituted a lottery for people to secure passes, since the species' growing popularity raised concerns about conservation. But, even with these limitations, the annual gathering isn't a small one.

I explain to the woman that I'd dipped down to the river for a brief respite from the crowd. The woman empathizes: "It's hard to know what to do. Know what I mean?"



Synchronous fireflies glow along a road on Grandfather Mountain.

Indeed, I do. It's been hard to know what to do for a long time running. Even mundane errands have, throughout the pandemic, required abstract risk assessments. And it doesn't seem that we've figured out, as a society, how to reckon with the magnitude of what we've been through.

I'm seeking fireflies' bioluminescence, or living light, mainly because I've been spending too much time basking in the artificial illumination of screens. According to the International Dark-Sky Association, 99 percent of people in the United States don't have access to natural night anymore. Internationally, artificial light pollution is growing at a rate of 2 percent a year with no signs of slowing. It's as if we, as a species, have grown afraid of the dark.

Since the initial COVID-19 shutdown, I've stayed up too late, acting as if the light of screens might stave off

doom. I've fallen under the influence of phones, tablets, and computers. For several seasons now, I've been beating myself against screens like a moth against a light bulb, seeking entertainment that might numb me, news that might comfort me—and the process has only served to disrupt my animal instincts. Tonight, I'm hoping to break the spell that screens have cast.

**ALONG THE TRAIL** designated for firefly viewing, people have been setting up folding chairs, as if they're waiting for a parade. They're a diverse bunch. There are nine-month-olds and 90-year-olds. Some of them have been to the firefly viewing several times. Others are awaiting the first synchronous firefly sighting of their lives.

Firefly habitat is so specific, so mercurial, that it's possible to see a great show from one section of the trail while another remains relatively

dark. No one, not even rangers, can predict the best seats for the evening, so people mill around until they find a spot that feels right to them. Finally, dusk comes.

When the first synchronous fireflies appear, sporadically flashing, they don't seem, to my untrained eye, to be much different from common species that illuminate backyards across the country. But, as their numbers grow, expectant murmurs travel up and down the row of spectators. Instinctively, when hundreds of insects grow to be thousands—each appearing to light the one next to it, like a candle being passed—the crowd stands.

For a while, the insects' rhythms remain a bit discordant, like that of an orchestra warming up. Scientists have found that the more individual fireflies participate, the more in tune they get. Before long, there are so many that it's clear they're working in unison. The effect isn't a lights-on-lights-off situation, as I'd expected; it's more like watching a stadium wave, when members of a crowd successively lift their hands, swept into the fervor of something larger than themselves.

The insects are responding to each other's light, working with their neighbors to find their role in the whole. From a distance, the activity appears

as a shimmering current running through the forest from right to left: *Whoosh*. Then, darkness. Then again, a whoosh of light.

I cannot see the face of the woman beside me, but I come to attention when she calls out "*Dun, dun, dun, dunnn*," mimicking the famous motif in Beethoven's Symphony No. 5. "It's like they're playing music," she says to someone beside her.

Despite the awkwardness of approaching strangers in the dark—even more acute these days, when many people haven't seen their extended families outside of video calls—I pipe up, "Have you heard about how

A synchronous firefly lights up in a rhythm with all the others around it.



the synchronous fireflies were originally found here?”

“Whoa, a messenger from the dark!” she says, laughing. “No, tell us!”

So, I share what I’ve read: Lynn Faust, a naturalist who used to spend summers in the now-defunct Elkmont community, grew up admiring the fireflies we’re watching. As an adult, she came across an article about synchronous fireflies in Asia, and she recognized similarities between what the scientists were reporting and what she’d seen as a child.

When she reached out, researchers were skeptical that a species unknown to science existed in the most-visited national park in the country. They asked her to imagine the flashing lights as musical notes and record their rhythm on a blank piece of sheet music. Her efforts convinced firefly scientists that they should make the trip to Great Smoky Mountains National Park, where they confirmed the existence of a previously unrecorded synchronous species. This is, ultimately, how we all ended up in Elkmont, bearing witness this evening.

I can sense more people gathering around me as I’m speaking. When I finish, strangers’ voices ping to my left, to my right, from the trail behind me. Their words ring like bells.

“Amazing!” says a baritone.

“Fantastic!” shouts a soprano.

“What, exactly, do you think they’re singing?” a man asks the crowd.

“Beyoncé! ‘All the single ladies!’”

a woman says. Laughter ripples up and down the trail.

Most people in attendance seem to be familiar with the concept of firefly flashes as a function of mating. The insects we’re seeing are males, signaling to females who stay close to the ground. Scientists generally agree about the mating-related utility of fireflies’ bioluminescence, but they’ve long tussled over how, exactly, fireflies make light. It’s generally thought that illumination occurs when a firefly opens an air tube, allowing oxygen to

## WE’RE WITNESSING THE GRAND FINALE OF A LONG-TERM METAMORPHOSIS.

ignite inborn organic compounds in its body. This means, in a roundabout way, that when you see a firefly light up, you’re watching it take a breath.

Collectively, the crowd gasps and sighs as fireflies flit through the forest. But, despite the dazzle, I find my eyes wandering toward the infinitely dark ground. Because, once I started researching fireflies, I came across this fact: By the time we see a firefly in flight, it has potentially been living among us for up to two years in various life stages, dimly glowing on the ground. What we’re witnessing now is the grand finale of a long-term metamorphosis. These famed fireflies have

spent much of the past year crawling around in the dark to find what they elementally needed to survive, so that their species might ultimately thrive.

These creatures have been waiting for their turn to rise. And, finally, they've found it. When people begin leaving the park, headed for their hotel rooms and tents, the fireflies are still working like cells of a glowing, forest-size lung.

## SOMEONE SPOTS A STRANGE ORB OF LIGHT RISING FROM THE UNDERSTORY.

**THERE ARE MORE** than 2,000 known species of fireflies in the world, and 19 of those—with synchronous fireflies being the most famous—reside within the borders of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Will Kuhn, director of science and research at Discover Life in America, a nonprofit centered on biodiversity, believes there are more. “I don’t think we’ve found all the firefly species in the park,” he says. There is a chance we won’t know what we’ve got even after

it’s gone. Globally, firefly populations are under assault, and the largest threats to their well-being—according to the Tufts Report—are habitat loss, pesticide use, and light pollution.

When I meet Kuhn, he’s holding court with two dozen people who’ve signed up for a synchronous firefly viewing event hosted by his organization, which often partners with universities and other research institutions. Since the founding of Discover Life in America in 1998, the group has documented more than 10,000 animal and plant species in Great Smoky Mountains National Park—and more than 1,000 of those were previously unknown to science.

We’re getting ready to travel down the mountain to Norton Creek, a private creekside habitat outside of the park. Kuhn knows the area to be home to a large population of synchronous fireflies, which have now been observed in Appalachia as far north as Pennsylvania. The group is already buzzing with questions. Many of them are here because they’ve failed to win federal lottery passes. Given that they’ve found another route to witness the synchronous phenomenon, they’re already feeling lucky.



One of the women encircling Kuhn says that she's excited for a good show because she has only "plain old fireflies" on her farm in Ohio. Kuhn suggests that, if she does a little research, she'll find that her region is likely home to several species, all with their own songs and longings. The most common firefly in the United States is the big dipper, but there are 150 species with specific habitats and behaviors in North America. Each of the bioluminescent species' flash patterns is as unique as a fingerprint. And, where you find one species, there's a good chance you'll be able to find others nearby.

Susan George, a nurse from San Antonio, Texas, lives in the city proper, and she's always been amazed that fireflies are tenacious enough to find homes there, in rare squares of land that have been spared from asphalt and concrete. "Sometimes, when I'm sitting out in my yard, fireflies land right on me," she says.

The woman from Ohio nods. "When they do that," she says, "it feels like love."

The nurse gives a weak smile. "I'm here because, at the hospital, I work with bugs of a different kind," she says.

"And after this year, I really needed a break." Everyone falls silent. We are—as any group of humans might be at this point in history—a swarm of loss embodied. On Norton Creek, we're seeking abundance.

Unfortunately, when we finally make it to the waterway, the local population of synchronous fireflies fails to greet us. There are only a few partnered dots of light. Predicting emergence dates of fireflies involves a formula of temperature patterns and other factors. But, even with careful calculation, the details of firefly metamorphosis can be difficult to predict. It's several degrees cooler here than it has been in the Elkmont region of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The synchronous residents of Norton Creek apparently need a few more days to fully wake.

Just when it seems spirits are irretrievably waning, someone spots a strange orb of light rising from the understory. It peers at us from across the creek, blue and unblinking.

**I'VE BEEN FAMILIAR** with the term "blue ghost" for years as related to my home region's firefly attraction. Until recently, though, I didn't understand

that synchronous fireflies and blue ghosts were different species. They have slightly different mating seasons, but these often overlap as conditions transition from evening to evening. Currently, on Norton Creek, it seems to be the blue ghost firefly population that's peaking.

The ghost moves toward us. And it isn't flying, it's floating.

Soon there are carpets of light in and around the forest on all sides of us. These creatures, notable for their neon-bright color and enduring flashes—which hold for up to 60 seconds at a time—are visible demonstrations of how to breathe deeply. Their traceable flight patterns make them look as though they're intoxicated.

As group members wander off, I find myself walking alone. But with every step I take, more fireflies reveal themselves. Blue orb-fairies, hundreds of them, appear to be following me. They're swooping and swerving and serenading me—not as a visitor to this landscape, but as part of it.

I've seen the aurora borealis in the Arctic. I've witnessed migrations in the Serengeti, and I've snorkeled the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, yet I'm not sure that I've ever appreciated any natural phenomenon more than this marvel of Appalachia.

By the time I hear voices on the road ahead, I've lost all sense of time and space. In dim moonlight, I can make out half a dozen silhouettes in

the distance. Kuhn's voice is hushed. "People typically don't walk around at night without lights on," he says. "But it's amazing what happens when you let your eyes adjust to the dark. When you take the time to really look."

**FOR WEEKS AFTER** I return from Tennessee, I find myself scanning meadows and creeks—not as scenic backdrops, but as habitat. Every plot of land I see is suddenly weighted with secret, golden glory. And each night, around 9:30, when I'd typically be logging on to Netflix, I get the urge to go outside to check on the local firefly population.

The High Country of North Carolina, where I live, is primed to become the next firefly tourism hot spot. In 2019, a population of synchronous fireflies was discovered near Boone, North Carolina, on Grandfather Mountain, a beloved regional attraction. The entomologist who found the species during a nocturnal stroll, taken on a whim, had been traveling a trail I've walked dozens of times in daylight.

The mountain is closed to night visitors, but natural resource staff members are investigating how Grandfather Mountain might host future firefly viewings without harming habitat. Surveys of synchronous populations on the mountain have led participants to find previously overlooked blue ghost populations—in locales frequented by hundreds of

thousands of visitors a year. Even my ordinary front door, on the far end of neighboring Watauga County, is a portal to a parallel universe once the sun has set, but it's taken the pandemic for me to recognize it. My guided night walks have acted as a sort of training. Even so, it still takes me a few nights of distant firefly watching to leave the familiarity of my front porch.

This ease-in approach gives me an opportunity to correct the light pollution seeping from my house, mitigating trespasses against my bioluminescent neighbors that I hadn't been aware I was making. I close curtains and turn off porch lights. The difference made by these small changes is staggering.

Incrementally, as the darkness around my house deepens, I move farther out. I take to sitting beyond

an old chicken coop, watching what I now understand to be femme fatale fireflies winking from treetops, and big dippers plunging through meadows. One night, I decide I'm going to leave my immediate environs to explore the valley beyond. I set out for a place where fields and forest meet. When I reach a neighbor's livestock gate—open since its last inhabitants, a family of goats, were killed by an unidentified predator—I pause, mustering the courage to enter. But, before I embark on my chosen path, I hear a rustling in the feral pasture above me.

My eyes are still adjusting. I use vestiges of twilight to trace the ragged outline of high grass. I'm on the verge of dismissing the sounds as manifestations of my anxiety when a wildcat flings itself into the sky. I see it, claw to claw, arched like a crescent moon,

Whole families of tourists come to Appalachia to observe fireflies.

TRAVIS DOVE/THE WASHINGTON POST MAGAZINE



nearly close enough for me to touch it.

The predator has pounced onto something I cannot see—so quickly that I hardly have time to register what's going on. Then, from thorny bramble, the wildcat exhales in a guttural hiss. The sound slithers around me, and I yelp from the pressure of it.

I turn to run, but somewhere beyond my conscious mind, I have a vague understanding that running would trigger the animal's prey instinct. It takes everything I have to slow my stride. I pivot to an unexpected route, keeping my pace steady.

I target the yellow pool of a distant security light, even though I know the light cannot save me. That's when it registers: I might have set out on my firefly pilgrimage because I wanted to revel in light, but what I needed was a reconciliation with darkness.

Fireflies are light bearers, but it is the darkness between most species' flashes that reveal their true character. Without intermittent darkness, there would be no synchronized light shows. There would be only glare. Stars are, after all, in the sky above us even at midday, but we see them only when the sun takes its leave. Because while it's true that only light can drive

out darkness, there are some forms of light that only darkness can reveal.

We live in an age that's asking us to get comfortable with constant disruption. There will always be, as there always have been, threats beyond our line of sight. But, as we venture into the unknown, we also stand to encounter wonders yet unimaginable. I keep walking.

Half a mile from the site of my wildcat encounter, I slow my stride. Out of the corner of my eye, I see a lone firefly blinking in what appears to be a synchronous pattern. It repeats, with a dark pause that holds, beat after beat. I cannot imagine that I've found a synchronous firefly here, but I'm no longer willing to discount any patch of land in southern Appalachia.

Slowly, entire constellations of fireflies rise from the coal-black earth around me, twinkling with oxygen. I attempt to align with their rhythm: Inhale, light. Exhale, dark. We are breathing at this moment, in sync, on this complicated planet. And even the deepest parts of the mountain valley I'm standing in are pulsating with life, illuminated. **R**

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## One for the Record Books

The longest drum solo was 10 hours and 26 minutes and was performed by the child sitting behind me on Delta Flight 963 from Los Angeles to Tokyo.

 @FAKEMUSICFACT



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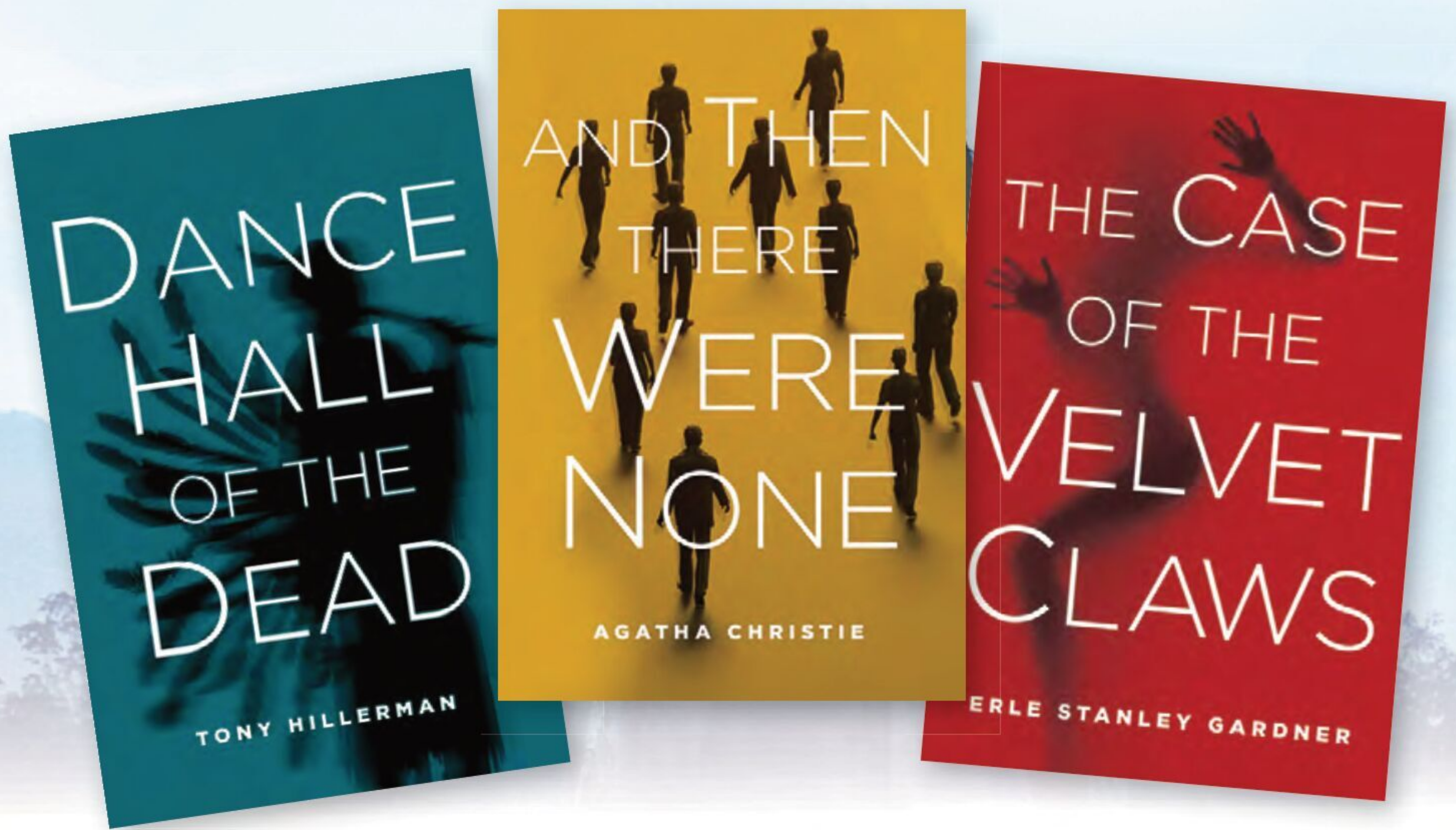
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*The RD*  
**LIST**

READ, WATCH, LISTEN

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# Dog

*Directed by Channing Tatum*

**ALL RIGHT, WE'LL BITE.** After a five-year absence from the big screen, Channing Tatum makes his directorial debut with buddy comedy *Dog*—his buddy being, yup, a Belgian Malinois named Lulu. Tatum plays Jackson Briggs, a veteran tasked with taking Lulu, a heroic military dog, down the Pacific Coast to the funeral of the soldier she belonged to. One small (well, large) problem: Lulu is rowdy to the extreme. (“Maybe just take the

crazy down one notch,” Briggs begs from behind the wheel of his Ford Bronco.) Lulu pushes him up the wall and through a fancy lobby, but he feeds her treats, gives her a bed, and even shares a bathtub with her. In turn, Lulu shows her loving and loyal side. Ultimately, the vet (the human one) gains a better understanding of himself and his canine companion. (In theaters February 18, 2022)  
 —Mara Reinstein



David Chang, Regina King, and John Leguizamo find their roots in the new season.

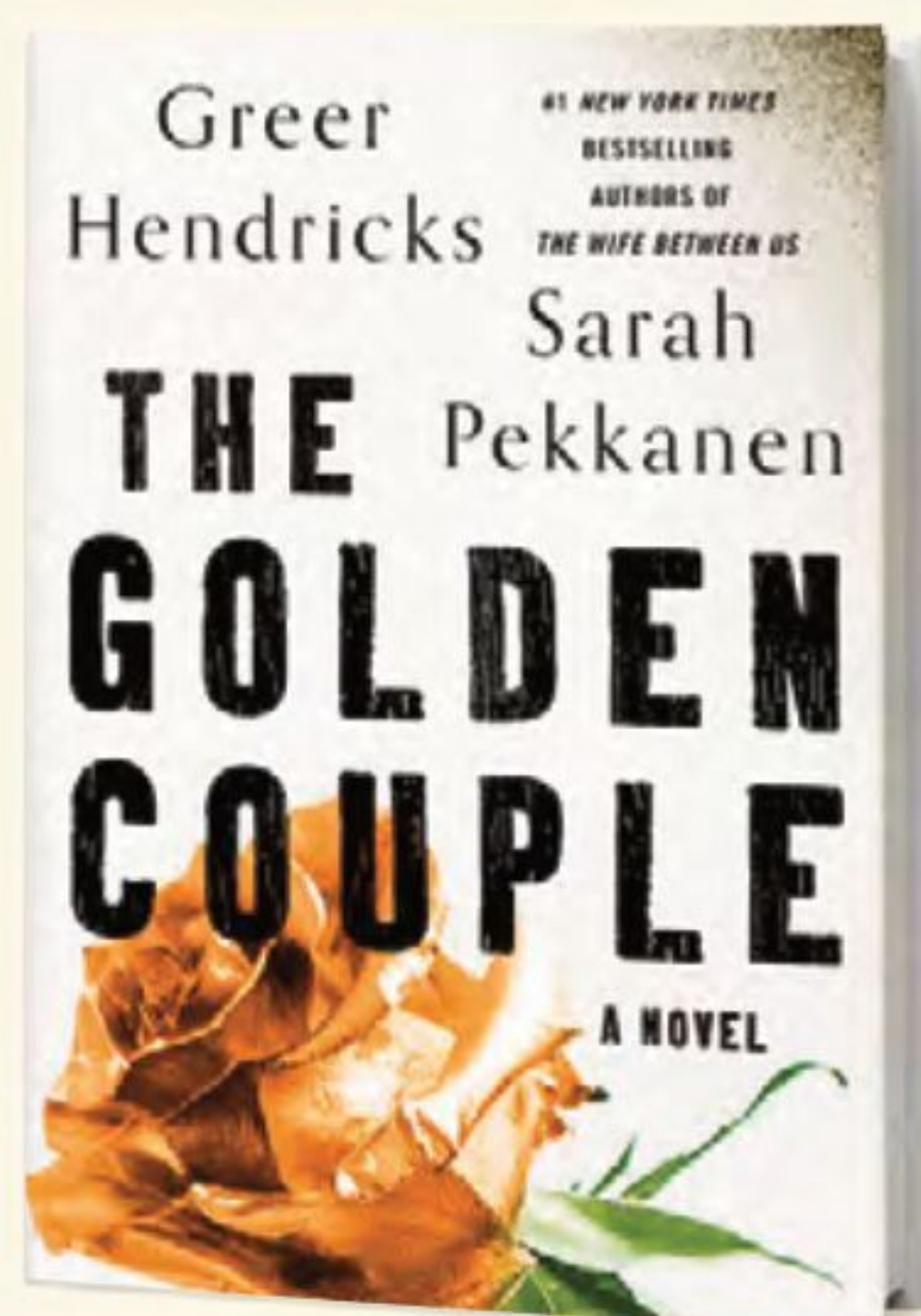


## Finding Your Roots *with* Henry Louis Gates Jr.

What does **Condoleezza Rice** have in common with Andy Cohen? Martha Stewart with LL Cool J? Alan Dershowitz with RuPaul? They've all found their roots with Henry Louis Gates Jr. The historian and TV presenter sat down with 21 of the most compelling personalities of the moment for Season 8 of his PBS docuseries—inspired by former *RD* writer Alex Haley's 1976 book, *Roots*—to trace their genealogies far beyond a 23andMe. In Season 7, Gates helped TV detectives Christopher Meloni and Tony Shalhoub do some real-life sleuthing, clueing them into some unlikely distant (but eminent!) cousins. Who might turn out to be related to new guests in Season 8? (Catch new episodes Tuesday nights on PBS, or stream at [pbs.org/findingyourroots](https://pbs.org/findingyourroots).) —*Caroline Fanning*

COURTESY FINDING YOUR ROOTS. NOUN PROJECT: TV ICON. OPPOSITE PAGE: T\_KIMURA/GETTY IMAGES (BOOK)





## The Golden Couple

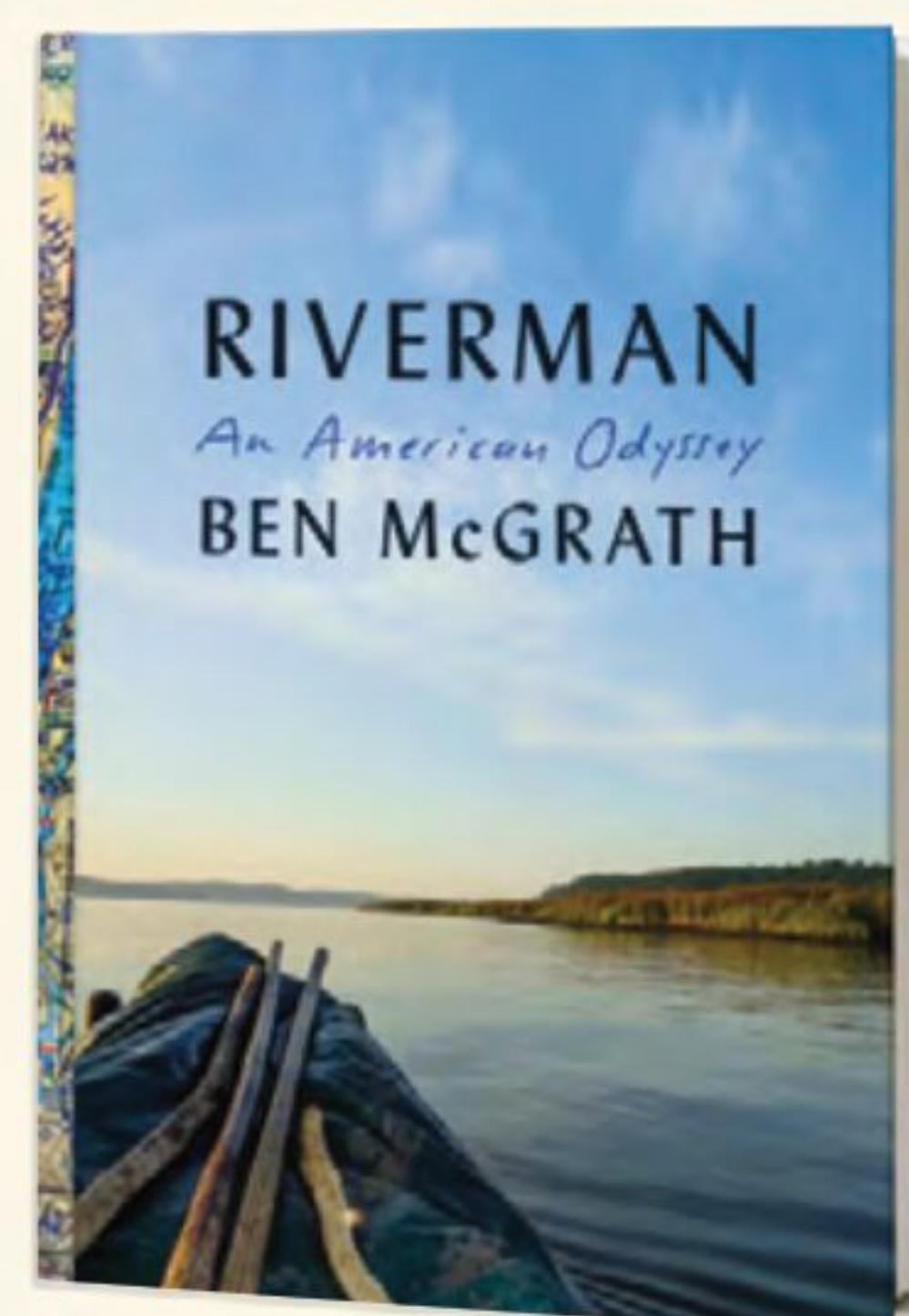
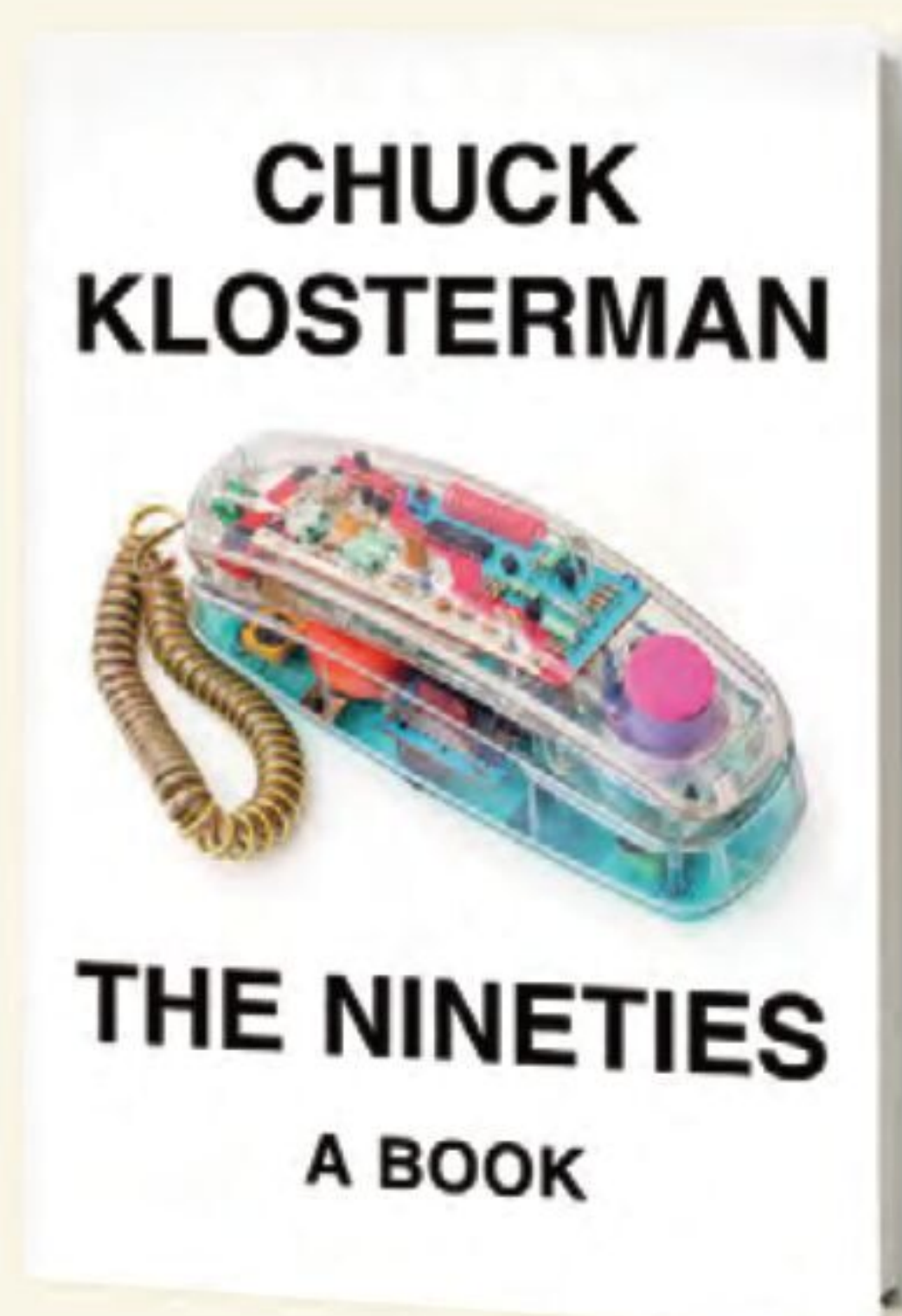
by Greer Hendricks and Sarah Pekkanen

Marissa and Mathew Bishop aren't nearly as holy as their name hints at—but Avery Chambers has just as many secrets as hers does. The therapist's gray relationship with client boundaries already cost Chambers her license—or in her opinion, freed her to openly meddle in the Bishops' marriage. She soon learns all that gleams about this golden couple is their carefully combed fair hair. Dual narrators leave you as sorry to say goodbye to one's point of view as you are desperate to say hello to the other's. *RD's* Select Editions editor has dubbed it the next *Gone Girl*. (On sale March 8, 2022) —CF

## The Nineties

by Chuck Klosterman

It's hard not to look back fondly at an era when hamburger phones were the apex of technology. Grunge was in the air, and being ghosted referred only to Patrick Swayze. The Internet was about to take over the world—that is, if all this Y2K business held up. Exploring the era from all angles, the latest volume by bestselling author Chuck Klosterman makes an era feel more like a character. You'll remember what you forgot or learn what you never knew, chuckle at the laughable, and roll your eyes at the supremely ridiculous. (On sale February 8, 2022) —Adrienne Farr



## Riverman: An American Odyssey

by Ben McGrath

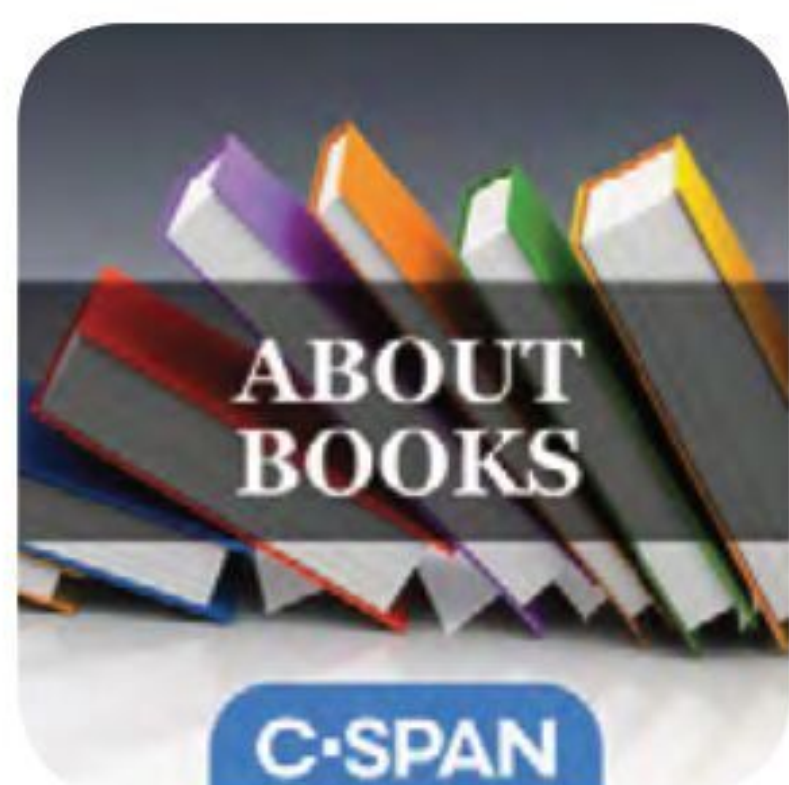
Talk about paddling your own canoe. Dick Conant spent 20 years on the water before meeting Ben McGrath in 2014. McGrath wrote a *New Yorker* article about Conant, a character as unforgettable as they come, who was canoeing from Plattsburg, New York (the Canadian border), to Florida (a destination he'd never reach). His canoe washed up in the Outer Banks of North Carolina, writing the end to a story published just months earlier. McGrath revisits Conant's story to provide a wider look at his life—and now, legacy. (On sale April 5, 2022) —CF



# About Books

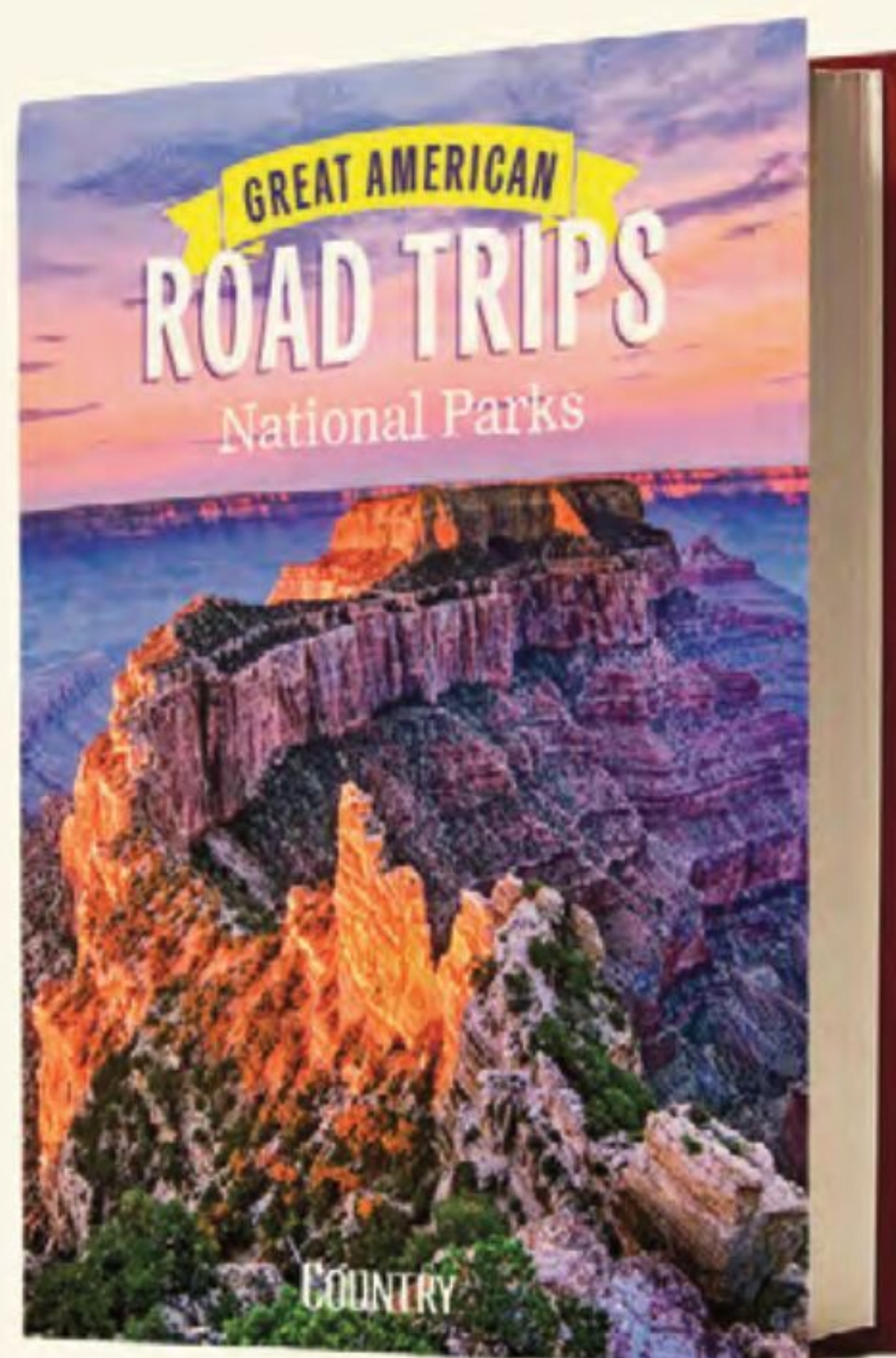
*From C-SPAN*

**Book TV** is turning a page. The longtime C-Span staple is moving beyond its trademark “television for serious readers” and into audio with its new podcast, *About Books*. Host Peter Slen talks—what else?—books with authors and publishing pros. Tune in to hear Marji Ross, former president of Regnery Publishing, discuss the pitfalls of conservative book publishing. Visit Detroit’s Source Booksellers and listen to owner Janet Webster Jones share her story of creating a thriving online business out of a brick-and-mortar store with minimal e-presence prior to the pan-



demic. (Listen on Spotify, iTunes, Stitcher, and [c-span.org/podcasts](http://c-span.org/podcasts).) —CF

## SPECIAL OFFER



### Great American Road Trips: National Parks

Enjoy the view from the driver’s seat while the editors of *Country* take you on a journey to more than 40 of America’s greatest National Parks, from Shenandoah Valley to Denali to the Virgin Islands and back (from sea to shining sea, dare we say?). Armchair travelers and road warriors alike will appreciate the tips for can’t-miss sights, convenient rest areas, and worthwhile detours. For a limited time, it’s just \$10—and shipping is on us. To order, visit [lovethecountry.com/RDM](http://lovethecountry.com/RDM).

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**QUOTABLE QUOTES**

Generosity can take so many forms—it doesn't just have to do with money—so I'm always shocked when people can't muster any at all.

—Alice Waters, CHEF  
IN *Vanity Fair*



Visibility these days seems to somehow equate to success. Do not be afraid to disappear for a while and see what comes to you in the silence.

—Michaela Coel, SCREENWRITER  
AT THE EMMY AWARDS

Just as you think you know someone, it turns out you actually have no idea who a person really is until you've traveled with them.

—Gabrielle Union, ACTOR  
IN THE BOOK *You Got Anything Stronger?*



Always eat before a meeting. Even a lunch meeting. Because hungry people say things they regret.

—Chris Rock, COMEDIAN  
IN *Esquire*



Some people feel confusion and uncertainty (which are often things that arrive right before possibility), and do nothing. Don't do nothing.

—Alex Dimitrov, POET, IN *W*

FROM TOP: DAVID LIVINGSTON/GETTY IMAGES. GILBERT CARRASQUILLO/GETTY IMAGES. ALLEN BEREZOVSKY/GETTY IMAGES

# BRAIN GAMES

SHARPEN *Your Mind*

## Fact or Fiction?

**MEDIUM** Determine whether each statement is fact or fiction. To reveal the solution to the bonus question at the bottom, write the letters indicated by your responses in the corresponding numbered blanks. Turn the page upside down for the answers.

1. Rabbits literally jump for joy.



FACT: **B** FICTION: **J**

2. Earth's core is as hot as the sun's surface.

FACT: **A** FICTION: **E**

3. Meryl Streep has won more Oscars than any other actor.

FACT: **L** FICTION: **R**

4. Peanuts are the most common allergen.



FACT: **L** FICTION: **N**

5. Centenarians in New Mexico are exempt from state taxes.

FACT: **A** FICTION: **Y**

6. No woman has ever been drafted by the NBA.



FACT: **F** FICTION: **C**

7. F. Scott Fitzgerald said all American literature comes from Mark Twain.

FACT: **I** FICTION: **L**

8. About 1 in 10,000 clovers has four leaves.



FACT: **E** FICTION: **S**

9. Brazil borders every other country in South America.

FACT: **H** FICTION: **S**

**BONUS QUESTION** Which creatures inspired researchers to develop a new, faster type of wound glue? (Need help? Turn to News from the World of Medicine on page 50.)

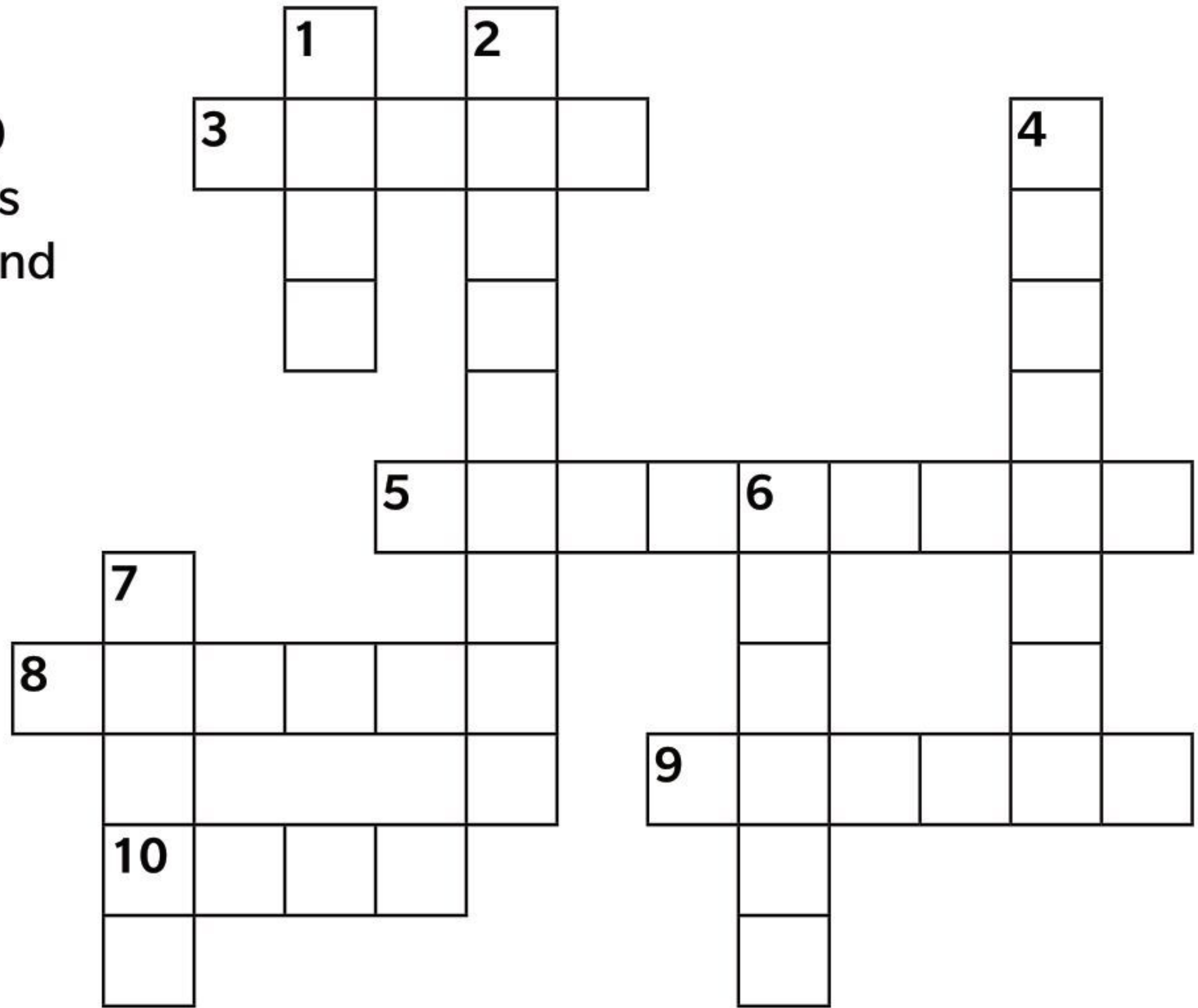
1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9

**Answers:** 1. Fact; during leaps called "binkies," they perform twists and kicks in midair. 2. Fact. 3. Fiction; Katherine Hepburn has. 4. Fiction; it's milk for children and shellfish for adults. 5. Fact. 6. Fiction; two have (Denise Long in 1969 and Lusia Harris in 1977), though neither played. 7. Fiction; Ernest Hemingway said it. 8. Fact. 9. Fiction; it doesn't touch Chile or Ecuador. **Bonus Question:** Barnacles.

### Quick Crossword

**EASY** In honor of Yellowstone National Park, which turns 150 this March, place these animals and other natural wonders found at the park into the grid:

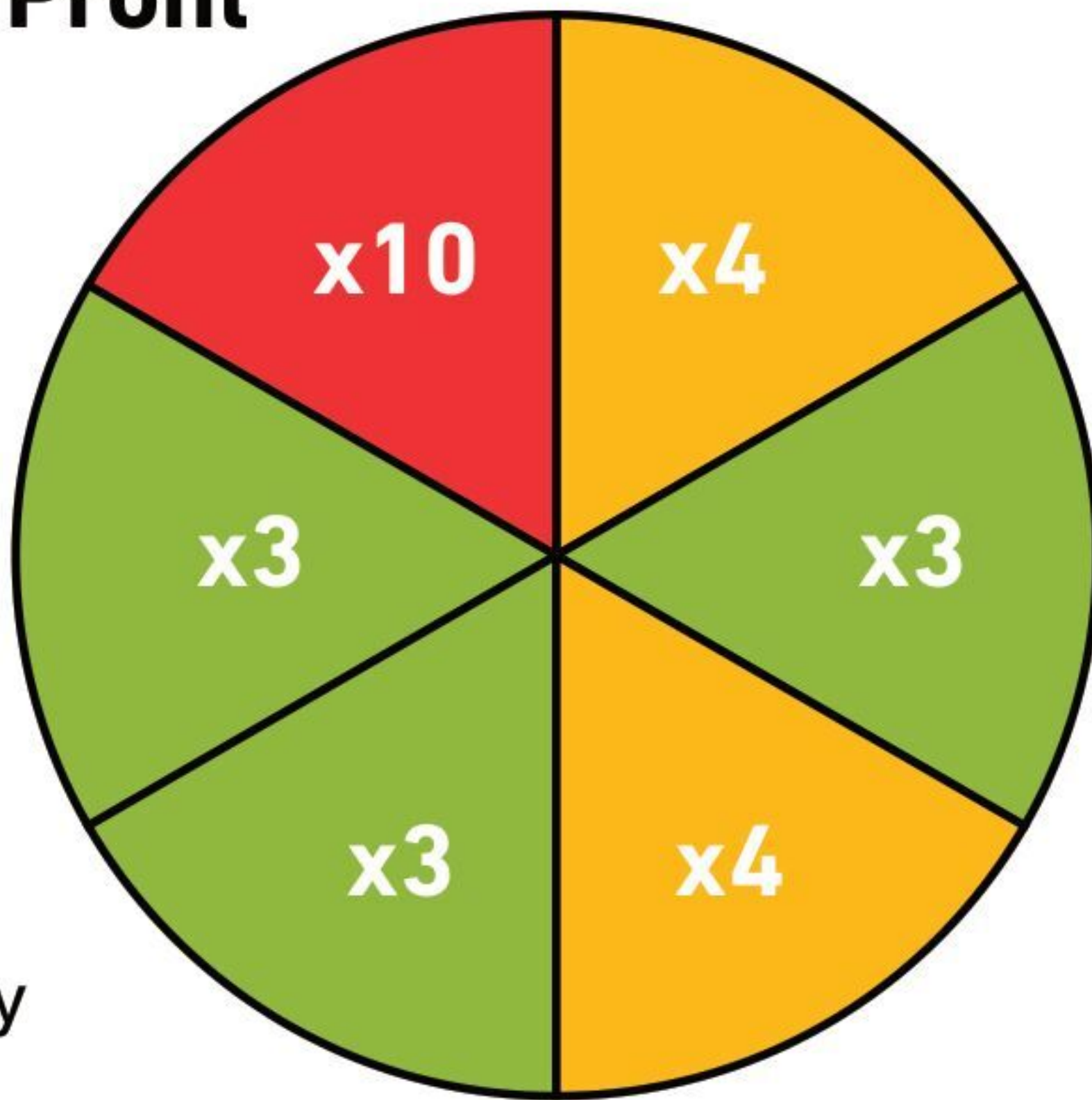
- LYNX
- BISON
- GEYSER
- WOLVERINE
- EAGLE
- PRONGHORN
- CANYON
- PIKA
- OSPREY
- FUMAROLE



EMILY GOODMAN (QUICK CROSSWORD). WHEEL OF PROFIT (SUE DOHRIN). SYMBOLISM (MARCEL DANESI)

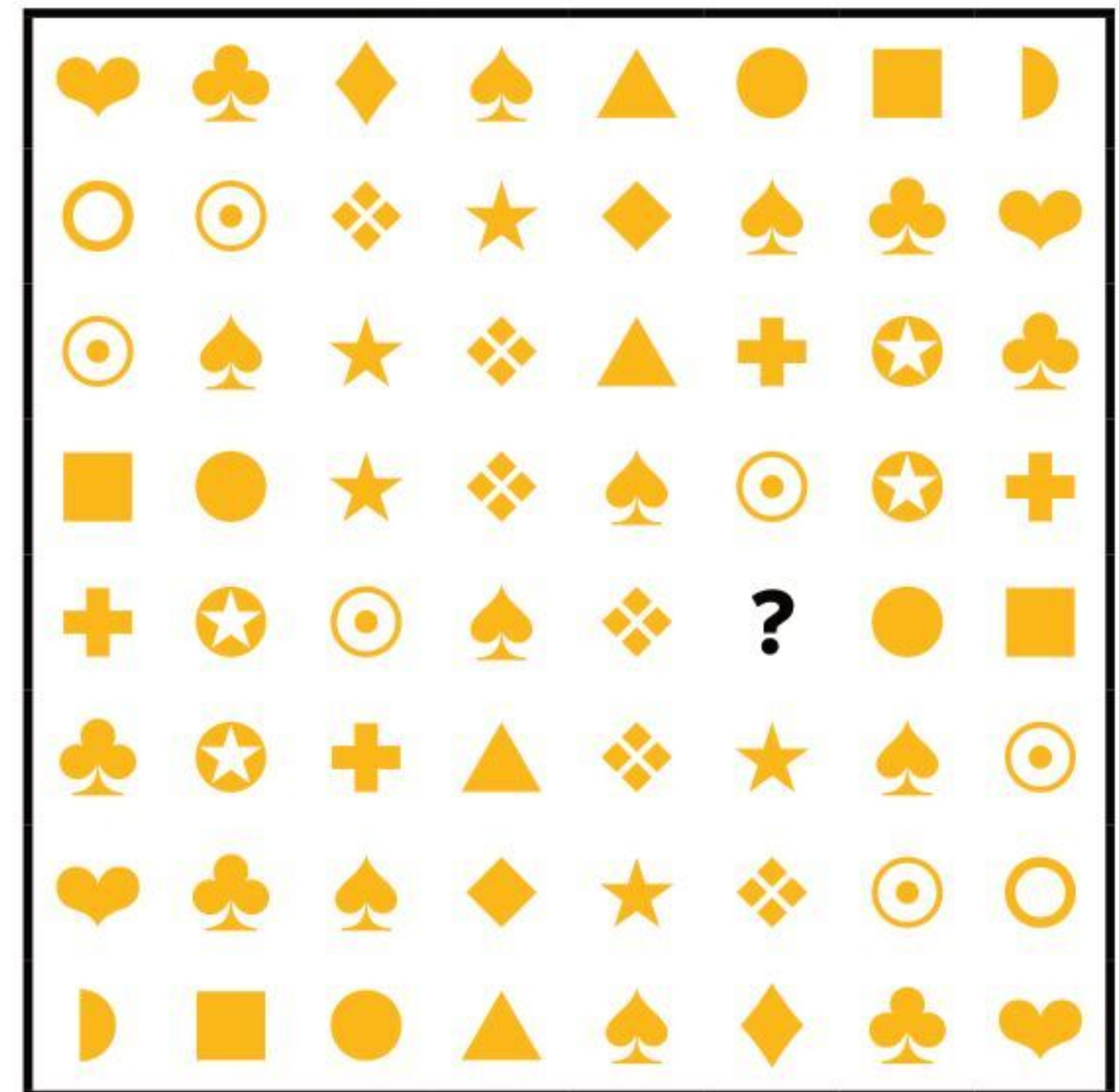
### Wheel of Profit

**MEDIUM** You must wager \$10 to spin the wheel, and if the wheel spins to the color you bet on, you win \$10 multiplied by the number shown. If you always bet on green and your friend always bets on red, who is more likely to have made a bigger profit after six spins?



### Symbolism

**DIFFICULT** Which symbol (A, B, C, or D) is missing from the grid below?



- A: Star
- B: Star in circle
- C: Heart
- D: Square

For more Brain Games, go to [RD.COM/CROSSWORDS](http://RD.COM/CROSSWORDS).

For answers, turn to PAGE 119.

# CONNECTIONS:

*Your link to values and insights each month*

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**Many English words** include accents—think blasé, jalapeño, and château—which clue you in to pronunciation and differentiate between terms (like resume vs. résumé). Many have French roots, but we've featured other etymologies too. When you're ready, turn the page, and voilà—the answers.

BY Sarah Chassé

**1. exposé** *n.*

(ek-spoh-'zay)

- A low neckline
- B camera lens
- C public disclosure

**2. pied-à-terre** *n.*

(pee-ay-duh-'tayr)

- A second home
- B leisurely walk
- C small garden

**3. doppelgänger** *n.*

('dah-pull-gang-er)

- A mobster
- B cyclone
- C double

**4. née** *adj.*

(nay)

- A unmarried
- B formerly known as
- C born-again

**5. soupçon** *n.*

(soop-'sawn)

- A small amount
- B folk song
- C large kettle

**6. piñata** *n.*

(peen-'yah-tuh)

- A birthday party
- B decorated container
- C green salsa

**7. coup de grâce** *n.*

(koo-dih-'grahss)

- A rebellion
- B ballet step
- C final blow

**8. flambé** *v.*

(flahm-'bay)

- A drench and ignite
- B top with custard
- C bring to a boil

**9. tête-à-tête** *n.*

(tet-uh-'tet)

- A fistfight
- B private talk
- C drum solo

**10. mañana** *adv.*

(mun-'yah-nuh)

- A immediately
- B long past
- C in the future

**11. maître d'** *n.*

(may-truh-'dee)

- A dinner jacket
- B serving tray
- C headwaiter

**12. risqué** *adj.*

(ris-'kay)

- A suggestive
- B dangerous
- C strategic

**13. curaçao** *n.*

('kyur-uh-so)

- A gunpowder
- B citrus liqueur
- C tropical bird

**14. vis-à-vis** *prep.*

(veez-uh-'vee)

- A in relation to
- B despite
- C on top of

**15. séance** *n.*

('say-ahnts)

- A afternoon nap
- B long speech
- C meeting with spirits



## An Übershort Guide to These Funky Symbols

The acute accent (´) signals stressed syllables; the grave accent (`) signals unstressed ones. Other marks include the cedilla (¸) for an s sound, the circumflex (^) for vowel length, the tilde (~) for an n-plus-y sound, and the umlaut (¨) for a rounded vowel. The umlaut has a twin: the diaeresis. In words (naïve) or names (Chloë), it indicates a separate syllable.

### Word Power ANSWERS

#### 1. exposé

(C) *public disclosure*

The newspaper's exposé uncovered corruption in the mayor's office.

#### 2. pied-à-terre

(A) *second home*

Are Keisha and Blake at their pied-à-terre in Manhattan this weekend?

#### 3. doppelgänger

(C) *double*

You must have a doppelgänger, because I'd swear I saw you on TV last night!

#### 4. née (B)

*formerly known as*

Jacqueline Kennedy (née Bouvier) was famous for her style and elegance.

#### 5. soupçon

(A) *small amount*

This stew needs just a soupçon more salt.

#### 6. piñata

(B) *decorated container*

We whacked the candy-filled piñata until it burst.

#### 7. coup de grâce

(C) *final blow*

For many struggling businesses, the pandemic was the coup de grâce that forced them to close.

#### 8. flambé

(A) *drench and ignite*

"What if we flambé our Easter ham in rum this year?" Dad suggested.

#### 9. tête-à-tête

(B) *private talk*

Adrian's boss scheduled a tête-à-tête to discuss his performance review.

#### 10. mañana

(C) *in the future*

I'm too busy to clean the garage—I'll do it mañana.

#### 11. maître d'

(C) *headwaiter*

"Do you have a reservation?" the maître d'

asked, consulting his list.

#### 12. risqué (A) *suggestive*

The novel was considered risqué when it was first published, but it's tame by today's standards.

#### 13. curaçao

(B) *citrus liqueur*

Though curaçao is flavored with dried orange peel, it's often dyed an electric blue.

#### 14. vis-à-vis

(A) *in relation to*

Miguel keeps a detailed spreadsheet tracking his income vis-à-vis his spending.

#### 15. séance

(C) *meeting with spirits*

Madame Zelda's séance failed to conjure my late uncle.

### Vocabulary Ratings

9 & BELOW: *passé*

10–12: *touché*

13–15: *olé*



## ANSWERS

### WHERE, OH WHERE?

(page 56)

B. Macon, Georgia

### BRAIN GAMES

(pages 114-115)

#### Quick Crossword

##### ACROSS

3. BISON
5. PRONGHORN
8. CANYON
9. OSPREY
10. LYNX

##### DOWN

1. PIKA
2. WOLVERINE
4. FUMAROLE
6. GEYSER
7. EAGLE

#### Wheel of Profit

Your friend, although this is not guaranteed. You will both wager \$60 to spin six times. Your friend can expect to win once after six spins (for \$100) and you can expect to win three times (for \$90).

#### Symbolism

A. The symbols on the top line occur in reverse order on the bottom line; the symbols on the second line from the top occur in reverse order on the second line from the bottom; and so on.

## PHOTO FINISH



#### Winner

“Don’t tell me, you’re pregnant again!”  
—ELAINE MILLIGAN *Blossburg, Pennsylvania*

#### Runners-Up

“I’ll pay for lunch. Just put it on my bill.”  
—KEN HUSSAR *Lancaster, Pennsylvania*

Waiting with baited breath.  
—LAURA CRAWFORD *Bessemer City, North Carolina*

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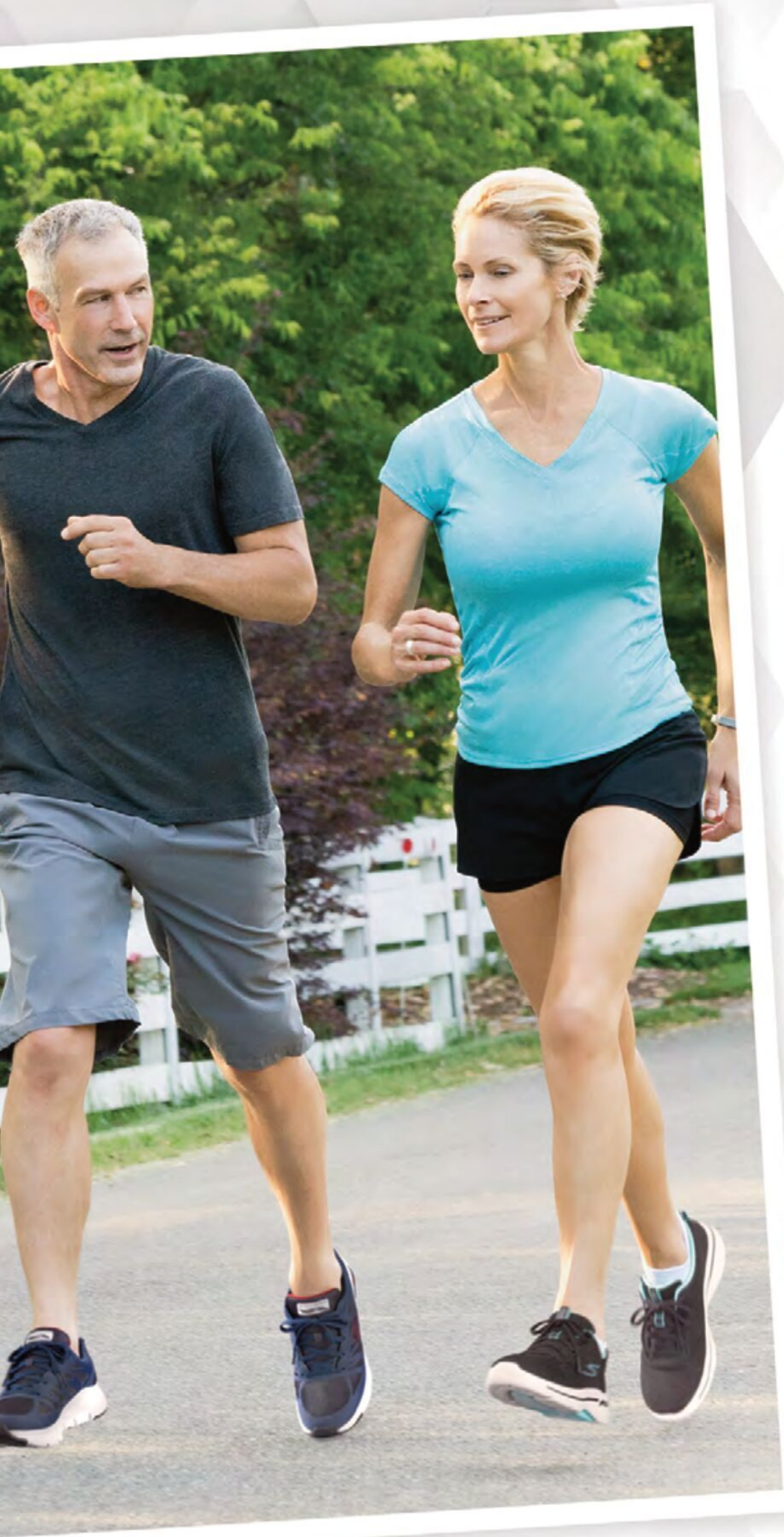
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