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Bangladesh Tk220 . Indonesia Rp45,000 . Korea W7000 . Thailand B155 . HK\$36 . Sri Lanka Rs850 . NT\$158 . Pakistan Rs595

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Locked In The

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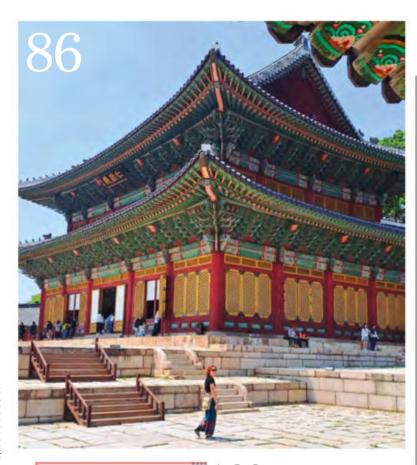












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Tantrums To Tinsel

Every year, overexcited children and determined parents queue up for a Santa photo.

CHERINE FAHD

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The Upside Of Anxiety

Worrying has its benefits, alerting us to things that need to change.

PATRICIA PEARSON

SEPTEMBER 1977

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As the massive lion latched onto his head and neck, the conservationist waited for the end. ARNOLD SAPIRO

DECEMBER 1979

Adding Up To Happiness

Apply creative arithmetic to subtract the bad and multiply the good in life.

FREDELLE MAYNARD

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When their baby was born with only half a heart, this family had to fight to give her a second chance at life. ROBERT KIENER

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Discover what's behind the sparkling pyrotechnics that light up our skies.

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PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES/WESTEND61. ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES

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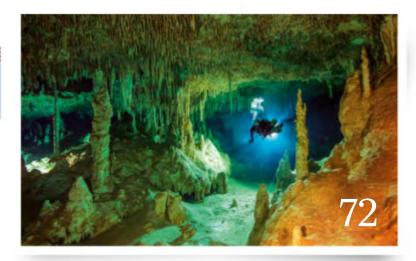
Caverns and caves hidden deep underground. **DORIS KOCHANEK**

OUIZ

What Would The World Be Without Paper?

If paper had not existed the world might not be nearly as advanced. But can you scroll through our quiz without a cheat sheet? KARIN SCHÄTZLE





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TRAVEL

Heart & Seoul

South Korea's bustling capital fuses an ancient culture with modern intensity. **DIANE GODLEY**

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Her Gift To The Elephants

Injured, neglected and elderly elephants find a new home with an inspiring woman in Thailand. **DOUGLAS ANTHONY**

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Reader's Comments And Opinions

Wonderful World

I enjoyed 'Vision Quest' (Oct/ Nov '23) about the family who travelled the world before their kids lose their vision to a rare genetic condition.

I have a friend who has a daughter with autism and she did something similar before her condition worsened, as sadly it did. She travelled around Australia, New Zealand, Thailand and Singapore for 18 months when her daughter was eight.



Who can blame parents for wanting their children to see more of this wonderful world while they can fully appreciate it?

Good luck to this lovely family.

RIA HARDING

Staying Connected

I was intrigued by the article 'Let's Be Friends' (Aug/Sept '23). I grew up in Sri Lanka and at 75 migrated to Australia with my wife to follow our daughters. I am now 85 and still have contact with most of my friends back home, including a school classmate, thanks to electronic media. I have started several social

contacts in Australia, too. We meet up casually but not very often. I felt somewhat lonely after the death of my beloved wife three years ago, but life is not dull. Social contacts, reading and writing help keep loneliness at bay. Reading Reader's Digest and using social media are keeping me well 'connected'.

DAYARATNA WEERASEKARA

Let us know if you are moved – or provoked – by any item in the magazine, share your thoughts. See page 7 for how to join the discussion.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Leaving Worry Behind

THE END OF ONE YEAR and the start of another is the ideal opportunity to refocus our thoughts on what's great in our world, and as individuals aim to keep our mood buoyant and health strong so we can embrace all the delights on offer. To this end, in 'Adding Up To Happiness' (page 44) we look at a wise and amusing formula that one woman used to manage the pressures of her social life, while in 'The Upside Of Anxiety' (page 28) we look at how anxiety can actually be beneficial, making us more motivated to achieve outcomes suited to our specific needs.

This issue, we also visit the colourful city of Seoul in South Korea (page 86), where our Senior Editor, Diane Godley, found endless adventures and surprises. Then we challenge you with a quiz on the paper industry (page 80) before meeting Lek Chailert, a Thai woman who has dedicated her life to improving the lives of Thailand's retired and abused elephants ('Her Gift To The Elephants', page 94).

And so we say good bye to an extraordinary year that was full of recovery, positive energy and adventures long overdue!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from everyone at Reader's Digest.



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Kindness On Wheels

I was absolutely delighted to read 'The Paper Delivery Boy' (My Story, Aug/Sept '23). It was a very kind gesture of Abdul Kader to buy the young boy a bicycle. It took me back to 1976. We had sold our house and while waiting to move into the new one we stored some things under my in-laws' house.

Unfortunately, the bicycle which my parents bought my six-year-old son for Christmas was stolen. I wrote to my local newspaper about it. It was not instrumental in finding the thief, but a lovely man by the name of Frank Bartlett rang me. He said after reading the letter he felt compelled to buy my boy a bicycle. He bought the exact bike and I have never forgotten that man's kindness.

JUDITH HOOPER

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ON THE KNIGHT SHIFT

We asked you to think up a funny caption for this photo.

On the way to growing an Iron Man.

FATIMA KHATUN

I'm not in the right headspace.

Boss in shining armour.

Good knight everyone.

Antique's roadshow.

Congratulations to this issue's winner, Merran Toone.



CAPTION CONTEST

Come up with the funniest caption for the above photo and you could win \$100. To enter, email asiaeditor@readersdigest.com.au or see details on page 7.

Réader's

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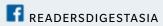
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Anecdotes And Jokes

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Send in your real-life laugh for Life's Like That or All In A Day's Work. Got a joke? Send it in for Laughter Is The Best Medicine!

Smart Animals

Up to \$100

Share antics of unique pets or wildlife in up to 300 words.

My Story \$250

Do you have an inspiring or life-changing tale to tell? Submissions must be true, unpublished, original and 800-1000 words.

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Online: rdasia.com/contribute

Include your full name, address, phone number and email.

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*LCA is in progress of critical review











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hen handball was introduced to Sri Lankan schools in 2010, I wanted to bring it to my school, St Anthony's, in the remote village of Wasalakotte in central Sri Lanka. This became a challenging task as the sports teacher was reluctant to initiate anything other than traditional sports, such as cricket, rugby and basketball.

I was not a sports teacher and I had never played handball before. In fact, I was an English language teacher before assuming my post as deputy principal. However, I was determined to start this game at any cost. Handball is a fascinating game which combines speed, strength, stamina, agility, technical precision, skill and teamwork. As a new sport, I foresaw it as a golden opportunity for our school as we had never secured a place in traditional sports.

The boys were immediately interested and 40 students aged between 13 and 19 signed up to play. I had the support of their parents but I still couldn't convince the sports teacher to agree. Ultimately, I used my position as deputy principal to get the game going.

Heshan Pradeep, a St Anthony's old boy who graduated some nine years earlier, volunteered to coach the team. He was a member of the Air Force handball team and was happy to take on the role in his free time. He assigned exercises and drills to do in his absence.

Although handball is an indoor game, we trained outdoors as our school had limited facilities. Training started early in the morning before class and continued after school until it was dark. The boys loved the game and were enthusiastic about training.

"This handball craze will ruin your studies!" grumbled some of the teachers in an attempt to discourage the game. Whenever the boys were late for class after morning practice they were scolded or punished by their teachers, but I was able to keep them cheerful.

After three months of dedicated training we were able to send an under-19s boys' team to compete with 50 other schools at the first three-day, all-island school handball tournament held in Colombo - the country's most populous city. Initially, the School Handball Association rejected our application because we weren't association members, but thankfully some members believed any school on the island should be welcomed.

Our boys played remarkably well and reached the semifinals. And that was when the real game started. Students, parents, teachers

Sujeeva Wijeratne currently works as a Deputy Commissioner of Examinations at the Department of Examinations in Sri Lanka. He lives in Colombo with his wife and son.

and old boys from Colombo schools joined forces against us, saying they wouldn't allow the cup to be taken out of Colombo.

Although my students did not belong to the Vedda community, a Sri Lankan indigenous group, the Colombo students from privileged schools considered it a disgrace to lose a match against boys from a rural village school who couldn't even speak English (due to lack of staff and opportunities).

Some Colombo students wore leaves and danced and sang Vedda songs to insult and intimidate our boys. Even the referees favoured the Colombo schools, resulting in our team being deprived of the victory they deserved. Defeated, the boys fell to the ground, sad and disappointed. And Heshan and I were angry.

However other Colombo students were supportive, saying "Don't cry, brothers. You're the champions. You must come again next year and claim your victory." If not for the kind words of these boys, our team may never have returned to Colombo for another tournament.

A few weeks after the defeat, Heshan and I met the national handball coach to discuss our treatment by the referees. He apologised and offered to send a Korean professional handball coach - who happened to be on the island at the time - to our school for

READER'S DIGEST

two weeks training. Coach Vonho arrived as promised and turned our handball team from good to great in just two weeks. Vonho, like our boys, spoke little English but managed to get his message across.

The team's mothers showed their appreciation by preparing Vonho

delicious traditional meals, such chicken and vegetable curries, kiribath (rice cooked in coconut milk), hoppers with lunumiris (ground chilli, shallots, Maldive fish, black pepper and lime juice) and bread with polsambol (coconut

relish). The boys' fathers showed their appreciation by providing Vonho with something to drink to accompany his meals. And Vonho fulfilled his duty to the letter - I have never seen a more enthusiastic. supportive and encouraging trainer.

The following year, nobody could stop our team from winning the all-island schools handball championship. Our team of 14 boys played so well that teachers from other schools advised their players to watch our matches. The team's moves were technically perfect.

Unexpectedly, media attention was drawn to the tournament. A member of the School Handball Association asked me to comment in English about the tournament on the Colombo Sports Network television channel. I found this rather ironic that they chose a teacher of a so-called 'Vedda' school to provide commentary in English.

It is no exaggeration to say that the victory sent the whole village

COACH VONHO

TURNED OUR

HANDBALL

TEAM FROM

GOOD TO

GREAT IN JUST

TWO WEEKS

into carnival mode. There was a perahera (procession) to welcome us home. A while mothers made kevum (a deep-fried children danced.

large banner was hung at the village junction. Fathers lit firecrackers Sri Lankan sweet). The youth beat drums and

Celebrating their victory in such a fashion was most deserved. The players and their parents had dedicated much towards this win. Many families had sacrificed a lot some parents had borrowed money to pay for the uniforms while others pawned precious belongings such as gold ornaments.

Heshan and I were immensely honoured to have shown the boys that dreams can be fulfilled. They were so thrilled they called Vonho in Korea to share their joy.

Do you have a tale to tell? We'll pay cash for any original and unpublished story we print. See page 7 for details on how to contribute.

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SMART ANIMALS

Animals can be heroes and seek out a hero



ANTHONY SMETANIN

One sunny afternoon as I sat on my back porch, I noticed my loyal golden retriever Louie playing in the yard. Suddenly, barking frantically, he bolted towards the chicken coop.

Curious, I walked over to see what was going on. As I approached I saw a small snake slithering along the ground. Louie was barking and chasing the snake around the coop, determined to protect his feathered friends. I watched in amazement as Louie zigzagged around the yard,

knocking over flowerpots and garden gnomes in his pursuit. The snake, startled by Louie's sudden appearance, slithered away as fast as it could. But Louie wasn't about to let it get away. He continued his chase, determined to drive the snake out of the yard.

You could earn cash by telling us about the antics of unique pets or wildlife. Turn to page 7 for details on how to contribute.

Smart Animals

The chase went on for what felt like ages, with Louie and the snake darting around the yard. Finally, Louie managed to corner the snake near the garden shed. With a triumphant bark, he lunged forward to grab the snake in his jaws - but missed and ended up tumbling into a pile of leaves. The snake, sensing its chance, slipped away into the underbrush. Louie emerged from the leaves, looking a bit dazed but still determined to protect the chickens. He settled down next to the coop, keeping a watchful eye on the area in case the snake came back. The chickens seemed to sense Louie's bravery, and they peered out at him through the wire mesh, clucking their thanks.

And that's how Louie became a hero in our yard.

Frogmouth's Rescue **Flight**

RHONDA DAVIES

In the summer of 2012, we had a wonderful experience with a pair of tawny frogmouths. My husband and I watched as they built a nest in a deciduous maple in our back garden, about 50 metres from our back door, and then tended the eggs and later the three hatchlings.

When the fledglings were close to leaving the nest, one of the parents visited us. It was around midday, which was strange for a nocturnal bird. It perched outside



With a bit of gentle coaxing with a bamboo pole along the goanna's tail, it headed back down the tree and disappeared into the shrubbery. We also moved a branch that gave the goanna easy access to the nest.

lizard, it was not going to be the chicks in the nest if I had anything

to do with it.

Several nights later, we heard a commotion coming from the nest; the fledglings were on the edge of the nest, flapping their wings and working their way up to taking flight. One of the parents was calling to them from another tree across the yard. The next day, the nest was empty. The family was gone.

I will never forget how the tawny frogmouth sought our help.



Heart Of The Matter



High blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, smoking and obesity make it more likely you'll develop cardiovascular disease, but other risk factors might surprise you

BY Susannah Hickling

GOUT

A Nottingham University study of more than 60,000 patients with the painful arthritic condition gout found that people who'd had a flare-up had greater odds of having a stroke or heart attack in the following 120 days. Other conditions that, like gout, involve inflammation - such as rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's and lupus – also make you more prone to coronary artery disease.

HAVING A PREMATURE BABY

Women are by no means spared when it comes to heart disease. Doctors don't yet really understand why, but studies have shown that having a pre-term or low birthweight baby, gestational diabetes or pre-eclampsia all put mothers on the radar for future heart problems.

MIGRAINES IN WOMEN

In a study of nearly 28,000 female health professionals in the US, women who suffered from migraines with aura had a significantly higher incidence of major cardiovascular events, such as stroke or heart attack, than those who didn't. What's more, the cardiovascular incidence rate was higher than for women who were obese.

EARLY MENOPAUSE

Evidence is mounting of a link between going through the 'change' before the age of 45 and cardiovascular disease, including heart failure and the heart rhythm disorder, atrial fibrillation. This may be because women lose the protective effect of oestrogen when levels of this hormone begin to decline in menopause.

MIGRAINES WITH AURA IN WOMEN **COULD BE** LINKED TO **HEART DISEASE**

obese, have high blood pressure and develop type 2 diabetes. A study of 6550 American adults found that not eating breakfast brought a significantly increased risk of dying from cardiovascular disease.

PSORIASIS

If you have this skin condition, you are 50 per cent more likely to develop cardiovascular disease, according to a 2021 American study. The worse your psoriasis, the higher your risk.

AIR POLLUTION

Of the nine million deaths worldwide attributed to air pollution in 2019, 62 per cent were from cardiovascular disease. Poor air quality is associated with high blood pressure and diabetes. A Chinese study published last year suggested that even shortterm exposure to pollutants might trigger acute coronary syndrome, where there is reduced blood flow to the heart. This collection of conditions includes heart attacks.

SKIPPING BREAKFAST

It can't be overstated how important it is to make your morning oats or egg on toast part of your daily routine. Over time, people who don't have breakfast are more likely to be

SUGARY DRINKS

Long-term consumption of sweet drinks, whether sweetened with sugar or artificial sweetener, makes you more likely to die from a cardiovascular cause, according to a large US study. And the more sweetened beverages you drink, the greater the risk.

So, if you find yourself in any of these groups, it makes sense to keep up to date with health checks and make a few lifestyle changes if you need to.



RISING RISKS OF HYPERTENSION AMONG YOUNGER GENERATION

BY DR GANAPATHI PALANIAPPAN, CARDIOLOGIST.

The data from Malaysia National Health and Morbidity Survey 2015 for overall population shows the prevalence of hypertension in Malaysian adult population of above 40 years old is 35.3%, and of these, only 37.5% are aware that they have hypertension, only 31.1% are treated and only 37.4% of those treated are controlled well on treatment. This emphasises that the diagnosis and treatment for hypertension is significantly undermined.

In addition to that, hypertension is becoming more common among the younger generation due to the rise in sedentary lifestyles, poor eating habits, and increased stress levels. A recent study from Yi Yi Khoo et al. published in 2021 shows that the prevalence of hypertension among young adults in Malaysia in 2006 is around 17.7% and increased to 18.4% in 2015.

Hypertension, commonly known as high blood pressure, occurs when the force of blood against the walls of your arteries is consistently too high. It's often referred to as a "silent killer" because it usually does not cause noticeable symptoms but can lead to serious health problems if left untreated.

Hypertension can be caused by a combination of multiple factors such as genetics, poor diet (high in salt, saturated fats, and low in fibre), lack of physical activity, excessive alcohol consumption, smoking and stress. In the younger generation, lifestyle factors such as unhealthy eating habits, sedentary lifestyles, and stress from studies or work can contribute.

Hypertension is often asymptomatic. However, some individuals may experience symptoms such as headache, shortness of breath, dizziness or even nosebleeds. Diagnosis is typically done through blood pressure measurements. Young adults who are suspected to have hypertension should have their blood pressure regularly checked and if consistently high, further tests might be needed to determine potential underlying causes. Thus, health screening is utmost important.

The risk factors include family history with hypertension, obesity, smoking, excessive alcohol intake and a high-sodium diet. Younger individuals with poor lifestyle habits are more prone to developing hypertension.









BEST SPECIALIZED HOSPITALS ASIA PACIFIC CARDIOLOGY

2023 Newsweek

statista 5

INSTITUT JANTUNG NEGARA Internationally Accredited Heart Centre



CKLIU 1678 / EXP 31,12,2025

BY Marissa LaLiberte

1. DON'T CARBO-LOAD AT **BREAKFAST** Carbohydrates hold water in your body, which may make your belly bloat. Plus, high-carb, high-sugar breakfast foods like sweet rolls or cereal might fill you up initially, but you'll probably end up searching for more food within an hour, says nutritionist Alissa Rumsey. "Those digest pretty rapidly, and then your blood sugar spikes up and drops back down pretty quickly because they digest so fast," she says. Those extra carbs will more likely cause bloating than if you'd started with a more filling breakfast.

2. GREEK YOGHURT IN THE MORNING Look for a brand of Greek yoghurt that contains live and active cultures, which will promote healthy bacteria in your gut to prevent bloating. Slowly add a little more fibre to your diet every day for a

flatter belly, and increase your water intake to aid digestion, flush out the sodium and reduce bloating.

3. ADD A DOSE OF POTASSIUM

Sodium is a big cause of bloating by making your body retain water, but potassium helps counterbalance that salt. Slice banana onto your yoghurt, or scramble up eggs with tomato and spinach, which are other good sources of potassium.

4. SNACK ON CHEESE AND AN APPLE Not only will the protein in cheese keep you full so you're not tempted to snack more later, but it can also help you avoid bloating and gas. Pairing it with an apple gives you an extra kick of nutrients. "Protein helps the flow of digestion and gives you the nutrients your body needs, along with fibre," says nutritionist Jessica Crandall.

Committed to caring for your brain & nervous system

Gleneagles Hospital Kuala Lumpur has delivered exceptional patient care since 1996, and is committed to providing the best available treatment for our patients. Neurology is a specialty concerned with the diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the nervous system. Neurologists are physicians who are subspecialized in this field of medicine and are able to accurately diagnose and efficiently treat disorders such as stroke, epilepsy, migraine, dementia, and many movement disorders. Early consultation with the appropriate specialist often leads to a timely diagnosis and alleviation of the patient's condition. A neurologist is also often the first doctor to diagnose surgical disorders such as brain tumours, infections, and congenital malformations and usually works closely with a Neurosurgeon to treat these diseases.

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WORLD OF MEDICINE

BREAST CANCER SURGERY NOT ALWAYS ESSENTIAL

Patients with breast cancer who respond well to chemotherapy may now be able to skip surgery altogether: improvements made to the drugs have rendered them so effective that they can sometimes eradicate the cancer.

For instance, in a Texas-based trial, published in Lancet Oncology, 31 out of 50 women with early-stage HER2-positive or triple-negative tumours had no signs of cancer after chemotherapy. So instead of an operating room, these patients proceeded to radiotherapy - and after two years, none of them saw their cancer return. Larger trials are still needed, however.

A NEW DRUG FOR HOT FLUSHES

Hot flushes affect roughly 80 per cent of women in menopause and can be a huge drag on mood, sleep, concentration and quality of life.

For those who don't want to or are unable to use hormone replacement therapy to treat their symptoms, there's a new option.

Thanks to an improved understanding of how the brain's hypothalamus can trigger hot flushes, a non-hormonal class of drugs called NK3R antagonists is now on the horizon. The results, published in The Lancet, indicated that one medication slashed the weekly number of hot flushes almost in half.

YOU MIGHT BE ALLERGIC TO **YOUR SMARTPHONE**

There's more on the typical smartphone than just data, according to a recent analysis in Annals of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. When US investigators analysed what was on the phones of 15 volunteers, they uncovered some eye-watering evidence. In addition to dog and cat dander, they found beta-D glucans - a marker of mould - and endotoxins, powerful inflammatory agents.

> To prevent your phone from triggering reactions

such as wheezing or sneezing, clean it frequently, especially if you have allergies or asthma. But stick to the manufacturer's cleaning instructions to avoid damage.





GENERATION AFTER GENERATION

As we celebrate this remarkable half-century milestone, we remain steadfast in our commitment to quality care, innovation, and the well-being of our patients.

Here's to the next 50 years of making a difference, enriching one life at a time.





Tantrums To Tinsel

Why I love the curious and festive tradition of the Santa photo

BY Cherine Fahd
FROM THE CONVERSATION

n April 1995, my uncle secured a lucrative job in Saudi Arabia. He and my aunt left their home in suburban Sydney and relocated to a western compound (a residential gated community for expats) in Jeddah. My aunt shares stories of life under Saudi's strict laws and how she craved her western freedoms. One such freedom was the celebration of Christmas.

Hailing mostly from Australia, the UK and the US, the compound residents organised their Christmases by smuggling in decorations and creating homemade Santa suits. They even staged the photographic rituals with mums and dads disguised as the shopping centre Santa Claus.

My aunt's eagerness to recreate this photographic ritual with her children stems from her own childhood posing with Santa. My siblings and I were also photographed every year on Santa's lap and we continue the ritual with our own kids.

As a photographer, I have spent years studying my curious desire to participate in this photographic custom. While I do not celebrate

READER'S DIGEST

Christmas on religious grounds and bemoan the increasing consumerism of the season, I participate with overzealous enthusiasm in the Santa Claus photo.

This is evident in the careful way I have cultivated the collection of my children's Santa photographs be-

tween 2009-2018, and kept guard of my family's collection from the '70s and '80s that portrays me alongside my siblings and, on one rare occasion, with my parents.

I use myself and my family as a case study. Analysing details like my mother's obsession with dressing my sister and I in identical outfits, and then the ways I consciously made my children dress themselves.

The Santa photo feeds my photographic penchant for overly staged family portraits that signal to the camera 'we are posing together for a photograph'.

PERFECT KODAK MOMENTS

In Photography: A Middle-Brow Art, the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu famously observed in his 1965 study of amateur photography, that the family represents itself in "ideal moments of celebration" in order to secure its honourable social standing.

Santa photos certainly fit this schema, tied to the so-called 'Kodak moments' where everyone says "cheese".



The author and her family in the 1980s dressed in matching outfits with her sister

Instagram, which today operates as a public family album, reveals a searchable hashtag archive. Across #santaphoto, #santaphotos, #santapictures and #vintagesantaphoto you'll find thousands of images of children sitting nicely on Santa's lap.

Like most family photos, they serve a nostalgic function to take us into our pasts (with rose coloured glasses) and make us laugh at ourselves, at how we used to look, our hair styles, fashions, poses and reactions.

Today there are even photo sessions for pets, and 'sensitive Santa photo sessions' for children with special needs.

With the rise of COVID-19, we see action-packed beach Santa photos proving popular. In the shopping centre, the 1.5-metre social distancing rule is captured for posterity.

But Santa photos capture more than just the idealised moments of family life.

Year after year my mother dressed my sister and I in matching outfits an indicator of togetherness and the ideal family.

HILARIOUS'SANTA FAILS'

If the perfect family photograph is where the children are well dressed and everyone is posing and smiling happily, the 'Santa fails' resist the ideal. Santa fails show children reeling from Santa, throwing tantrums, back arching, crying and demanding to leave. Search #santafail on Instagram to see the truth of the matter: we happily and freely deposit our children onto the lap of a total stranger.

The artist Julie Rrap recently shared a story with me about her father who was once employed as a shopping centre Santa. He often came home with a saturated lap from children having wet themselves while seated.

The comic relief that comes with such stories and the Santa fails are over time another ritual enjoyed among family members. But my attraction to the Santa photo goes deeper than comic relief of fearing Santa.

A WORK OF ART

As a migrant family in '70s Australia, we interpreted the Santa photo as an unpretentious custom that assimilated us into the middle-class values of suburban Australia. Participating in this ritual made us feel and appear more Australian, if only to ourselves.

I'm also interested in the Santa photos as a photographic typology. As a photographer, I have done what Bourdieu describes and "elevated the ordinary photo into a work of art".

Through my training I have linked

the seriality of Santa photographs to Rineke Dijkstra's photographic portraits of Olivier and Almerisa. Photographing the same people over many years, Dijkstra captures the subtle changes in their appearance, mood and fashion style, as well as their social and political status.

I am also reminded of the playful fictional photographs of Christian Boltanski which leads the viewer to think they are looking at portraits of a boy growing up.

Like these artworks, Santa photos mark time, revealing what is imperceptible in everyday life. Through the repetition of a performance, a scene and an image we confront ourselves and the people we love changing.

Children and animals are notoriously the hardest subjects to photograph. The training a photographer receives with Santa photography is a baptism of fire. Moving subjects, crying babies, a toddler's inability to sit still, scared children that won't smile and toddlers engaged in escape attempts all combine with the parent's consumer expectations that the photographer should get the right shot.

So, the next time you take your children, pets or yourself to have a Santa photo, keep in mind that the best Santa photos are often not the ones where R they're smiling.

CHERINE FAHD IS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION IN THE SCHOOL OF DESIGN, UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY. PUBLISHED UNDER CREATIVE COMMONS LICENCE. **PSYCHOLOGY**

How to use it as a strength

BY Patricia Pearson

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TARYN GEE

am an anxious traveller. I arrive at airports and train stations extra early. I triple-check all of my documents, feel a tightness in my jaw and a slight clench in my stomach until I've arrived where I'm going.

Non-anxious people tease me for being a 'nervous nelly'. I used to feel bad about it, seeing it as irrational, weak. Not anymore. I could write a book on this subject - actually, I did: A Brief History of Anxiety (Yours and Mine). I've learned to respect my tendency to be hypervigilant.

Recently, I was driving along a rural road at the start of a long trip that would mainly be on a large highway. I began feeling that something



READER'S DIGEST

could go wrong. What if I run out of petrol? I worried, even though I still had plenty. So when I spied a petrol station just before the on-ramp I was going to take onto the highway, I gave in to my angst and decided to fill up. Just in case.

And that's when I discovered that one of my front tyres was badly deflated. If I'd overpowered my unease, talked down my anxiety, the tyre would have blown at speed on the highway. My urge to plan ahead, even though it wasn't strictly necessary, saved me from a potentially catastrophic scenario.

A growing number of psychologists and neuroscientists are getting the message out that anxiety and other negative feelings have a role to play in our lives. Tracy Dennis-Tiwary, who recently published Future Tense: Why Anxiety Is Good for You (Even Though It Feels Bad), thinks our culture goes overboard in demonising difficult emotions.

She knows what it's like to get swamped by anxiety. "I remember a period at work when there was a lot going on," says the professor of psychology and neuroscience. Worries kept waking her up at 4am. "It was like a yucky cloud of free-floating anxiety," she says, and it kept her from falling back to much-needed sleep.

Instead of trying to suppress this disconcerting feeling, however, Dennis-Tiwary leaned into it. "If you sit with the anxiety, you have an

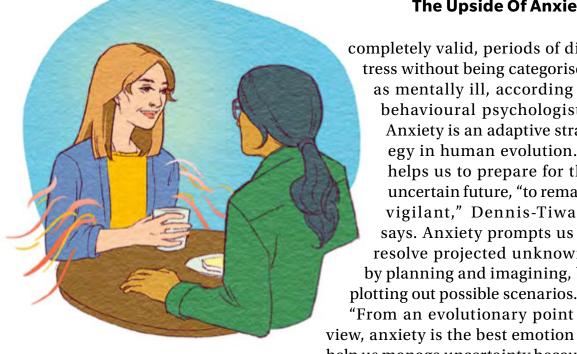
opportunity to glean information," she says. "For me, this one important ball I'd dropped at work finally rose to the surface of my mind. When I recognised this niggling thing, and gave it space, I learned from it. I wrote down two or three things I could do to address it." The next morning, she felt calmer.

"IF YOU SIT WITH THE ANXIETY, YOU HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY **TO GLEAN** INFORMATION"

Psychologist Todd Kashdan, director of the Well-Being Lab at George Mason University and co-author of The Upside of Your Dark Side, is a critic of what he calls 'gung-ho happy-ology'. We don't always have to be smiley and serene, or worry that there's something wrong with us. Sometimes, he says, it's right to worry. Fear heights? Good, because you won't be the person who falls off a cliff while taking a selfie.

These experts wonder if the natural role that anxiety plays in our lives is being forgotten. For example, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced in March 2022 that the prevalence of anxiety and depression had increased globally by 25 per cent over the year before (which

The Upside Of Anxiety



was the earlier part of the pandemic). It called the finding "a wake-up call to all countries to step up mental health services and support." Do we know for certain this data represents a public-health crisis? Or could it mean that millions of people are quite rightly feeling uncertain, stressed out and afraid?

The difference is important. For example, the US Department of Health and Human Services now recommends that family doctors do routine screenings for anxiety. It's a positive development in that it recognises the impact that anxiety disorders can have on those at risk. But what if initiatives like this funnel some of us into unnecessary treatments and medications? Could it make us lose sight of the benefits of our doubts and 'what ifs'?

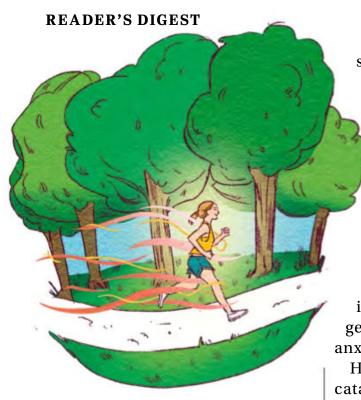
We can experience healthy, often

completely valid, periods of distress without being categorised as mentally ill, according to behavioural psychologists. Anxiety is an adaptive strategy in human evolution. It helps us to prepare for the uncertain future, "to remain vigilant," Dennis-Tiwary says. Anxiety prompts us to resolve projected unknowns by planning and imagining, by

"From an evolutionary point of view, anxiety is the best emotion to help us manage uncertainty because it forces us to run those 'what-if' simulations," she says. "That's what it's good for."

Likewise, neuroscientist Wendy Suzuki points out in her book *Good* Anxiety: Harnessing the Power of the Most Misunderstood Emotion that "if we simply approach anxiety as something to avoid, get rid of or dampen, we not only don't solve the problem it's alerting us to, but actually miss an opportunity to leverage the generative power of anxiety." By generative, she means that it can prompt us to move out of a situation that's no longer working, to find the energy we need to get unstuck.

When we're in an anxious state, the amount of dopamine in our brains increases, which prompts us to take action. In evolutionary terms, millions of years ago that might have meant looking for shelter to evade



predatory animals. Today, it might mean leaving a job because of a predatory boss.

By not facing our anxiety, we lose its benefits, and can make things worse. Case in point for me: hiding unopened envelopes from the tax department in a drawer - even if they could be just the routine updates that self-employed people like me receive - until I've turned it into a full-blown phobia.

Says Alice Boyes, who has a PhD in clinical psychology and wrote *The* Anxiety Toolkit, coping with unpleasant feelings by avoiding them just reinforces your insecurity, because you're not getting better at solving the problem: "Over time, you will feel less and less competent."

The key is to manage unease before it overtakes us, like tending a garden so the weeds don't spread. But how? According to Suzuki, solutions include meditation, exercise, compassionate connection such as volunteering, access to nature and mentally reframing what we're experiencing.

For example, in her book Suzuki writes about a startup entrepreneur who was beginning to feel daunted by everything that could go wrong in his high-stakes venture. This generated all kinds of 'what if?' anxiety that kept him sleepless.

He was, in psychological parlance, catastrophising. After talking to a mentor, he found a new tool: a 'reframe'. He turned 'what ifs?' into a goal-directed to-do list: "If this were to happen, then what could I do? Well, I could do X."

Dennis-Tiwary agrees that reframing is crucial. She points to a 2013 Harvard study in which socially anxious people were asked to speak in public. The researchers told some of them that having sweaty palms and a dry mouth or shaky knees was a good sign, a 'positive coping tool' that optimises the body for performance. The nervous speakers who heard this message had lower blood pressure and a slower heart rate. In other words, they shifted to that sweet spot where they were ready for the challenge, but not distracted and alarmed by their own nervousness.

The Harvard research is a pretty

remarkable discovery. What it says is that we can reframe our fears so that they help us.

Several years ago, I was the last in a long queue of speakers at a TEDx event. The theatre was over-air-conditioned. I sat there shivering and growing tense, worrying that I would forget my speech about a book I'd recently written about death and dying. The longer this mind-body feedback loop of physical tension and mental anxiety went on, the worse it got, until my legs felt so rubbery that I feared I would fall off the stage. It's

SPENDING TIME IN GREEN SPACES CAN HELP RESTORE PSYCHOLOGICAL BALANCE

a miracle I made it through my talk.

Knowing what I do now, I would have paced and stretched in the hallway to keep my body warmed up and my breathing calm while I waited, not unlike an athlete before an event. I still would have been nervous, but I would have been taking steps to manage it.

"One of the key problems is that our perceptions about anxiety stop us from believing we can manage it," says Dennis-Tiwary. She argues that anxiety isn't the problem. "It is the messenger that tells us we're facing

uncertainty and need to rise to the challenge. Or it's pointing us to ways that our life needs to change, or that we need support."

We can manage anxiety by 'worrying well, in Suzuki's words. This includes meditation. It has been shown to calm the amygdala, the brain gland responsible for sending out alarm signals related to fear and anxiety.

Exercise helps, too. Suzuki experimented with some of her students and found that even just a ten-minute workout helped them feel less anxious before an exam. So, hit the gym, enjoy the dance floor or go for a hike. Just spending time in natural light and in green spaces, what the Japanese call 'forest bathing', can restore our sense of psychological balance. After all, we evolved in companionship with nature.

Because humour increases oxytocin, a hormone that enhances social bonding and relatedness, I sometimes listen to stand-up comedy to calm down. Social connection, touch and a grounding perspective on others' suffering can also soothe us, which is why volunteer and community involvement helps.

These are all well-founded techniques that can keep us from spiralling. The trick, as Dennis-Tiwary says, is to listen to anxiety, then leverage it to make changes - just like I did that day I set off on my road trip.

"Then," she says, "let it go. It's a wave that you need to learn to ride."

Seeing The Funny Side



True Admissions

Reddit users share the moment they realised they weren't as smart as they had thought:

- When someone told me they had the same name as me and I said "Really? What's your name?"
- I was shopping for clothes when I spotted someone I recognised. We made eye contact and smiled at each other. It was just then I realised I was walking towards a full-length mirror.
- After this conversation with my

boss: "I will be in late tomorrow. I have a doctor's appointment." "Is everything OK?"

"Yes, why do you ask?"

• I said, "I'm consistent, just not all the time." And it really had to be pointed out to me. REDDIT.COM

Silent Rites

A new student at a Catholic high school, I was attending our first Friday mass so naturally I sang my heart out. Suddenly, the principal, Sister Matilda, appeared by my

side. She leaned over and said, "Mr Godfrey, the Lord will not mind if you mouth the words."

SUBMITTED BY DON GODFREY

A Write Off

An author friend of mine was helping a grandchild with some homework and dismissed the complaint "I've got to write a whole paragraph" with the comment, "That's not too bad. I write whole books."

She was floored by the response. "Yes, but mine has to be good." SUBMITTED BY MAGGIE COBBETT

Hook, Line And Sinker

A shop assistant welcomed my friend and me when we walked into a fishing store. Pointing to the walking canes my friend and I use, I joked, "We really don't need the canes. We just use them to beat off the women."

She shot back, "And you'll need the other end of the cane to hook them." SUBMITTED BY GEORGE BERRIEN

Flight Of Fancy

As we boarded a plane some years back, the two women behind me were voicing their anxiety about flying. That is, until they peeked into the cockpit and got a glimpse of our pilots. "Whoa," one said. "They're both good-looking."

Her friend sounded relieved. "Good," she said. "They have more to live for." SUBMITTED BY PAULA DAVIS



THE GREAT TWEET-OFF: **NEW YEAR'S EVE AT** HOME EDITION

Not going out to celebrate? You're not alone, according to the stay-at-homes of Twitter.

Shout out to everyone spending New Year's Eve at home, sitting on the couch in pyjamas, eating snacks and watching TV, while scrolling through your phone.

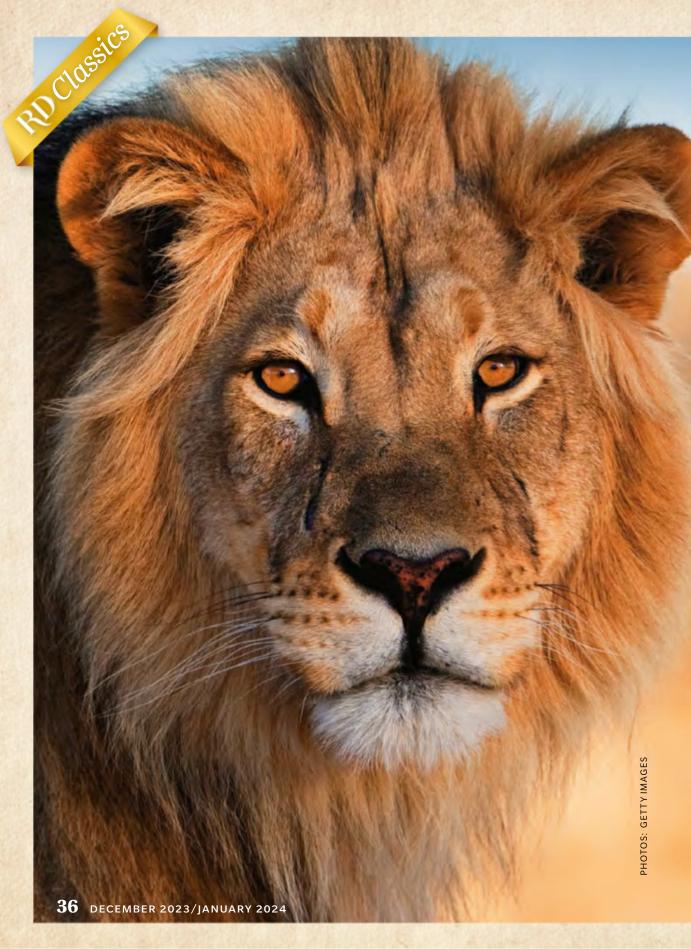
@IMIGHTBEFUNNY1

I'm up for any New Year's Eve party as long as it starts at six, ends by eight, involves food, and doesn't require any social interaction whatsoever. @ABBYHASISSUES

The weather guy said we may need a raincoat for New Year's Eve, like I'm actually going anywhere. @MCDADSTUFF

We only have small, intimate gatherings for New Year's Eve, because I like to limit the number of people who watch me fall asleep at 10.30pm. @RODLACROIX

"This is going to be the best New Year's Eve ever," I say while bedazzling my dog's jumper. @SIXFOOTCANDY



SEPTEMBER 1977

DRAMA IN REAL LIFE

In The Lion's Jaws

As the enormous lion bit down hard, Tony Fitzjohn felt sure he was about to die. Then another lion entered the fray

BY Arnold Sapiro

he 18-month-old lion cub, already bigger than a Great Dane, leapt out of the thick underbrush, put his furry front paws up on Tony Fitzjohn's broad shoulders and rubbed heads joyously with his friend. It was Thursday, June 12, 1975, and in lion fashion Freddie was welcoming Tony back to Kora Camp after a two-day supply trip.

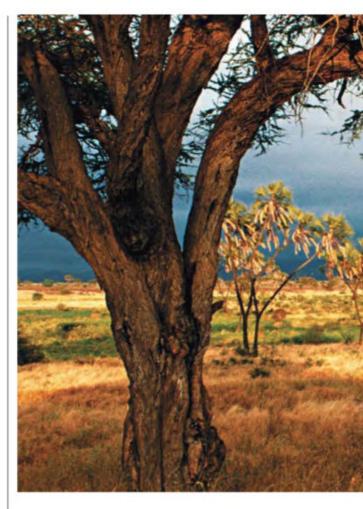
READER'S DIGEST

Kora, an isolated huddle of tents protected by a high wire fence in northern Kenya, was where 70-yearold naturalist George Adamson rehabilitated lions in a unique conservation project. Orphaned cubs or young zoo lions - animals that would otherwise remain in captivity - grew up, reproduced and lived free in an area the Kenyan government had designated a national game reserve.

Conditions at the camp were rugged: intense heat and biting tse-tse flies, no electricity or plumbing and a six-hour drive to the nearest settlement. But English-born Fitzjohn, 31, had read the Born Free books as a teenager and been captivated by the story of Joy and George Adamson raising the orphaned lioness, Elsa. Living in Africa and working with Adamson for the last three years had been a dream come true for Tony.

One of his regular jobs was a monthly trip by Land Rover to buy supplies at the tiny outpost of Garissa. This morning, before his return, he had stopped to see the district game warden and thank him for evicting a gang of armed poachers who had been leaving poison traps for rhinos inside the reserve.

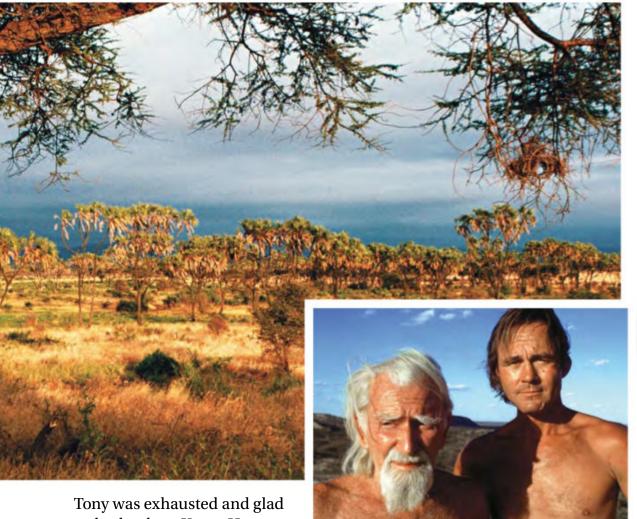
The warden had asked about Freddie, the abandoned lion cub he had found in the bush 17 months earlier and turned over to Tony. It was the first cub he'd known. He had taken the frail animal in his arms, driven him home, and named him Freddie.



Later, three more cubs were brought from zoos. But Freddie always held a special place with Tony. Freddie was not only good-natured, but also the bravest of the cubs, scrappier and more inclined to take liberties with the fully-grown wild lions that prowled around the fence. He and Tony had slept in the same bed until Freddie outgrew it. Tony's girlfriend, Lindsay Bell, who was living in Nairobi, had noticed that he was completely relaxed only when he was with his lions.

After two days of rough driving,

Locked In The Lion's Jaws



to be back at Kora. He was dressed only in shorts and sandals, his tan skin glistening with perspiration in the 36-degree heat. It was 5.10pm, time to gather the cubs - the other three had joined Freddie now in welcoming Tony - and take them inside the fence for the night. To settle the frisky Freddie, Tony sat down, his back to the underbrush a few metres away, and began talking quietly. One rule in the bush is never to sit on the ground outside camp, because of the possibility of unexpected

Above (top): The savanna around Kora Camp gave plenty of cover to prowling lions. Above: George Adamson (left) and Tony Fitzjohn at Kora in 1979, four years after the attack

contact with animals. But Tony felt safe just 50 metres from the camp.

Without warning, he felt a giant creature pounce on him from behind. He crashed forward to the ground and momentarily lost consciousness. When he came to, it was

READER'S DIGEST



Lions often kill by strangulation, holding a vice-like grip until the prey stops breathing

to the terrifying awareness that his head was locked between the jaws of an enormous lion.

The attacker clamped down hard, then released the headlock and began a barrage of biting and clawing – sharp bites to the neck and head, deep bites to both shoulders, slashing claws to back and legs.

To Tony this horror was a series of jerky slides punctuated by blackouts. His glasses were smashed and he saw flashes of the camp he had thought close; it seemed to be moving further and further away, getting smaller and smaller. Which lion was attacking him? One of George's? He only knew that the beast was fully grown and powerful.

Tony covered his genitals and closed his eyes. More blows from mighty paws struck his head; more deep gashes from razor-sharp claws opened his face. Because of shock and concussion, he felt no pain and heard no sounds. Paralysed by injuries and bewilderment, he was experiencing his own death as a silent movie.

Now the lion grabbed Tony's neck and bit down. Tony remembered that lions often kill by strangulation, holding their vice-like grip until the prey stops breathing. It takes no more than a minute.

Then he realised that there were two lions in the battle. As he forced his bloody eyelids open, he saw Freddie charging towards him. *Oh, no, not Freddie, too!* he thought.

But Freddie wasn't attacking Tony; he was after the mighty lion, four times as big as he. Proper juvenile behaviour is to submit to adult lions; to attack an enraged adult was suicide.

Freddie, however, snarled and bit at the flanks of the lion who stood astride Tony's torso. For an instant it worked. The lion released his grip on Tony's neck and charged after Freddie, who ran for his life. Tony lay in a pool of blood, gasping for air. The attacker could have torn Freddie apart on the spot, but he stopped his pursuit and ran back to the victim. Again, he clamped down on Tony's neck in the strangulation hold. God, I'm dying! I can feel it, Tony thought,

then lost consciousness again.

But Freddie returned to the fray and bit the surprised beast's rear, then circled with snarls and yelps, bold charges and nips. Freddie withdrew only when the bigger animal swiped at him with his powerful paw.

Throughout the attack, Tony was a silent victim and the lion a silent killer. The only sounds were Freddie's unrelenting growls and piercing yelps that Tony could not hear.

Freddie's shrill cries were heard by Erigumsa, the compound's cook. At first, he thought two cubs were fighting, but Freddie's distant voice sounded too desperate. The cook ran to the gate and saw Tony being mauled. Erigumsa raced to the dining tent, 25 metres away, where Adamson was having tea.

"Simba ame kamata Tony inje!

Anataka kuua yeye!" he cried in Swahili. ("The lion has caught Tony outside! He's trying to kill him!")

George believed the cubs' playfulness had unintentionally got too rough. So he took only a walking stick, bypassing a loaded rifle, when he ran from the tent.

Outside the gate, George saw Tony's neck locked between the jaws of a full-grown lion. There was no time to return for the rifle. Without a second thought, he charged the lion,

GOD, I'M

DYING, TONY

THOUGHT

BEFORE

LOSING

CONSCIOUSNESS

yelling and waving the walking stick.

nerable to attack. But prepared to spring, but forward, shouting and

brandishing the stick. It worked! The lion hesitated, then slunk off into the bush, splotched with Tony's blood.

The next thing Tony realised, he was stumbling back to camp, supported by George. "George, I think I'm dying. Whatever you do," he pleaded, "don't shoot the lion. My fault ... Caught unaware ... Shouldn't have happened."

The minute he got Tony into his tent, George rushed to the shortwave radio to call the Flying Doctor Service in Nairobi. It was too late - the 210-kilometre flight would take an hour and a quarter, and regulations firmly

READER'S DIGEST

prohibit landing on a bush strip after dark, even for a critical emergency.

The nurse assured George that the plane would come first thing in the morning and advised him on first-aid treatment for Tony's myriad, deep wounds. George signed off, staring at the setting sun. Could Tony make it through the long night ahead without a surgeon and blood transfusions?

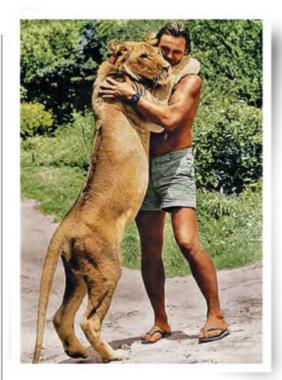
Drifting in and out of consciousness, Tony fought for breath – and life. I've got to live – for Lindsay, George and the lions. I know if I just think about living, I'll make it.

At dawn, George and Erigumsa managed smiles; 13 hours after his mauling, Tony was still alive.

Lindsay was the first one out of the Flying Doctor aircraft when it touched down – George had radioed her the night before about Tony's condition. "I was expecting bad wounds, but not all over his head," she recalls. "He could hardly breathe. The right side of his neck was completely open and his wounds were oozing. It was horrible."

During the flight back to Nairobi with Tony, Lindsay broke down and wept. "I knew how much he loved his work," she says. "If he lived, would he ever want to return to the lions?"

Tony spent two hours in surgery when they got him to the hospital. There were three dozen wounds – some so deep and dangerous they couldn't be stitched at that time. His trachea had been squeezed but not broken. Miraculously, the lion's teeth



Tony Fitzjohn raised Freddie from the time he was a cub

had not severed any nerve, artery or vein. Tony would be one of the few people ever to survive a lion-mauling.

The day after the attack, a large lion appeared outside Kora with dried blood on his chest and muzzle. It was a 30-month-old wild animal George had known since infancy, a creature so placid that he'd been named Shyman.

Now Shyman was growling menacingly at the cubs. George drove outside the compound and positioned the Land Rover between Shyman and the frightened cubs. Then he observed Shyman carefully. His movements were erratic and unusual.

The once-gentle lion had probably eaten from a poisoned carcass left by the rhino poachers. Since he had attacked once, he could do it again. The

Locked In The Lion's Jaws

lives of humans and other lions were in jeopardy. After an hour of watching Shyman, George sadly raised his rifle and put a bullet into the lion's brain.

Such a mauling as Tony had received would make even the bravest soul re-evaluate the risks of work in the bush. The scars on his face and neck would be with him always. But Tony remembered how a lion cub whom he loved had tried to save him.

Two months after the accident. Tony returned to Kora, wondering what kind of greeting he'd receive after his absence. When the cubs saw Tony, they rushed towards him, Freddie in the lead, making woofing sounds all the way. Typical lion greetings last less than a minute; this one lasted close to ten as the excited cubs leapt all over Tony.

"I never had any thoughts about not going back," Tony said later.

"We're creating an animal reserve. People from all over the world can eventually come and see our lions, and the lions can live free and unmolested in nature. I belong here."

Update: Tony Fitzjohn continued to work at Kora until 1989, when he moved to Tanzania to lead efforts to rehabilitate a national park that had been decimated by farmers and poachers. Elephants are once again flourishing in the area, and Fitzjohn also helped bring rhinos back to Tanzania. In 2006 he was awarded the Order of the British Empire for his conservation work. In 2020, he returned to Kenya with his son Alexander to restore Kora, which had fallen into neglect after George Adamson's death in 1989.

Tony Fitzjohn died in May 2022 of a brain tumour at the age of 76.

DECADES OF DRAMAS

IT WAS IN MARCH 1943 that we started a department called Drama in Everyday Life, about people overcoming ordinary troubles. But the approach (and name) changed in 1966 with a thrilling hostage story called 'A Stranger at the Door'. Since then, Drama in Real Life has been a reader favourite around the world. These stories are about regular people who refuse to die: people who have been abandoned in oceans and in deserts, or fallen into wells, off cliffs and down

mountainsides. People escaping war zones or who have lost a limb and are far from help. We've shared momentby-moment accounts of people attacked by bears, dogs, snakes, kangaroos and killer bees. And when the survivor can't endure any more, we've celebrated the brave people friends, family, trained rescuers and medical professionals – who have the smarts and determination to save them. We are proud to carry on that storytelling tradition more than five decades later.



ADDING S LUD 10 HAPPINESS

Solutions to many of our most

perplexing personal problems can often be

found by applying a kind of creative arithmetic

BY Fredelle Maynard

ver lunch recently, an old friend and I talked about life. She admitted that she'd been lonely since her husband died. "Yet I can't complain," she said. "I had a good marriage. The kids are on their own. My job isn't exactly thrilling, but it's secure, and I retire in 15 years. So what else is there?" What else indeed! A woman of 50 - able, experienced, attractive - assuming, in effect, that her life is over. I've seen this often, and in much younger people - the resigned conviction that change is impossible. What many of us fail to realise is that it's possible at any age to improve the quality of our life.

But we have to initiate the process ourselves. By taking a new job or moving to a new locale, we can propel ourselves, forcibly and excitingly, into the stream of life. It's like pruning an overgrown tree: the result is new growth and more fruit. A widow I know sold her house and bought a van so she could travel the country showing her silverwork at craft fairs. She has made friends wherever she goes and looks ten years younger. "There's so much I haven't seen yet," she said. "It's not too late."

It's almost never too late to do, on some scale, what you've always wanted to do. The key is to move forward, to make changes. The path many of my acquaintances have taken to greater happiness may be thought of as a kind of creative arithmetic,

with additions, subtractions, multiplications and divisions. Chances are these steps will work for you, too.

Add to your life by trying something new. Remember the first-dayof-school challenge? That annual shake-up obliged you to mix, reach out, discover. Last winter, I decided to take a plumbing course. Like most girls of my generation, I had been programmed to be hopeless with tools, but very soon I found I was intrigued by vises and wrenches and the fact that I could use them.

When I consider which of my friends seem happiest, most alive, I observe they're the ones who are constantly expanding their skills, interests and knowledge. Ronnie had never grown so much as a cactus when she was asked to tend a neighbour's prized pink African violet. One day she found a leaf that had broken off and stuck it in water. Now she has a unique collection.

ADD TO YOUR LIFE by turning limitations into opportunities. If your life has a built-in constraint, struggle against it, or use it to your advantage.

When an industrial accident confined Martin to a wheelchair, he was overwhelmed by the feeling of uselessness. One day I asked if I could give his telephone number to my daughter's teacher, in case there should be an emergency when I couldn't be reached. Soon he was performing a similar service for other

Adding Up To Happiness

working mothers. Word got around, and now he runs an answering service. The money he earns helps pay for extras his pension wouldn't cover. "Above all," he says, "I'm doing something, and touching other people's lives."

SUBTRACT FROM **YOUR LIFE** possessions that are a burden, activities that you no longer enjoy. When I was growing up, I admired my mother's wedding china, which stood in a cupboard and was brought out only for dusting. "Someday this will be yours," mother said. During my young married years, when I longed to entertain with style, that fine china remained in her cabinet. When

it all came to me last year, I realised that at this stage of my life I don't want possessions requiring special care. So I passed the china on to my daughter. She's delighted; I'm relieved of a chore.

MULTIPLY YOUR POINTS of contact with other people. My life has been enhanced since I began trying to know people whose assumptions

and lifestyles are unlike mine. For example, because I cultivate friendships with the children of friends, I have been introduced to music, poetry and ideas I otherwise would never have understood.

A woman I know 'adopts' grandparents. Usually she finds them through

> volunteer work, but sometimes she makes a direct approach. "I met Harry in the supermarket," she told me. "He seemed to have trouble reading prices, so I offered to help. I ended up driving him home; he asked me in for tea and now we regularly shop together. My children love Harry's stories. Harry thinks we do a lot for him, but he gives our family something priceless, a sense of the past."



LIMITATIONS **INTO OPPORTUNITIES**

MULTIPLY YOUR CONNECTIONS

with the life around you. "My wife was the social one," Philip told me. "After she died, I was terribly lonely. Then it occurred to me that I met lots of people every day. I just hadn't been seeing them."

He struck up a conversation about fly tying with the hardware store manager and discovered a shared

READER'S DIGEST



interest; the two men have since gone on several trout-fishing expeditions.

Whether you live in a city or a village, it's possible to find friends in the course of routine activities.

just by taking an active part in the community. But you must make the special effort, whether it be to help out at a youth centre or distribute campaign literature.

DIVIDE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

into manageable units and delegate some of those units to others. Living well is partly a matter of making wise choices and compromises.

DIVIDE PROBLEMS INTO SEGMENTS THAT CAN BE TACKLED ONE AT A TIME

If you want more time, more freedom or simply more help, accept the fact that some things won't be done the way you'd like.

DIVIDE THOSE

SEEMINGLY intractable problems into segments that can be tackled one at a time.

Jenny left college, over her parents' objections, to marry a musician. Two years and two children later, he vanished, leaving her with a mountain of unpaid bills. "I used to lie in bed in the mornings," she told me, "unable to face the day." She began to gain strength when, instead of

Adding Up To Happiness

contemplating the whole discouraging picture, she isolated priorities. Convinced that her best hope lay in completing her education, she listed things to be done, one at a time. "Sell car for money to tide us over. Find out about educational loans. Reapply to university. Find apartment in safer neighbourhood. Find good daycare centre. Write to Mum and Dad. Get in touch with creditors and arrange to pay when I can." By the time she contacted her parents, who'd cut off communication when she married, Jenny couldn't help but impress them with her resourcefulness.

RAISE YOUR EFFORT LEVEL to the nth degree. I used to wonder why TV advertisers repeat the same commercial so often. But of course repetition - intensification - has a special force. The principle of raising to the nth degree works in all areas of life. Take home decorating. For years I've collected wicker furniture. Scattered through the house, it added up to very little. Yet when I gathered every bit in one room, placing the furniture together and covering one wall with baskets, the impact was stunning.

In human relationships, where it matters most, intensification of effort may produce important gains as it did for my friend Paul. He lives far from his mother's nursing home. Though he regularly sent long, newsy letters, his mother was always querulous when he telephoned.

"I was beginning to wonder if I had a son," was her usual greeting. Paul would protest he'd just written; she would insist she'd had no word for weeks. So he gave up the letters, concluding that his mother's concentration on the letters wasn't the same as his own. Now he sends a daily greeting, very short. Sometimes it's just a postcard, a snapshot, a note saying, "Thinking of you." He never misses a day - and the change in his mother's attitude has been remarkable.

HAPPINESS IS ALWAYS an individual matter, and so is the path to happiness.

The most important thing, if you're R not satisfied now, is to act.



Walking Companion

Not feeling ready to have another dog of her own, a Perth woman enquired on a social media community page if anyone in her area had a dog that needed walking. Next thing she knew she was inundated with offers. She chose dachshund Louis, who she now walks four times a week. "It's a win-win situation because he gets a walk... and I've got company on my daily walks." ABC.NET.AU



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READER'S DIGEST

SEE THE WORLD... Turn the page >>



...DIFFERENTLY

In summer the Maharloo, a salt lake in southwestern Iran, often takes on an intense pink colour. The reason comes from the algae in the water. During periods of dry weather, evaporation causes the lake to have low water levels and it starts to glow. If you want to admire the pink splendour, however, you should first check whether the Maharloo has any water at all. In the hot season, it frequently dries up completely.

54 DECEMBER 2023/JANUARY 2024



The Best Medicine



"I wish everybody became vegan."

No Hair, Don't Care

I'm a positive person. To me, going bald is not about hair loss, it's about face gain. It's not a receding hairline, it's an advancing facial frontier. It's exciting. One day, I'll have a whole head of face.

SHENG WANG. COMEDIAN

Make It Count

Santa Claus has the right idea - visit people only once a year.

VICTOR BORGE, COMEDIAN

Easy Going

A reporter, interviewing a man celebrating his 110th birthday, asks, "What's the secret to your longevity?"

"No matter what, I never ever argue with anyone," says the elderly man.

"Surely there must be more to it than that," insists the reporter. "What about factors like genetics, diet, exercise?"

The old man shrugs.

"Maybe you're right."

SUBMITTED BY GARY KATZ





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MEDICAL DRAMA

THE Boctors said there was slim hope for the baby born with only half a heart THATINEVER GAVEUP

BY Robert Kiener

ILLUSTRATION BY ZACHARY MONTEIRO

It seemed so real, thought Rob Velez about the dream he'd had the night before.

Lying in bed after waking from a long night's sleep in his home outside London, he smiled as he remembered the wonderful scene. He had been holding his newborn daughter in his strong arms. As she looked lovingly into his eyes, he was so overcome with emotion that the former US Marine had started to cry. He'd never felt this much love for anyone.

Amazing, thought the 50 year old as the morning sun streamed through his windows. This was more than a dream. He threw back his covers and got dressed. He had to tell his partner of four years, Zofia Fenrych, what he had learned from his dream.

Fenrych, a 40-year-old homeopathic therapist, listened as he told her about his dream. "You're pregnant," he said. "We're having another baby."

Fenrych laughed. They had a daughter, age two, and both had 16-year-old sons from previous relationships. "No way I am pregnant," she said.

"Honey," he said, "we are having a little girl. I saw her. And she will be beautiful!"

And to prove it, Velez zipped downstairs to the pharmacy to get a pregnancy test kit. An hour later, two red lines appeared on the pregnancy test strip. Fenrych was indeed pregnant. She screamed in delight and they embraced. "We're going to have a beautiful daughter," he said. "I know. I saw her last night."

Four months later, in February 2022, the couple went to the doctor's office for a 16-week ultrasound. They held hands as the sonographer moved an electronic probe over Fenrych's abdomen. A two-dimensional image of their baby 'Dorothea' appeared on the nearby screen.

"We saw her tiny fingers and toes and watched as baby Dorothea, my dream daughter come true, actually moved," Velez remembers. "She was sucking her thumb. Then both of us let out a shout, as it looked like she waved at us. She was so tiny, so beautiful!"

The sonographer kept moving the probe, then suddenly stopped. "We have a problem," she said. She called in a paediatric expert from a hospital nearby. An hour later, the expert dropped a bomb. "I am so sorry," she said. She explained that the baby had hypoplastic left heart syndrome (HLHS), a rare, often fatal, condition. Dorothea had only half a heart; the rest was undeveloped. And because of that she had little chance to survive.

"Her best advice was that we elect to, and I'll never forget the word, 'terminate' the pregnancy," says Velez, choking back tears. "This was the moment that everything – our entire lives – changed forever."

The Family That Never Gave Up

Never. That was the response both Velez and Fenrych gave when they heard the doctor's advice to have an abortion. "'Forget about it!'" I shouted at the paediatrician," recalls Velez.

After digesting the news, Dorothea's parents decided to enjoy every day they had with her. They took day trips to the seaside and visited nearby parks where they would walk for hours and keep up a steady conversation with their unborn baby, explaining what they were doing and seeing.

On one trip to a botanical gardens, as their toddler, Batsheba, screamed with joy while she chased ducklings, Fenrych caressed her belly and told Dorothea, "See, your sister is having so much fun." At home, Fenrych would play the piano, her son would play the violin and Batsheba would sing to her unborn sister. "We wanted to include Dorothea in everything," remembers Fenrych.

Velez, who had been stationed in England when he was younger and had moved back there in 2014, was employed at a private equity firm that worked with healthcare startups. He pulled every string he could to get a second opinion, only to hear the same diagnosis and the same suggested medical path: terminate the pregnancy.

Obsessed with saving his daughter's life, Velez quit his job and devoted all his time to researching HLHS. He and Fenrych dipped into their savings to survive. He wrote countless messages to doctors, surgeons, specialists and hospitals around the world, hoping to find someone who could help.

A foetal echocardiogram at 24 weeks revealed even more bad news: in addition to HLHS, Dorothea also had a severe blockage in her heart. Their baby had only a five

Zofia Fenrych with daughter Batsheba a few days before baby Dorothea was born



per cent chance of survival, Velez and Fenrych were told.

Then they found out about a complex and risky in-utero foetal operation that might repair her heart. But since no one in the United Kingdom could carry out the surgery, the couple looked elsewhere, eventually finding a paediatric surgeon in Texas who agreed to perform the procedure. But it would cost more than \$4 million.

THE DOCTOR EXPLAINED THAT HE HOPED TO **BASICALLY 'REWIRE'** AND 'REBUILD' HER HEART

To raise the money, they started a publicity campaign, doing countless media interviews. Velez also wrote scores of letters to celebrities and, as he remembers, "every billionaire I could think of". But they only raised about \$80,000 - far from what they'd need. As the days ticked by, their chances of saving their unborn baby's life looked more and more hopeless.

LOOK CLOSER. It was in the middle of the night when Velez heard the voice in his head. He was sitting alone in his home office despairing that he'd failed his family. Am I going crazy? he thought. Now I'm hearing voices!

Look closer, the voice repeated.

"What are you talking about?" he answered aloud. "I've tried everything."

Look closer to home.

Fine, thought Velez, I'll try again. He googled 'impossible cases', 'miracle surgeon', 'UK paediatric expert' and 'HLHS'. Almost immediately a link to a Facebook page about Dr Guido Michielon, a cardiothoracic surgeon, popped up in the search results.

Velez pored through the page, reading message after message from enthusiastic parents thanking Dr Michielon for 'saving our baby's life', 'giving us hope', and 'changing our lives'. Even more remarkable, Velez discovered that the Italian-born surgeon was an expert in HLHS and had done more than 2000 open-heart procedures with a special focus on neonatal surgeries.

How did I miss him? Velez wondered as he wrote an email to the London-based surgeon, describing Dorothea's issues and including medical notes and copies of her sonograms. Within hours he got a reply: "I am in Italy now but will be back this Friday. I've moved you to the top of my appointment list."

Five days later, at the end of a long Skype conference call, Dr Michielon gave the anxious parents the news they'd been praying for: "I can help you. I will operate on Dorothea after she is born and stabilised."

He explained that he hoped to basically 'rewire' and 'rebuild' her heart

The Family That Never Gave Up

and veins days after she was born. And, instead of costing them millions, the operation, called the Norwood Procedure. would be fully covered by the National Health Service (NHS).

Velez and Fenrych were ecstatic. But they were jolted back to reality when the surgeon warned, "A child with HLHS has a very low chance of survival. And Dorothea's complications are even more severe than most. We will do our best. But please remember, the odds are not in our favour."

On July 7, at London's Royal Brompton Hospital, surrounded by a 20-strong team of medical personnel and a bank of beeping monitors, baby Dorothea was born by Caesarean section. Velez, dressed in surgical scrubs, stood alongside Fenrych and peeked over a curtain to see his newborn daughter. "Look!" he said joyfully. "She has a full head of hair!"

The medical team rushed Dorothea into a resuscitator unit and placed an oxygen mask on her tiny face. A priest Velez had asked to come along hurriedly baptised her as she was being scanned.

As he left the operating room, Velez noticed a group of doctors looking at a screen that showed a sonogram of his new baby's heart. Minutes later, chief paediatric cardiologist, Dr Alain



Dr Guido Michielon and his patient after one of her operations

Fraissé, told Velez, "I don't know how to explain this but, somehow, there are four or five new veins in her heart that have appeared out of nowhere."

He explained that these veins, which no one had seen on earlier scans or MRIs, were helping drain her heart. In other words, they were keeping her alive. He sounded astonished.

Dr Michielon came out and hugged Velez. "She is stable and she is beautiful. Congratulations!"



As ill as Dorothea was, her parents never gave up hope

The mood shifted dramatically on July 12, when Velez and Fenrych met with Dr Michielon and his team at the hospital to discuss the Norwood Procedure operation, which was scheduled for the next day. Velez instantly sensed there was something wrong. The normally ebullient physician seemed distant.

A hospital administrator delivered the bad news: "We've decided that there is such a small chance your baby will survive the surgery that we cannot allow it to go forward."

The room fell silent. And if she did survive, the administrator continued, "There's a very good chance she would suffer irreversible brain damage."

Velez looked a t Dr Michielon for help. He was looking at the floor. The administrator said, "We recommend compassionate care."

"You mean we should let her die," said Velez curtly. "After we've come this far?"

"You know I want to operate, but I cannot without the support of my team," said Dr Michielon.

Velez went home and sent pleading messages to the hospital CEO and the hospital legal counsel. He also spoke to a human rights lawyer who had a successful record fighting for NHS patients. Twenty-four hours later, the hospital administrators relented.

The operation would take place.

The next morning, at 7.30am, Dr Michielon, assisted by three paediatric cardiac surgeons and a team of nurses, began the delicate openheart surgery that would reconstruct the right ventricle of Dorothea's heart so that it would pump blood to both her body and her lungs without the need of the malformed left ventricle.

After Dorothea's chest was opened, she was hooked up to a heart-lung machine that would take over while doctors operated on those organs. Surrounded by flickering monitors and the gentle whirring of the heart-lung machine, Dr Michielon began the intricate

The Family That Never Gave Up

procedure of building a new, larger aorta by joining the pulmonary artery to Dorothea's existing aorta, which was just one millimetre wide.

This is time-consuming, painstaking work; a baby's heart is only about the size of a walnut, and Dorothea's veins and arteries were so tiny, "really a hair," says Dr Michielon. He needed to wear high-powered magnifying lenses to see as he expertly cut and sewed vessels together.

The hours dragged by as Dr Michielon and his team performed the delicate surgery. Their

last step was to install a shunt from the right ventricle to the pulmonary artery, connecting them to direct the blood flow to the lungs. Nearly 11 hours after he and his team began, Dr Michielon finally began to relax, as he double-checked his work that had essentially re-plumbed this newborn's faulty heart.

By late afternoon, Dr Michielon, exhausted and still dressed in scrubs, found the parents in the waiting room. "Looks good," he told them, smiling broadly. "She is stabilised." The three embraced in a celebratory hug. But within minutes, Velez and Fenrych were startled by the screech of emergency alarms. A team of doctors and nurses rushed into the room where

Dorothea was recovering from surgery. People shouted orders. A doctor yelled, "Cardiac arrest!" The alarm kept wailing.

After a few minutes, a nurse dashed out to tell them, "Dorothea's heart has stopped. She's had a heart attack. We are trying to revive her."

Ten minutes later the nurse returned with the same message.

Fifteen minutes later she came back: "We're still doing CPR."

An agonising hour later, they were ushered into the ICU and were shocked to see their tiny daughter

Rob Velez and his 'dream girl'



READER'S DIGEST

tethered to a dialysis machine and life-support unit. Her chest was covered with dried blood and was swollen from more than an hour of CPR. She was battered and bruised, but with the help of a bank of high-tech machines, she was still fighting to stay alive.

Velez and Fenrych reached beneath the network of tubes and held her hand. Velez felt his daughter squeeze his index finger in her tiny hand and said, "You are a fighter, you did it. You're going to be okay."

For the next five weeks, Velez and Fenrych rarely left Dorothea's side in the ICU. They talked to her, played music for her and caressed her.

On August 26, Fenrych's birthday, doctors removed Dorothea's breathing tube and took her off the ventilator, moving her to only light breathing support from a CPAP machine. She would need a second open-heart operation in a few months, and doctors warned her parents that to survive that surgery, Dorothea would need to put on weight and get stronger.

She was moved out of intensive care and gained more than a kilogram in less than two months. Dorothea's heart was working well and her oxygen levels became normal.

On September 14 she was taken off the CPAP machine and began breathing for herself. Dr Michielon performed the second surgery on her



Zofia with her two little girls

heart on November 24, and declared her prognosis excellent. On December 21, Dorothea finally went home with her parents, just in time for Christmas. She had lived up to her well-earned nickname: the miracle baby.

Today, says her proud father, she is a chubby, healthy baby who is constantly smiling and laughing. "You know, right after we found out we were having a baby girl, we named her Dorothea. That's derived from a Greek phrase that means 'gift of God'," he explains.

Velez watches Batsheba, now age three, snuggle up next to her baby sister. "We sing happy birthday to Dorothea each morning, because every day with her is a miracle."

OLD RULES REDEFINED





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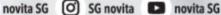
QUALITY WATER TO REJOICE WITH

INSTANTLY "

















Illuminating Facts About Fireworks

BY Samantha Rideout ILLUSTRATION BY Serge Bloch

There's a good chance the fireworks you admire every year were made in China: about 90 per cent of the world's fireworks are produced there. The biggest importer is the US, which shipped in more than US\$650 million worth in 2021. Sydney's spectacular New Year's Eve harbour display typically

costs around US\$5 million. To welcome in 2023, eight tonnes of fireworks were burnt through.

Fireworks are Chinese in origin and are surprisingly ancient. The specific details of their invention are lost to history, but numerous folk legends try to

Illuminating Facts About Fireworks

fill in the gaps. According to one, a monk named Li Tian created fireworks around 1400 years ago by packing gunpowder into hollow bamboo tubes. His purpose: to scare off evil spirits.

An explosive mixture of gunpowder and flammable compounds is what makes fireworks splatter across the sky in all those pretty colours and fun shapes. Copper, for instance, burns bright blue; strontium sparks deep red. Together they produce purple. The images they make depend on the placement of these compounds inside the shell of the firework. Crowd favourites include 'comet', featuring a long trail of sparks; 'peony', a spherical, flower-like burst; and 'strobe', which produces a blinking effect.

Every summer, world-class pyrotechnic artists gather in Montreal, Canada, for the world's largest fireworks competition, L'International des Feux Loto-Québec. Roughly three million spectators watch as teams compete with themed musical programmes such as 'Bells and Drums' (Mexico's lively entry last year) or 'A Tribute to Prince', which featured many shades of purple. There's no cash prize, but winners take home trophies known as Jupiters - fittingly named for the Roman god of the sky and thunder.

Italians were the first to mix in extra metals to produce different colours in the 1830s. Before that, all fireworks were orange, the colour of fire. The patterns, however, come from more recent technology. The first patch of sky to see them was above Washington, DC, in 1991, when the US welcomed home troops from Operation Desert Storm with explosions of purple hearts and yellow bows.

The single biggest firework shell ever shot was part of a 2020 winter-carnival display in Colorado, US, according to Guinness World Records. Weighing a hefty 1268 kilograms, it rose more than a kilometre into the sky before bursting, turning the night sky red.

For centuries we had to light each firework fuse by hand to set it off, but since the 1980s, there's been another option: computer-controlled igniters. Automating fireworks allows for more precisely timed explosions, making musical displays all the more synchronised and satisfying - not to mention safer.

But it doesn't always go according to plan. In 2012, an American Independence Day celebration in San Diego, California, went awry because of a computer glitch. A display that was supposed to last 18 minutes got compressed into less

than one. First, the spectators were bombarded with clamour and light while roughly 7000 shells exploded at the same time. Then they waited around, confused, for the rest of the show they'd been promised.

Other cultural holidays that feature fireworks include Malaysia's Merdeka Day, the Diwali Festival in India and the UK's Guy Fawkes Day. The latter event commemorates the failure of a plot to blow up London's Parliament buildings with gunpowder in 1605. Fireworks serve to remind celebrators of the deadly explosion that was averted.

We're used to seeing fireworks displays paired with music. Think 'Auld Lang Syne' on New Year's Eve. But sometimes it's the sparklers that inspire the tunes. George Frideric Handel's joyous *Music for the Royal Fireworks* (1749) was composed to help mark the end of the War of the Austrian Succession. More than 150 years later, Claude Debussy's *Feux d'artifice* (Fireworks) used the piano to evoke thrilling blasts with anticipation-filled pauses in between.

The pops and whistles that some fireworks make are due to the craftsmanship of chemists, who add metal tubes or flakes that hiss and sizzle as they burn. Of course, most fireworks go off

with a loud bang, which many people (and animals) don't enjoy. Newer 'quiet' fireworks that don't need as much energy to burst are already popular in Europe and are starting to catch on elsewhere. However, totally silent fireworks aren't really possible as they typically require some noise to flare up, but the noise level of 'quiet' fireworks is not anywhere near the level of normal fireworks. That's good news for the animals.

As you might imagine, fireworks emit large amounts of pollutants into the atmosphere. They can also release hazardous substances: potassium perchlorate, for example, a chemical that has been linked to thyroid problems. As a result, some cities have banned their use. Environmentally friendly fireworks (that emit up to 65 per cent less air pollution compared to regular ones) were developed at the request of the Walt Disney Company, which received smoke complaints in the 1990s from residents who lived near the California resort.

An even greener alternative – recently adopted and enjoyed around the world's skies – is using swarms of drones to trace flashy patterns in the sky. Another perk: there's a much smaller risk of sparking bushfires. The future of fireworks, like so much else, may be robotic.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

Tidying up means dealing with all the 'things' in your life. So what do you really want to put in order?

> MARIE KONDO, TIDYING EXPERT

> > I think when you do the right thing for the world, most of the time, the profits follow.

MARTIN KON, PRESIDENT OF AN AI STARTUP

WE'RE ALL GOING **ABOUT TRYING** TO MAKE BEAUT IN THE WORLD AND TRYING TO MAKE ORDER OUT OF CHAOS. AND THAT'S WHAT ART IS.

REBECCA MAKKAI, NOVELIST

In many instances parents encourage children to get something from the world outside, but in truth they must get into their children's inner world, the real place where learning begins.

ANGELICA LEE SINIE, **ACTRESS AND DOCUMENTARY** MAKER



GRETCHEN BLEILER, ATHLETE

Marriage is the punctuation mark and the celebration of what you already have.

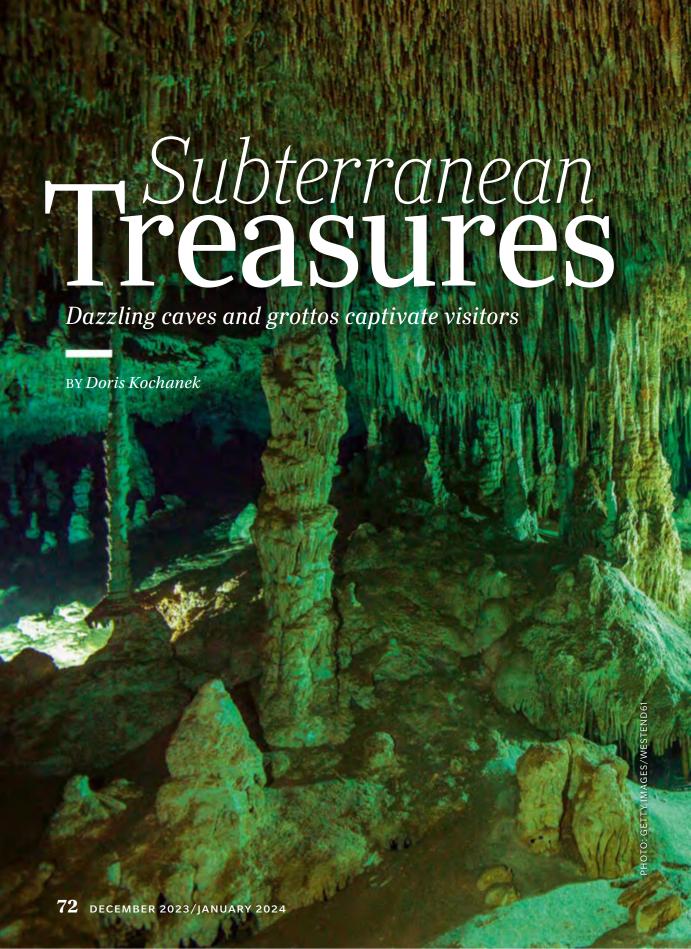
JULIETTE LEWIS,





RICK RUBIN IN THE BOOK

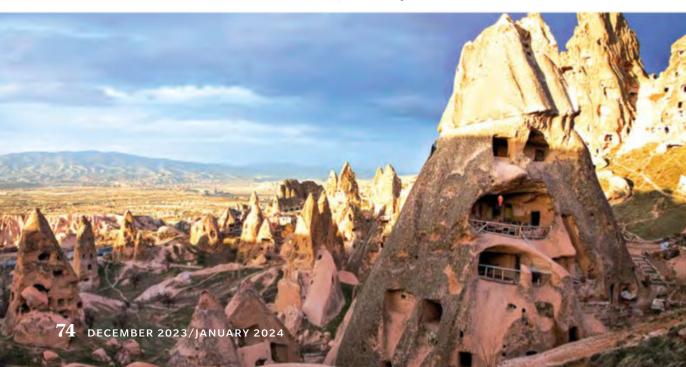
THE CREATIVE ACT



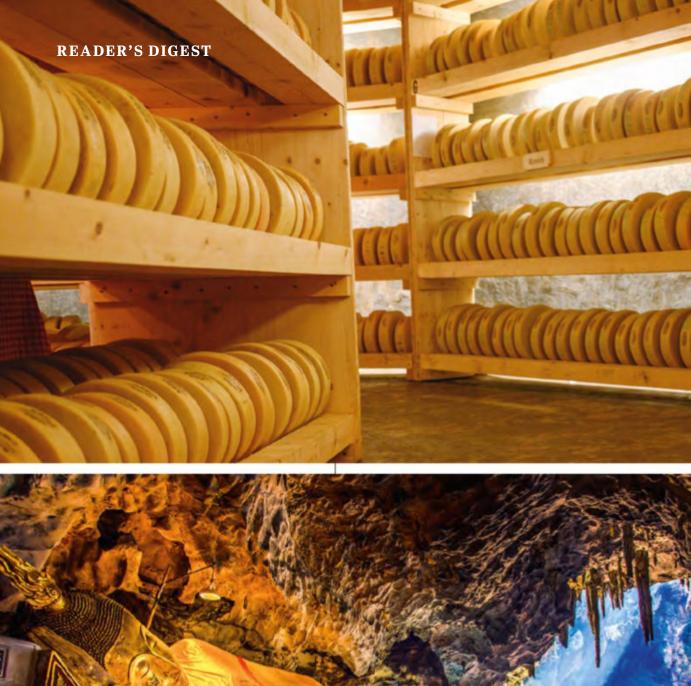




- ▲ Probably the largest underwater cave system in the world is located near the city of Tulum on Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula. Cave after cave line up for 347 kilometres. According to tradition, the Maya believed that this was the entrance to the underworld.
- ▼ The rock paintings in the Lascaux cave in southwestern France are literally as old as stone. They were created in the Upper Paleolithic period of the Stone Age, around 19,000 to 17,000 years ago.
- The waves of General Carrera Lake in the Patagonian region of Chile formed a natural work of art consisting of caves, columns and tunnels from a huge block of marble. The Marble Caves are known for their beauty and light reflections.
- ▼ Cappadocia is the home of the fairy chimneys. This is the name given in Turkish to the rock formations typical of this region. In the past, some fairy chimneys were inhabited but by ordinary mortals.











▲ The Gstaad Cheese Grotto in

Switzerland is quite something: Around 3000 cheese wheels are stored and ripened here. The local dairy proudly calls it 'our Fort Knox'. Visitors are allowed into the cheese grotto – unlike the storage facility for the US gold reserves.

- ◆ Some 200 Buddha figures give
 the Khao Luang cave in Thailand
 an almost mystical atmosphere.
 Also worth seeing are the rock
 paintings and magnificent
 stalactites.
- ► Glowworms (arachnocampa luminosa) light up the Waipu Caves in Northland, New Zealand. Particularly convenient for visitors: the tiny creatures cavort near the entrance to the caves.



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WHAT WOULD THE WORLD BE WITHOUT

OUESTIONS

Cave walls, stone tablets and animal skins: before the invention of paper, man used all kinds of materials to write or paint on. Who is considered to be the inventor of paper as we know it today?

- a) Cai Lun, a Chinese court official around 100 CE
- b) Darius, a Persian Great King around 420 BCE
- c) Archimedes, a Greek scientist around 500 BCE
- d) Yax Nuun Ahiin, a Mayan King around 380 CE

Paper is a precious commodity. Its production requires large amounts of energy, water and fibre. The latter usually comes from wood. Which trees are preferred for paper production?

- a) Deciduous trees
- **b)** Palm trees
- c) Tropical woods
- d) Coniferous trees

What is the difference between paper and cardboard? Cardboard is ...

- a) thicker than paper
- b) heavier for the same size
- c) recycled paper
- d) made from straw

If you're sensible, you'll check whether there is any toilet paper $oldsymbol{ol}}}}}}}}}}$ a public toilet. In 1890, US business the Scott Paper Company made an

important contribution to the development of this important hygiene product. It came up with the idea of paper ...

- a) wound on rolls
- b) manufactured in multiple layers
- c) that could fit in a dispenser
- d) in a bleached version

When computers began to enter offices en masse, some experts predicted the paperless office. That's not what happened. Paper consumption in the world is enormous: in 1970, around 130 million tonnes of paper was produced around the globe. To date, this figure has more than ...

- a) doubled
- b) tripled
- c) quadrupled
- d) increased ten-fold



The most expensive piece of paper measures just 3.2 by 2.5 centimetres. It last changed hands at auction in 2021 for US\$8.3 million. What was it?

- a) Leonardo da Vinci's sketch of a flea
- b) a gold-leaf corner torn from a medieval text
- c) a thumbprint of Marilyn Monroe
- d) the British Guiana 1-cent magenta stamp

Fold a sheet of paper and you have an airworthy object. This children's game is pursued with a passion by some adults, such as the three men who hold the world record

coins are minted has value in itself. Banknotes, on the other hand, have only face value. It was - and is - all the more important for banknotes to be counterfeit-proof. This is why many currencies have watermarks printed into their banknotes. These translucent images in the paper are ...

The metal from which

- a) printed with light-binding ink
- b) milled out after production
- c) embossed during paper production
- d) can resist damage

What would writers in times past be if they didn't have paper to record their thoughts on? Which famous author said, "My aim is to put what I see and feel on paper in the best and simplest way."?

- a) Ernest Hemingway
- b) Franz Kafka
- c) Rainer Maria Rilke

PHOTO: ANASTASIANI/GETTY IMAGES d) Jane Austen

for the longest distance flight of a paper aeroplane they built themselves. How far did their construction fly?

- a) 23.77 metres, the length of a tennis court
- b) 50 metres, the length of an Olympic swimming pool
- c) 88.3 metres, almost the length of a hockey field
- d) 100 metres, the length of a football (soccer) field

In Japan, paper folding - or origami - is a revered art form. A particularly popular motif is the crane. According to Japanese folklore, making a senbazuru, or 1000 cranes, is a wish for ...

- a) health, long life and peace
- b) good luck in love
- c) wealth
- d) respect

Paper was introduced to Europe in the 11th century. In 1221, Frederick II, a Holy Roman Emperor, forbade its use for important documents. Why did he want important documents to continue to be made of parchment (animal skin)?

- a) He had a monopoly on parchment production
- b) At that time, paper was susceptible to insect damage
- c) Parchment caught fire less easily
- d) He was allergic to paper

Origami is a cherished art form in Japan

extremely valuable. what makes this tiny piece of paper

metres. 2, 2022, their construction flew 88.3 On their record attempt, December aniel Erickson and Garrett Jensen. he constructed together with Naththrowing the paper aeroplane that Dillon Ruble practised For more than four months,

a wish for world peace. Senbazuru cranes are often folded as health, long life and peace. The crane can symbolise

the process. the starch, destroying the paper in attracted insects. These feasted on which aided ink absorption but also was coated with rice starch, In the 13th century, paper

per web, which has not yet solidified. responding to the mark into the paachieve this by pressing a shape corthinner. Paper manufacturers can that part of the paper is deliberately the light because the fibre layer of when the banknote is held up to note will become visible A watermark on a bank-

was famous for his terse, laconic style. 1954 Nobel Prize winner for literature Ernest Hemingway. The mori səmoə ətoup sidT

> world. many centuries before the rest of the was and began using the material how valuable Cai Lun's invention ple from China were quick to realise fishing nets and tree bark for it. Peopieces of discarded cloth, scraps of tor of paper. He is said to have used cial, is considered the inven-Cai Lun, a Chinese court offi-

finished product. Their long fibres add strength to the used for paper production. Coniferous trees are mainly

weighs at least 600 grams. while a square metre of cardboard Paper can be as light as a feather, materials. They differ only in weight. made from the same basic Paper and cardboard are

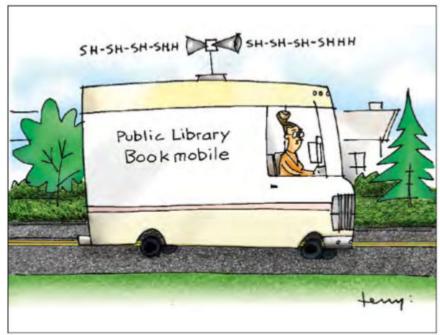
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therefore more than tripled. duced worldwide. The quantity has lion tonnes of paper are pro--lim 004 nsdt erom 400 mil-

ta stamp is known to exist. That is ish Guiana 1-cent magen-Only one copy of the Brit-

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

Humour On The Job



Right Candidate, Wrong Job

Three of us peppered the job candidate with questions regarding an opening in our department. When we got to the end of the interview, we asked the candidate whether he had any questions for us.

He replied, "Yes, I have. What job am I interviewing for?"

SUBMITTED BY KARIN GREEN

Picking It Up

"Why are they stealing our rubbish?!" (My kid, horrified that the garbage men are doing their job.)

@MOMSENSE_ENSUES

Making Good Time

As a single mother, I found that getting the kids off to school and then driving 45 minutes to work was a struggle. Luckily, my boss was very forgiving. In fact, one day he greeted me with a cheerful smile, exclaiming, "Today's the earliest you've been late all week!"

SUBMITTED BY PAT SICHK

Paw-don Me

I was screensharing in a meeting and realised I had multiple tabs open searching "do cats feel love?"

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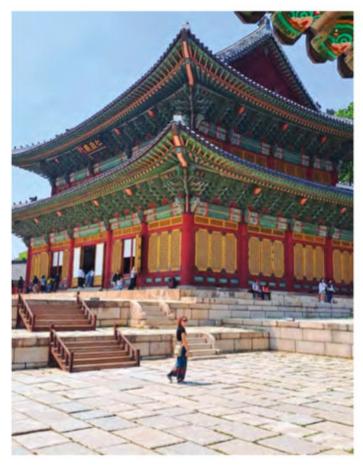


This bustling metropolis will woo you with its melting pot of futuristic architecture, ancient culture and natural beauty

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY Diane Godley

wo weeks in Seoul, South Korea's bustling capital, is just not enough time to explore all it has to offer. With ancient temples, palaces and fortress walls rubbing shoulders with sparkling contemporary architecture, exquisite mountain landscapes, parks and forests, plus pumping nightlife and outdoor markets galore, Seoul really has something for everyone.

Founded as the capital of the unified Korean peninsula in 1394, Seoul sits in a basin and is surrounded by four low mountains, which provided a natural defence to the fledgling kingdom. To reinforce this defence, several years into the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910) construction started on a wall along the mountain ridges. Much of the fortifications remain today (some have been rebuilt) and are a magnet for tourists.



UNESCO World Heritage listed Changdeokgung, said to be the most beautiful of the five palaces

On our first day in Seoul, we decided to do something cultural and headed to Gwanghwamun Square and Gyeongbokgung - the largest of the five remaining gung or palaces in Seoul - where the history of the Joseon Dynasty began. We were going to take a bus from our hotel in the central district of Myeongdong, but there was such a vibrant atmosphere when we stepped onto the street, we decided to walk. Sejong-daero, the main thoroughfare that passes City Hall and leads to Gwanghwamun Square,

was festooned with colourful lanterns - and being a Sunday, the mood was positively festive. We discovered later that many streets and temples across the country are decked out with the lanterns and other decorations during April and May to celebrate Buddha's birthday.

From Gwanghwamun Square - a public space that boasts statues of King Sejong (creator of Hangeul, the Korean alphabet) and Admiral Yi Sunshin - the palace and Blue House (which, up until last year served as the official residence of the president) can be clearly seen, with Bugaksan mountain making a striking backdrop.

Entry into each of the palaces is a tiny 3000 won

or around US\$2.20, but if you hire a hanbok, traditional Korean clothing, you can get in for free. To our delight, lots of people, locals and tourists alike, embrace the idea of dressing up so we felt like we were on the set of a Netflix period K-drama. Security guards at Gyeongbokgung also dress in colourful historical costumes, as do tour guides who give free tours in several languages. Looking towards the north from inside the palace grounds, Bugaksan and Inwangsan, the two highest northern mountains,

loom close by. Turn 180 degrees and the view is of a sparkling cityscape with Namsan (south mountain) and Seoul Tower in the background.

During my stay, I visited two other palaces, the UNESCO World Heritage listed Changdeokgung and Deoksugung, located across from City Hall. Built in 1405 as a secondary royal residence to the main palace, Changdeokgung is the best-preserved palace of the Joseon Dynasty and is where royalty spent the most time. To the rear of the palace is a

secret garden dotted with pavilions for contemplating and writing poetry, a library for learning, ponds for fishing, as well as royal residences. Entry to the secret garden is separate from the palace and needs to be booked online as only a limited number of people are admitted each day.

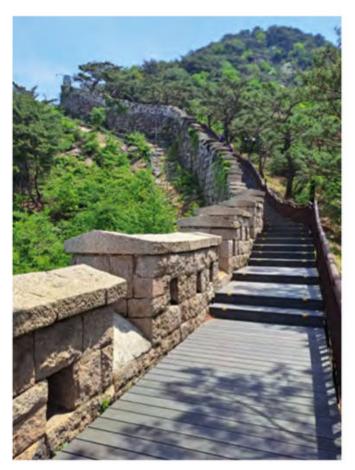
If you don't have time to visit all the palaces, make sure the changing of the guards in front of Deoksugung's main gate is on your to-do list. Performed every day at 11am, the colourful display takes about 20 minutes. From there, stroll along the stonewall walkway the runs alongside the palace. Selected as one of the 100 most beautiful roads in Korea. it is also a popular location for Korean dramas.

On the bus ride back to our

hotel, we missed our stop. But we didn't have any misgivings because we stumbled upon Myeongdong market - streets upon streets heaving with people selling street food, such as tteokbokki (rice cakes in a spicy sauce), chicken skewers, dumplings, corn dogs and hotteok (Korean pancakes). On every corner people were selling hundreds of types of socks for between US\$1 and \$2 - make sure you bring home a pair or ten - as well as souvenirs. At night, fairy lights thread through the laneways and it

Visitors to Gyeongbokgung dressed in hanbok, traditional Korean clothing





The ascent up Seoul's highest mountain, Bugaksan, takes you along the fortress wall

is even busier than during the day. Dozens of outdoor markets are found around the capital, but Myeongdong is a good place to start for a taste of Seoul.

The next day we embraced the great outdoors and walked along the fortress wall that snakes up Bugaksan. Rising steeply to a 342-metre summit, it is the highest of Seoul's four guardian peaks and has a difficulty rating of medium – I'm guessing seasoned mountain climbers provided this rating. Bugaksan is part of a

military reserve, therefore it is completely off limits after sunset and photography is limited to a few designated spots. You may think them paranoid, but in 1968, North Korean agents attempted to assassinate the then president sparking a gun fight on the mountain. A tree that was hit by several bullet holes is one of the trail's exhibits.

Several paths can be taken from the summit to descend the mountain, and I think we took the steepest (just happy we were going down and not up like some of the flustered people we passed). At the foot of the mountain we were close to Bukchon Hanok Village. Situated between the two main palaces, it is packed with some 900 traditional Korean houses (hanok) that were

originally lived in by the royal family and aristocrats but today are the residences of your average Seoulite. Retaining much of the appearance of the old city, it is a tourist magnet.

A holiday in Seoul wouldn't be complete without the surreal trip to the DMZ (DeMilitarised Zone between North and South Korea). These can be booked online around three months before you intend to visit. Dozens of buses travel to the DMZ every day. Our bus with Korridor Tours left Seoul at 7am in the







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READER'S DIGEST

morning and reached our first destination around 8.30am - yes, Seoul really is that close to the border, less than 40 kilometres in fact.

The highlights of the DMZ were the third tunnel and the Observatory Deck. The third tunnel is one of four dug across the border by North Koreans trying to infiltrate the South. As part of the DMZ experience, tourists get to walk through the third tunnel that the South discovered (hence the name) until you reach a wall, which indicates you've reached

North Korea. Claustrophobic people may want to think twice about doing this though, as we had to stoop for a good section of the tunnel and hard hats were provided to protect against knocks to the head.

Our guide delighted in regaling the story about how the North Koreans spent all their time and energy digging the tunnel for nefarious purposes only for the South to reap financial rewards by using it as a tourist destination.

The Observatory Deck was another bizarre experience. From atop the tower, binoculars are lined up so voyeuristic tourists can get a glimpse of North Koreans going about their daily lives. Through the

binoculars I could see people working in a rice field, and others walking and cycling around a village. It was all a bit surreal; they seemed so near, yet totally out of reach.

The trip back to Seoul took us west along the border with North Korea before turning south. Separated by the Han River, we looked through the barbed wire fencing to an agricultural setting, which contrasted starkly with the industrialised and high density living south of the border. R

The great naval commander Admiral Yi Sunshin (1545-1598) watching over Gwanghwamun Square





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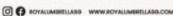












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BONUS READ Lek Chailert's sanctuary in Thailand is home to pachyderms that have suffered unspeakable abuse at the hands of their former owners Her Gift

Elephants BY Douglas Anthony Cooper

DECEMBER 2023/JANUARY 2024



In the mountainous jungles

of northern Thailand, I am being assaulted by a baby elephant. Her trunk has searched my pocket and, finding nothing of worth, is now bent on stealing the camera hanging around my neck. If this two year old were any larger, the mugging would likely succeed, but Pyi Mai is only one metre tall and 230 kilograms. I've met larger ponies. Her delinquent trunk does, however, manage to coat my lens with elephant slobber.

I am at Elephant Nature Park (ENP), a sanctuary that is home to 118 elephants, ranging from the adorable to the heartbreaking. ENP has rescued the adults from appalling situations: some are crippled, some blind; almost all are traumatised. They are now, unquestionably, happier than they have ever been.

The city of Chiang Mai, 100 kilometres south of ENP, is blessed with exquisite temples and sees as many as seven million tourists a year. ENP is an easy day trip for those who wish to experience living, trumpeting versions of the creatures they've seen carved into the ancient architecture here.

The sanctuary and its many satellites are the life's work of Saengduean 'Lek' Chailert. Her tireless efforts to improve the lot of Asian elephants turned her into an international celebrity more than two decades ago, despite her humble beginnings; she is from a hill tribe, and was at that time the only female from her village ever to attend school. Chailert was named a Ford Foundation 'Hero of the Planet' in 2001. Time magazine declared her a 'Hero of Asia' in 2005. And in 2010, she was identified as one of six 'Woman Heroes of Global Conservation'.

Today, her international non-profit Save Elephant Foundation (SEF) is even more influential. It's been directly involved in the rescue and rehabilitation of about 200 elephants. During the pandemic it supported nearly ten times that many across Thailand - helping feed them, offering medical services and improving their living conditions.

Chailert, 61, is known to everyone by her nickname, Lek, which means 'tiny' in Thai slang; she is about 1.52 metres tall. She has devoted her life to the plight of the Asian elephant, the world's second-largest land animal. The only one larger is another pachyderm, the African savannah elephant, which belongs to a separate genus. The Asian elephant has smaller ears, its head is topped with two prominent domes, and its trunk has only one prehensile finger-like extension, instead of two. They are equally magnificent.

Lek is a humble, soft-spoken woman, with angular features and

oversized glasses. In English, which isn't her first language, she tells me that her work to save Thailand's national animal started when she was 16 and in secondary school. An encounter with elephants in the logging industry changed her life.

"When I went to see the elephants work very hard in the jungle, I saw one bull get abused, beaten badly. Every time he pulled a giant log, he is screaming. And when he look at me, the eyes, that screaming noise..." she

points to her temple. "It is difficult to get that out."

She decided to help him, and returned to the logging site with medicine for the bull's infections. "I asked the owner, 'Why the old elephant still work? Why the blind elephant still forced to work? When they will go to rest?' And the owner said, 'When they die.'"

Lek's initial goal was modest: to rescue only that bull elephant. She wanted to bring him to her home

Elephants develop strong bonds with family and herd members



and release him, "to let him play with the mud bath, give him his final time with freedom, dignity." She eventually saved enough money to buy him, but when she returned to the logging site she learned that he had died. Her goal changed: to save all the mistreated elephants in Asia.

"And I decided to create our place, not just to rescue elephants, but to educate people, raise awareness, bring more voice."

'Bringing more voice' is critical. The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that Thailand had roughly 200,000 Asian elephants at the

FEW REALISE THAT TO MAKE AN ELEPHANT **DOCILE ENOUGH TO** DO TRICKS, YOU HAVE TO BREAK IT **MENTALLY**

beginning of the 20th century, half of them domesticated, half of them wild. Today - mostly due to humans destroying their habitat perhaps 3800 captive elephants remain, and most experts estimate some 3000 roam free.

Working elephants were integral to the country's teak logging, but when that industry was banned in 1989, their owners looked for a new use

for them. They often penned the elephants in camps where tourists could pet and ride them, as well as watch them ride tricycles, manipulate hula hoops and throw basketballs.

Few tourists realise that to make an elephant docile enough to do tricks, you have to break the animal mentally. Called *phajaan* in Thai, this involves beatings with sharp objects like the bullhook (a steel staff with a hooked end).

When the pandemic hit, tourism ground to a halt and owners found themselves with giant creatures they couldn't afford to feed. Many elephants starved to death. Pyi Mai and another baby, Chaba - her best friend - were captive at a camp where tourists could ride older elephants, and where the animals put on shows including bike riding. It also had a breeding programme, and the mothers were so emaciated they could barely produce milk.

Their owners would certainly not have entrusted them to ENP before the pandemic. Most people in the elephant business have resented Lek's advocacy; she'd drawn international attention to its cruel practices. During the lockdown, however, ENP established a food bank. At one point it was feeding almost 2000 elephants, more than half of Thailand's captive population.

The crisis offered an unexpected opportunity: Lek and her people were now aiding businesses that had

Her Gift To The Elephants

long considered ENP the enemy. It was a window for diplomacy, and - with gentle prodding - attitudes began to change in the camps.

The two baby elephants and their mothers were at last freed to join ENP, where they have established a small herd. Unrelated female elephants often babysit and develop strong bonds with another elephant's calf; Pyi Mai and Chaba now have their own pachyderm nanny, D-Max.

They also have room to wander, which is essential to an elephant's

health. The 81-hectare sanctuary concentrates on rescuing injured and abused creatures that could never survive in the wild. They have wounds that won't heal, problems with mobility, incapacitating psychological issues. The aim is to treat their ailments and provide them with a life that's as close as possible to what they would have experienced had it not been for humans.

Within the sanctuary, a slow, wide river divides an impossibly green jungle, and in the less wild areas you find odd impositions upon nature: a miniature Stonehenge, for instance, which turns out to be a monolithic back-scratching station. The elephants like to rub up against the rough stones



Lek Chailert with Pyi Mai

as they consume astonishing quantities of watermelons, bananas and sugarcane during scheduled lunches. Other items rarely found in the wild are a massive scale for weighing elephants, and a giant artificial hydrotherapy pool where disabled elephants can work on movement. The weightlessness they experience in the pool is a relief for legs accustomed to supporting several tonnes.

Tourists are not allowed to touch the creatures (Pyi Mai chose to make contact with me), but there's often no barrier between humans and elephants. Even the volunteers have only minimal contact; necessary hands-on work is restricted to staff and medical personnel. For a time





Chedi Chang Lom ('temple surrounded by elephants'), Pyi Mai and a mahout

ENP allowed humans to bathe the animals, but elephants really don't require bath attendants; they just trundle into the river. The point is to let them be elephants.

A captive elephant in Thailand typically experiences torture and humiliation, gruelling labour and separation from its family. Their complex psychology and social behaviour are callously disregarded. It used to be common, for instance, to take baby elephants into the city as props to aid in begging. Many of these elephants would never see their mothers again. Yet in the wild, a baby is never far

from its mother, and a female stays with the matriarchal herd for life.

Lek Chailert is changing this, despite some venomous opposition including online harassment and even death threats - from people wedded to the old barbaric ways.

Her influence has spread across Thailand, and is reaching into Cambodia, Laos, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Myanmar.

I meet a Nepalese family here who have been running an elephant safari in Nepal; a former volunteer from ENP told them about Lek's revolution, and they want to convert their operation

to an ethical sanctuary. They've come here to see these principles in action.

ENP is not restricted to pachyderms alone. The team also cares for 100 water buffalo, 150 wild boars, 130 cows, 30 goats, a 'kingdom of cats' - approximately 2000 of them - and 650 dogs, 50 of them disabled, many rescued from Bangkok during severe floods in 2011.

The sanctuary has three veterinarians who specialise in elephants, six general vets and a posse of veterinary nurses. They're experimenting with elephant prosthetics and other devices: I'm shown a fibreglass contraption that they hope will stabilise an injured knee. ENP is working on a fully equipped elephant hospital and plans to complete it in 2024.

The volunteers I encounter - from Australia, the USA and the UK - are impressively cheerful and range from their teens to their 90s. Everyone dines communally in an open pavilion, and I join them for lunch, an outdoor buffet featuring Thai vegan cuisine. They tend to have rapturous stories about a near-religious conversion, about how an encounter with Lek and her organisation caused them to reorient their lives towards an unexpected goal: elephant rescue.

I meet Lee and Roger Denison from the UK, who first visited ENP in 2018 just after Roger retired at age 60. This is their third time volunteering; they'll be here for two weeks. Much of the work while I'm here involves

cleaning the banks of the river in the wake of the worst flooding in at least 20 years. But the tasks are numerous and diverse: preparing food for various species, mucking out stables, helping build roads.

Kathy Snyder is a volunteer from California: this is her fifth time at the sanctuary, and she'll be staying for a month. "When I first came here, Lek said, 'I hear you're a nurse. I have a sick elephant that needs medical care. Can you help me out?" That was six years ago. Since then, caring for elephants has been one of Snyder's chief joys in life.

VOLUNTEERS HAVE MINIMAL CONTACT WITH THE ANIMALS. HERE, ELEPHANTS **CAN JUST BE ELEPHANTS**

Snyder, who has volunteered at several other sanctuaries around the world, stresses that she's a 'human nurse' but that the skills are transferable; wound care, for example. Moreover, she says, most mammals "have the same bones and organs; they're just bigger or smaller or in a different spot."

In 2018, Snyder helped with laser treatments for an elephant named Dalah. Before she was rescued,

READER'S DIGEST

Dalah's legs had been badly wounded during a forced breeding session and she had also suffered organ damage. Forced breeding sometimes involves chaining a female by all four feet. The male elephant, typically between the ages of ten and 15 and experiencing a spike in testosterone that increases their volatility and aggression, is jabbed with a bullhook until he mounts the female.

Despite what the team accomplished for Dalah's legs, she did not survive her internal injuries. The hydrotherapy pool is named in her memory.

During my visit, I'm squired around by the foundation's project director, Ry Emmerson, a cherubic ex-cop from northern England. Now 35, he was once a corrections officer at a high-security prison for men. "Very challenging and risky people," he says. "Part of my job was talking with offenders about why they committed their offence in order to better understand how to help them reduce their risk of offending in the future."

It was good training for his current job, which involves convincing people in the elephant business to change their practices.

How did a British ex-cop end up in the jungle? In 2012, when Emmerson found he was no longer satisfied with his work, he took a career break and began travelling, often volunteering at animal rescue operations in various countries. In Thailand, he

experienced ENP with awe. Then, seven years ago Emmerson was hired as project director on an elephant sanctuary that Lek's organisation was building in Myanmar, Thailand's neighbour to the west.

With the ongoing political turmoil in Myanmar, the sanctuary proved unworkable, and he found himself helping with other projects supported by SEF. "My role now includes a bit of everything," says Emmerson, the only foreigner working at the office in Chiang Mai. That includes project management, handling international media and coordinating Lek's schedule. And, crucially, when an elephant organisation approaches SEF because it wants to be more ethical. Emmerson is the one who goes in to help them change.

"I have to go places where I see elephants in horrific conditions," says Emmerson. "In Myanmar, I met with a family whose business was poaching elephants. You have to control yourself as you listen to what they're telling you. Because if you start to cry when you hear how brutal what they're doing is, they're not going to tell you."

Later that today I learn most baby elephants are born into captivity as a result of forced breeding. At one time, trapping elephants often involved slaughtering elderly herd members and trafficking the younger ones to entertain tourists. Even the most hardened cop would likely have a

Her Gift To The Elephants

hard time not being reduced to tears by. Just visiting ENP is emotionally complicated. It's wonderful to get close to these animals, but you're always aware of why they're here.

Emmerson takes me to meet the baby hellraisers, Pyi Mai and Chaba. "They're inseparable," he says. "Everywhere they go they create chaos." When he greets Pyi Mai, he puts her trunk up to his mouth and blows into it, as if playing a didgeridoo. Apparently, an elephant can tell a lot from your breath. "She wants to know, 'Where have you been? Which other elephants can I smell?"

We go for a walk to meet Mae Sri, who's in her 70s and dotted with bluegreen spots, which are wound treatments. Until she was rescued in 2018, Emmerson tells me, Mae Sri had been abused in the riding industry.

"When she came here she was skin and bones, with many open wounds." She has arthritis and when she falls, a truck-mounted hydraulic crane helps her up. The sanctuary has built her a special 'bed,' a sloping sand bank, so that she doesn't have to lie down: she simply leans at a 45-degree angle.

Every elephant I encounter is accompanied by a dedicated mahout (elephant handler). When you rescue an elephant, you generally have to rescue their mahout - they come as a unit - or pair the elephant with a new handler. Hence, ENP houses an entire community of mahouts, often refugees from Myanmar or hill

tribesmen. The park employs their wives in traditional roles - working in the kitchen, or housekeeping - and gives scholarships to their children.

Mahouts have to be convinced to change habits passed down for generations. "They have been taught that if you don't chain an elephant, it will kill you; that if you don't use the hook, it will kill you," says Emmerson. Bullhooks are routinely used to inflict pain, enforcing behaviour. The hook is jabbed into a sensitive area, often behind the ear.

There's no question that elephants can be dangerous, especially when

KEEPING THESE CREATURES ALIVE, **EVEN IN A RIGOROUSLY** ETHICAL SANCTUARY, **REQUIRES SOME FORM OF TOURISM**

tormented. Males, generally far more aggressive than females, can pick up a large rock with their trunk and throw it at you with accuracy. Nevertheless, the most effective way to manage elephants - and the only decent way - is with positive reinforcement.

The inhumane elephant camps for tourists have to be taught this approach, and to be shown that, thanks to the growing demand for ethical tourism, there are alternative ways.

READER'S DIGEST

ENP is proof tourists will pay for the chance to observe elephants happily being elephantine. But Emmerson is realistic. "Elephant owners in Thailand are not changing overnight because they suddenly love their elephants. It's about the business model."

The economics were rendered much more difficult, of course, by the pandemic. ENP relied upon various ingenious programmes to generate money in the absence of tourism. It developed a system to foster an elephant from afar, and the option to remotely present an elephant with a birthday 'cake' (a whimsical fruit arrangement). It may be your elephant-besotted daughter's birthday, but it's the excited elephant who gets the cake; your daughter gets the video. This ritual was so popular that ENP has maintained it.

These programmes were devised, however, as stopgaps until the tourists returned, and that remains an uncomfortable paradox: ENP is devoted to saving elephants from exploitation by tourists, but the hard financial truth is that keeping these creatures alive, even in a rigorously ethical sanctuary, requires some form of tourism. It's not a question of ending elephant tourism, but reinventing it.

My last experience at Elephant Nature Park is watching a glorious daily ritual late in the afternoon. The elephants swim down the river into camp to spend the evening, led by the precocious 11-year-old Kham La,

who has somehow taken charge of companions at least twice her age. An overhead complex of viewing platforms, the SkyWalk, allows visitors to observe the herd climbing onto the banks, trumpeting and rolling in the mud. They're clearly enjoying life. If tourism is a necessity, then this is how it should be done.

Emmerson suggests I visit their project just outside of Siem Reap in Cambodia. Even before the pandemic, it hadn't been drawing sufficient visitors and volunteers - despite being less than a two-hour drive from the Angkor Wat temple complex, the nation's most popular tourist destination.

Cambodia Wildlife Sanctuary sits in a vast swathe of jungle, 13,000 hectares guarded by ex-poachers. Only three of their many rescued animals are pachyderms, but one of them is Kaavan, infamously known as 'the world's loneliest elephant'. Kaavan had been chained in a miserable zoo in Pakistan; a mass Twitter protest in 2016 caught the attention of the late singer Cher, who wrote 'Walls,' a song about his suffering, and spearheaded a campaign for his release.

This is how it starts. I had come to Chiang Mai to tour the temples; I was lured to Elephant Nature Park because, like so many people, I care about elephants; and now I'm catching a flight to Cambodia to feed Kaavan. And when I return home, I'll talk about my experience, loudly and widely, to anyone who will listen.





KEMENTERIAN KEMAJUAN DESA DAN WILAYAH



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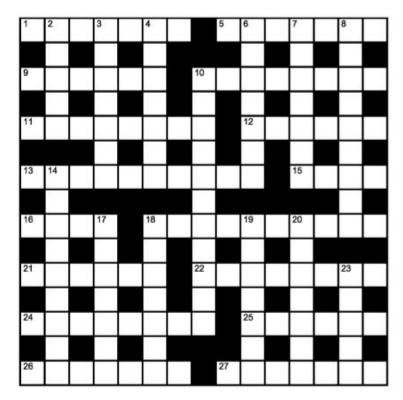






#imkemas #kemas4u#sentiasadihati#luarbandarsejahtera

Challenge yourself by solving these puzzles and mind stretchers, then check your answers on page 110.



ACROSS

- 1 Low sculptures rising from a flat surface (7)
- **5** Pull through (7)
- 9 Peeping Tom (6)
- **10** Enduring (4-4)
- 11 Sources of income (8)
- 12 Spokelike (6)
- 13 Its capital is Dhaka (10)
- 15 To achieve something, you ____ it (4)

- 16 Eye ailment (4)
- 18 Some of them are Grimm (5,5)
- **21** Shaft key (6)
- 22 Chosen as a career (4,4)
- **24** Formerly a Norman Manor in today's Derbyshire (8)
- 25 Tooth covering (6)
- **26** Salome composer (7)
- **27** Guided (7)

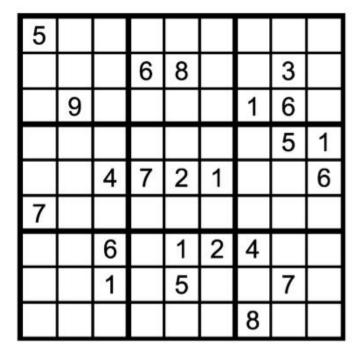
Crossword

Test your general knowledge.

DOWN

- 2 Wear away (5)
- 3 Polar wrecker (7)
- 4 Established form of words(7)
- 6 Queensland, from Sydney (2,5)
- 7 Picked democratically (5,2)
- 8 Adaptable (9)
- **10** Eavesdropping (9,2)
- 14 Thoughtless state (9)
- 17 African state on the Red Sea (7)
- 18 Elaborate Hispanic parties (7)
- 19 New York baseball team (7)
- **20** Energise (7)
- 23 Plural of this (5)





Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: To win, you have to put a number from 1 to 9 in each outlined section so that:

- Every horizontal row and vertical column contains all nine numerals (1-9) without repeating any of them;
- Each of the outlined sections has all nine numerals, none repeated.

IF YOU SOLVE IT WITHIN:

15 minutes, you're a true expert

30 minutes, you're no slouch

60 minutes or more, maybe numbers aren't your thing

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Spot The Difference

There are 12 differences. Can you find them?



Complete The Set

Which of the four options given completes the set?















Test Your General Knowledge

- 1. The Philippines declared independence from what country in 1898? 1 point
- 2. What large semiaquatic mammal was once thought to be a herbivore, but sometimes eats meat? 1 point
- 3. In what country was writer and theologian C.S. Lewis born? 2 points
- 4. What European country's government has had more than 65 cabinets since 1945? 1 point
- **5.** Cristiano Ronaldo was the first football player to score in five World Cups. True or false? 1 point
- **6.** What is the only mammal that can fly? 1 point
- 7. What beloved 1813 novel was originally titled First *Impressions?* 2 points
- 8. Which zodiac sign in Western astrology is born in the first half of January?

1 point

- **9.** What computer component weighed more than a ton when it was first developed by IBM employee Reynold B. Johnson in 1956? 1 point
- **10.** On January 1, 1877, Queen Victoria became the Empress of which British colony? A: Malaysia; B: Australia; C: India. 2 points
- **11.** Pop singers Madonna, Rihanna and Beyoncé all perform under their real first names. True or false? 1 point
- **12.** A Motorola engineer performed the first of what in 1973, marking a major event in the evolution of the telephone? 1 point

13. What hot, gaseous celestial body can fit more than

> one million planet Earths inside it?

1 point

14. What two countries have the most Michelinstarred restaurants in the world? 2 points



16-20 Gold medal

11-15 Silver medal 6-10 Bronze medal

0-5 Wooden spoon

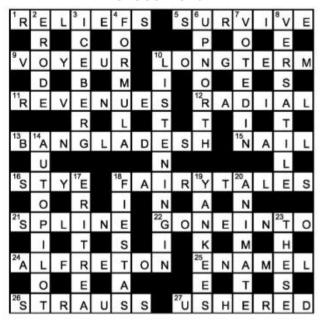
PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

14. France and Japan. 15. Mexico, by Italian chef Caesar Cardini. 10. C. India. 11. False. Rihanna is Robyn Fenty's middle name. 12. Mobile phone call. 13. The sun. the Women's World Cup in 2019. 6. Bat. 7. Pride and Prejudice. 8. Capricorn. 9. Hard drive. ANSWERS: 1. Spain. 2. Hippo. 3. Ireland. 4. Italy. 5. False. It was Brazil's Marta Vieira da Silva at

PUZZLE ANSWERS

From Page 106

Crossword



Sudoku

5	6	3	1	9	7	2	4	8
1	2	7	6	8	4	5	3	9
4	9	8	2	3	5	1	6	7
6	8	2	9	4	3	7	5	1
3	5	4	7	2	1	9	8	6
7	1	9	5	6	8	3	2	4
8	7	6	3	1	2	4	9	5
2	4	1	8	5	9	6	7	3
					6			

Spot The Difference



Complete The Set

Which of the four options given completes the set?





Party Time

Dress up your vocabulary with these festive terms

By Beth Shillibeer

- **1. shindig** A: barbeque. B: large, lively party. C: country dance.
- **2. sideshow** A: small show within a larger exhibition. B: unofficial entertainers, as in buskers. C: rigged game at a carnival.
- **3. zeal** A: sleight of hand. B: enthusiasm in pursuit of something. C: musical instrument similar to a zither.
- **4. ebullient** A: crowded and noisy. B: waning energy due to exhaustion. C: cheerful and full of energy.
- **5. symposium** A: flower festival. B: gathering that features an exchange of ideas. C: music festival.
- **6. marquee** A: large tent set up for an outdoor event. B: seating area for dignitaries. C: carnival vendor.
- **7. hippodrome** A: oversized float in a parade. B: giant balloon, often animal-shaped. C: venue for equestrian events.

- **8. dudelsack** A: German bagpipe. B: Bavarian strudel. C: clown pants.
- **9. gilly** A: carnival slang for patrons. B: circus master of ceremonies. C: truck used to transport circus equipment.
- **10. soirée** A: puppet show. B: mystery prize bag. C: formal social gathering.
- **11. saturnalia** A: stargazing party. B: wild revelry or indulgence. C: victor's wreath or crown.
- **12. bazaar** A: marketplace. B: strange. C: stringed instrument.
- **13. feria** A: Spanish market festival. B: costume designer. C: parade horse master.
- **14. mela** A: ceremonial dress. B: type of Indian dance. C: religious festival.
- **15. rave** A: dance party. B: cherry-blossom festival. C: annual festival of the sea.

READER'S DIGEST

Answers

- **1. shindig** B: large, lively party. Marie's 30th birthday promised to be a real shindig, as it coincided with the folk music festival.
- **2. sideshow** A: small show within a larger exhibition. Although the rodeo was the main event, Jorvak preferred the sideshows.
- **3. zeal** B: enthusiasm in pursuit of something. The dogs raced over the obstacles with zeal at the World Agility Open.
- 4. ebullient C: cheerful and full of energy. At the Highland Games, the Scottish reelers were so ebullient that they inspired the crowd to dance, too.
- **5. symposium** B: gathering that features an exchange of ideas. Band teachers and students from all over the country shared ideas about performance at the annual symposium.
- **6.** marquee A: large tent set up for an outdoor event. The children watched excitedly through the fence as the marquee went up.
- **7.** hippodrome C: venue for equestrian events. Pierre always attended the prestigious Prix d'Été race held at the Trois-Rivières Hippodrome.
- **8.** dudelsack A: German bagpipe. The dudelsack players made their

- way through the streets of Schleife, Germany, during the International Bagpipe Festival.
- **9.** gilly C: truck used to transport circus equipment. Once the gillies were loaded up, the convoy began driving to the next town.
- 10. soirée C: formal social gathering. Jack attended a glamorous soirée at the ambassador's residence last night.
- **11. saturnalia** B: wild revelry or indulgence. Thomas enjoyed some saturnalia after finishing a big contract at work.
- **12.** bazaar A: marketplace. Emira appreciated seeing all the handmade items for sale while wandering through the bazaar.
- **13. feria** A: Spanish market festival. Jules booked his trip to Spain for April so he could see the Spring Feria in Seville.
- **14. mela** C: religious festival. Ravi was excited to join millions at the Kumbh Mela.
- **15. rave** A: dance party. Locals have been horrified by the flocks of tourists heading to their town for all-night raves featuring electronic dance music.

VOCABULARY RATINGS

5-9: Fair

10-12: Good

13-15: Word Power Wizard



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