

Inside Hillcrest

– Connecting Neighbors to Neighbors –



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HOLLYWOOD, FLORIDA

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A Time to Laugh



Happy New Year! 2017 may be the year where keeping our sense of humor is a challenge. We are in uncharted territory when it comes to our government and seeing foreign as well as domestic acts of terror hitting closer and closer to home. Sometimes it is hard to keep our spirits up when we see what is going on in the world, whether it directly affects us or not. Unfortunately, untreated mental illness is playing a bigger and bigger part in the violence we have seen of late. The Catch-22 is that mental illness is a disease that many times is not treated until the victim victimizes the innocent.

For everyday garden variety bad things, the one thing that those perpetrators have in common is a lack of a healthy sense of humor. This issue is not for them. January is one of the two months of the year that we print the funny and sentimental stories sent to IH by our readers throughout the year.

THANK YOU MICHAEL BOGEN

This is also the time of year when many of our buildings are electing new Boards. Michael Bogen, an Attorney and writer for the Sun Sentinel has graciously allowed us to reprint his annual New Year's column started by his father Mark Bogen (now a Broward County Commissioner) many years ago and tweaked a bit as the "nature of the beast" changes. In his email, he says, "I receive lots of emails on my "New Year's" column that my father, Mark, started years ago when he wrote the Condo/HOA column. It seems everything thinks the column was written just for their association :)" Indeed. See the article on page 2.

What I like about the column is that it is a balance between admonishing bad board members but also those annoying unit owners that we can't un-elect. #6 lives in my building. As someone who knows most of the board members in Hillcrest, Number 2 on the list is the most fitting and should be practiced routinely. If you don't think so, then see #3. And a big CONGRATS to the buildings who no longer have the Graeae on their board. (Google it.)

THE SERMON

Yes, we have 24 different boards in 24 different buildings and not all do what

is right. You can be in a building with the greatest board and in the blink of an eye, the wrong people get elected (or appointed) and life as you knew it takes a turn for the worse. No matter how many times we write articles about right and wrong behavior, some boards still think they can get away with anything. It is very expensive for residents to hire an attorney and go after a wayward board who essentially can use the owner's own money against them. Bad attorneys are the key – avoid those with the initials SS or TT. Didn't matter what illegal or immoral course the board wanted to pursue, as long as these two guys were collecting a fee, they would take on a losing proposition.

TOP FIVE BOARD NO-NOS CURRENTLY PRACTICED IN HILLCREST

1. Charging more than \$100 per person for an application fee (max for a married couple is \$100). No, you cannot call it a transaction fee or interview fee and tack on an extra \$50-\$100. It is true that background checks for non-citizens cost more but until the statute changes, \$100 is the max. And yes, you need to refund the extra money if asked.
2. Persecuting owners who have documented service animals. Even emotional service animals are protected. Some the outlandish "rules" that a few buildings have come up with cost them dearly when they lost a lawsuit. However as one who is desperately allergic to animal dander, I think that pet owners should voluntarily restrict their use of the laundry equipment to a designated washer and especially dryer as a courtesy to those who suffer from allergies. And if your dog constantly barks, it is NOT a service animal – shame on you.



Building A Better Community

3. Over-using the building attorney for personal agendas. Condo attorneys are there to review contracts and advise on legal issues, not to punish owners who piss off a

board member. Most owners are reasonable people and for most "violations", a simple phone call from a board member who is a nice person will do the trick. Dashing off a letter; or worse, paying an attorney to send a letter without even speaking to the owner, is the coward's way out – and usually the coward in question has a mean streak.

4. Changing by-laws that do not contribute to the building welfare. When Devious Don and the Three Queens ran one of the buildings, many unit owner rights were systematically taken away and to this day, the owners can't get them back. Be VERY careful about voting for by-law changes that restrict resident's rights and enjoyment of their own home under the guise of stopping alleged abuse of the current by-law.

5. Rejecting buyers based on unreasonable criteria or "assumptions". If you are not abiding by the letter of the Fair Credit Reporting Act, you are opening yourself up to a costly lawsuit if a buyer is denied and the board does not tell them where the info was obtained, how the decision was made or even how to fix errors on their credit report. PS: Expecting a buyer to risk 10% or 20% up front for a purchase is NOT the intent of the minimum down payment by-law. The reason for minimum down payments in our by-laws is to be sure a new owner has enough equity to discourage maintenance payment delinquency. Recently, a buyer who took ill and could not complete the sale lost close to \$10,000 because technically he failed to perform and the seller had the right to keep his down payment. If you want to be sure a buyer has the proper down payment, ask for a copy of the Mortgage Commitment before the interview.

IN CONCLUSION:

Condo living is not that much of a challenge. As long as you can live with the restrictions necessary to make communal living pleasant for the majority, it is a great way to live. Little or no upkeep headaches, 99% of Hillcresters are super nice, our buildings are solid, safe, beautiful and well maintained; and Hillcrest units are spacious AND undervalued... for the moment. Don't take Hillcrest living for granted. There is only one Hidden Jewel in Hollywood, and you are one of the lucky ones.



My father, Mark Bogen, who wrote this column for several years, started the "New Year's column" with the following tips for all involved in community association living:

After writing about Florida Condo/HOA Law for the past several years, my annual New Year's Resolutions to all unit owners, managers and board members is my favorite column. Sometimes Florida Condo and HOA Law and Chapter 718 or Chapter 720 of the Florida Statutes needs to be put aside for some common sense [re]solutions. I hope you will agree with some of the following New Year's Resolutions:

1. For those board members and managers who spend their time looking for unit owner violations – get a life.
2. Try saying thank you to those board members that volunteer their time.
3. If you think things are so bad, volunteer your time and help out.
4. Before running to a lawyer – try working it out – it's cheaper.
5. The management company takes direction from the board, not owners.
6. To the one owner who always has to speak at every meeting – please zip it.
7. To the board member who thinks he or she can do whatever you want – vote him or her out.
8. Before signing a contract – let your attorney review it.
9. Rules and Governing Documents are not meant to be broken.
10. If you do not like following rules – do not live in an association.
11. If you do not like your fellow neighbor or owner – can you pretend to?
12. To the vendors who want you to sign a contract immediately – say goodbye.
13. To those who like loud music and T.V. – shut your windows and get headphones.
14. To smokers who smoke in their units – shut your windows.
15. Before you defame someone – make sure you are prepared to be sued.
16. Don't just ask a vendor for references – call some of them.
17. To the person who always disrupts a meeting – give it a rest.
18. If you are speaking for more than 5 minutes – ask yourself if anyone cares.
19. To the "Condo Commando" – you need to be recalled – kicked off the board.
20. If you came to Florida to retire – try acting like it.
21. If an owner is violating the documents – try first sending a nice letter rather than one from an attorney.
22. To those owners who think everyone on the board is getting a kick-back – just admit it that you want a piece of the pie.
23. To the part time owner who thinks he or she can do whatever they want – move back up north where you came from.
24. To the board member who will not let unit owners see the official records – sooner or later you will get caught.
25. To the board member who uses association money for their own personal use – get used to living behind bars.
26. A manager works for the board not as your personal slave.
27. When you are rudely complaining to the association manager – do you know what he or she is thinking about you while you are talking?
28. Remember, sometimes the way you say it is more important than what you say.



FRED THE BIKER





An Arizona Highway Patrol officer stops a Harley for traveling faster than the posted speed limit, so he asks the biker his name. 'Fred,' he replies. 'Fred what?' the officer asks. 'Just Fred,' the man responds.

The biker replies, 'It's a long story, so stay with me.' I was born Fred Johnson. I studied hard and got good grades. When I got older, I realized that I wanted to be a doctor. I went through college, medical school, internship, residency, and finally got my degree, so I was Fred Johnson, MD. After a while I got bored being a doctor, so I decided to go back to school. Dentistry was my dream! Got all the way through School, got my degree, so then I was Fred Johnson, MD, DDS. Got bored doing dentistry, so I started fooling around with my assistant and she gave me VD, so now I was Fred Johnson, MD, DDS, with VD.'

The officer is in a good mood, thinks he might just give the biker a break, and write him out a warning instead of a ticket. The officer then presses him for the last name. The man tells him that he used to have a last name but lost it. The officer thinks that he has a nut case on his hands but plays along with it. 'Tell me, Fred, how did you lose your last name?'

Well, the ADA found out about the VD, so they took away my DDS. Then I was Fred Johnson, MD, with VD. Then the AMA found out about the ADA taking away my DDS because of the VD, so they took away my MD leaving me as Fred Johnson with VD. Then the VD took away my Johnson, so now I am Just Fred.'

The officer walked away in tears.



Reality Bites

Money can't buy happiness, but it keeps the kids in touch!

My therapist said that my narcissism causes me to misread social situations. I'm pretty sure he was hitting on me.

Denny's has a slogan, "If it's your birthday, the meal is on us." If you're in Denny's and it's your birthday, your life sucks!

The pharmacist asked me my birth date again today. I'm pretty sure she's going to buy me something.

I can't understand why women are okay that JC Penny has an older women's clothing line named, "Sag Harbor."

The reason Mayberry was so peaceful and quiet was because nobody was married. Andy, Aunt Bea, Barney, Floyd, Howard, Goober, Gomer, Sam, Earnest T Bass, Helen, Thelma Lou, Clara and, of course, Opie were all single. The only married person was Otis, and he stayed drunk.



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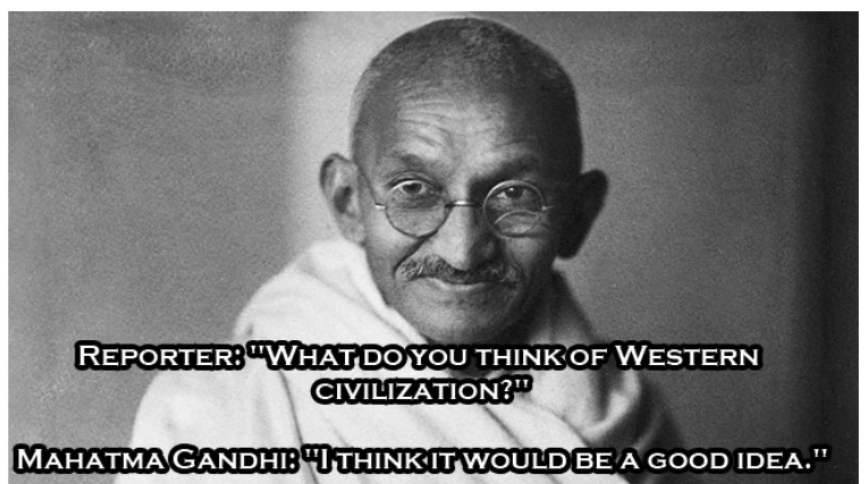
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Death by Garter Snake



Snakes also known as Garter Snakes (*Thamnophis sirtalis*) can be dangerous. Yes, grass snakes, not rattlesnakes. Here's the story:

A couple in Sweetwater, Texas, had a lot of potted plants. During a recent cold spell, the wife was bringing a lot of them indoors to protect them from a possible freeze. It turned out that a little green garden grass snake was hidden in one of the plants. When it had warmed up, it slithered out and the wife saw it go under the sofa. She let out a very loud scream. Her husband (who was taking a shower) ran out into the living room naked to see what the problem was. She told him there was a snake under the sofa. He got down on the floor on his hands and knees to look for it. About that time the family dog came and cold-nosed him on the behind. He thought the snake had bitten him, so he screamed and fell over on the floor. His wife thought he had had a heart attack, so she covered him up, told him to lie still and

called an ambulance. The attendants rushed in, would not listen to his protests, loaded him on the stretcher, and started carrying him out. About that time, the snake came out from under the sofa and the Emergency Medical Technician saw it and dropped his end of the stretcher. That's how the man broke his leg.

The wife still had the problem of the snake in the house, so she called on a neighbor who volunteered to capture the snake. He armed himself with a rolled-up newspaper and began poking under the couch. Soon he decided it was gone and told the woman, who sat down on the sofa in relief. As she sat back and relaxed, thanking him for his efforts, her hand dangled in between the cushions where she felt the snake wriggling around. She screamed and fainted. The snake rushed back under the sofa. The neighbor man, seeing her lying there passed out, tried to use CPR to revive her.

The neighbor's wife, who had just returned from shopping at the grocery store, saw her husband's mouth on the woman's mouth and slammed her husband in the back of the head with a bag of canned goods, knocking him out and cutting his scalp to a point where it needed stitches.

The noise woke the woman from her dead faint and she saw her neighbor lying on the floor with his wife bending over him, so she assumed that the snake had bitten him. She went to the kitchen and got a small bottle of whiskey, and began pouring it down the man's throat.

By now, the police had arrived. (Breathe here...). They saw the unconscious man,

smelled the whiskey, and assumed that a drunken fight had occurred. They were about to arrest them all, when the women tried to explain how it all happened over a little garden snake!

The police called an ambulance, which took away the neighbor and his sobbing wife. Now, the little snake again crawled out from under the sofa and one of the policemen drew his gun and fired at it. He missed the snake and hit the leg of the end table. The table fell over, the lamp on it shattered and, as the bulb broke, it started a fire in the drapes. The other policeman tried to beat out the flames, and fell through the window into the yard on top of the family dog who, startled, jumped out and raced into the street, where an oncoming car swerved to avoid it and smashed into the parked police car.

Meanwhile, neighbors saw the burning drapes and called in the fire department. The firemen had started raising the fire ladder when they were halfway down the street. The rising ladder tore out the overhead wires, put out the power, and disconnected the telephones in a ten-square city block area (but they did get the house fire out).

Time passed! Both men were discharged from the hospital, the house was repaired, the dog came home, the police acquired a new car and all was right with their world.

A few days later, while the couple was watching TV, the weatherman announced that a cold front was moving in. The wife asked her husband if he thought they should bring in their plants for the night. And that's when he shot her.





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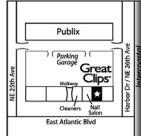
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The Back Nine



You know, time has a way of moving quickly and catching you unaware of the passing years. It seems just yesterday that I was young, just married and embarking on my new life with my mate. Yet in a way, it seems like eons ago, and I wonder where all the years went. I know that I lived them all. I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams.

But, here it is, the back nine of my life, and it catches me by surprise! How did I get here so fast? Where did the years go and where did my youth go?

I remember well seeing older people through the years and thinking that those older people were years away from me and that I

was only on the first hole and the back nine was so far off that I could not fathom it or imagine fully what it would be like.

But, here it is, my friends are retired and getting gray, they move slower and I see an older person now. Some are in better and some worse shape than me but, I see the great change. Not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant but like me, their age is beginning to show and we are now those older folks that we used to see and never thought we'd become.

And so now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do things that I wish I had done but never did!! But, at least I know, that though

I'm on the back nine, and I'm not sure how long it will last, this I know; when it's over on this earth, it's over. A new adventure will begin! Yes, I have regrets. There are things I wish I hadn't done and things I should have done, but indeed there are many things I'm happy to have done. It's all in a lifetime.

Your kids are becoming you but your grandchildren are perfect! Going out is good but coming home is better. You forget names but it's OK because some people forgot they even knew you. The things you used to enjoy doing, you aren't as interested in anymore. But it is OK because you really don't care that you aren't as interested. And you finally realize that no matter what, you are never going to be great at the game of golf.

So, if you're not on the back nine yet, let me remind you that it will be here faster than you think. At this point, whatever you would like to accomplish in your life, do it now! Don't put things off too long, life goes by quickly. Do what you can today as you can never be sure whether you're on the back nine or not.

There is no guarantee that you will see all the seasons of your life. So live for today and say all the things that you want your loved ones to remember; you can only hope that they appreciate and love you for all the things that you have done for them in all the years past!

"Life" is a gift to you. The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after. Make it a fantastic one. LIVE IT WELL! ENJOY TODAY! DO SOMETHING FUN! BE HAPPY! HAVE A GREAT DAY! Remember "It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver."

May you have a Happy and Healthy 2017!



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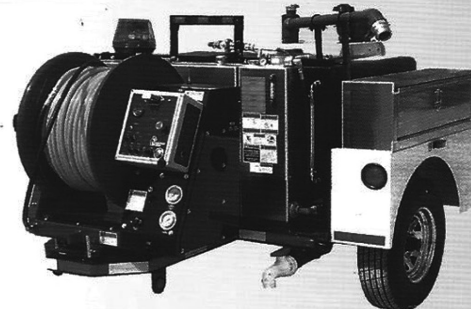
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Fable of the Porcupine



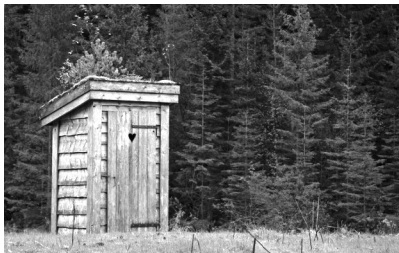
It was the coldest winter ever. Many animals died because of the cold. The porcupines, realizing the situation, decided to group together to keep warm. This way they covered and protected themselves; but the quills of each one wounded their closest companions.

Wisely, they decided to go back to being together. They learned to live with the little wounds caused by the close relationship with their companions in order to receive the heat that came from the others. This way they were able to survive.

After a while, they decided to distance themselves one from the other and they began to die, alone and frozen. So they had to make a choice: either accept the quills of their companions or disappear from the Earth.

The best relationship is not the one that brings together perfect people, but when each individual learns to live with the imperfections of others and can admire the other person's good qualities. The moral of the story is: Just learn to live with the pricks in your life.

TAKE ME OUT TO THE WOODSHED



Once there was a little boy that lived in the country. They had to use an outhouse, and the little boy hated it because it was hot in the summer and cold in the winter and stank all the time. The outhouse was sitting on the bank of a creek and the boy determined that one day he would push that outhouse into the creek. One day after a spring rain, the creek was swollen so the little boy decided today was the day to push the outhouse

into the creek. So he got a large stick and started pushing. Finally, the outhouse toppled into the creek and floated away. That night his dad told him they were going to the woodshed after supper. Knowing that meant a spanking, the little boy asked why.

The dad replied, "Someone pushed the outhouse into the creek today. It was you, wasn't it son?" The boy answered yes. Then he thought a moment and said, "Dad, I read in school today that George Washington chopped down a cherry tree and didn't get into trouble because he told the truth." The dad replied, "Well, son, George Washington's father wasn't in the cherry tree."

From The Book of Revelations

The frequency of sexual activity of senior males depends on where they were born. Statistics just released from Statistics Canada and The United Nations B.O.H. Team, revealing that: North American men between 60 and 80 years of age, will on average, have sex two to five times per month, (and a small number a lot more), whereas Japanese men, in exactly the same age group, will have sex only once or twice per year if they are lucky.

This has come as very upsetting news to both me and most of my buddies at the golf club, as none of us had any idea that we were Japanese.

Vinny and Sal

Vinny and Sal are out in the woods hunting when suddenly Sal grabs his chest and falls to the ground. He doesn't seem to be breathing; his eyes are rolled back in his head.

Vinny whips out his cell phone and calls 911. He tells the operator, "I think Sal is dead! What should I do?"

The operator, in a calm soothing voice says, "Just take it easy and follow my instructions. First, let's make sure he's dead."

There is a silence. And then a gunshot is heard. Vinny's voice comes back on the line, "Okay... Now what?"



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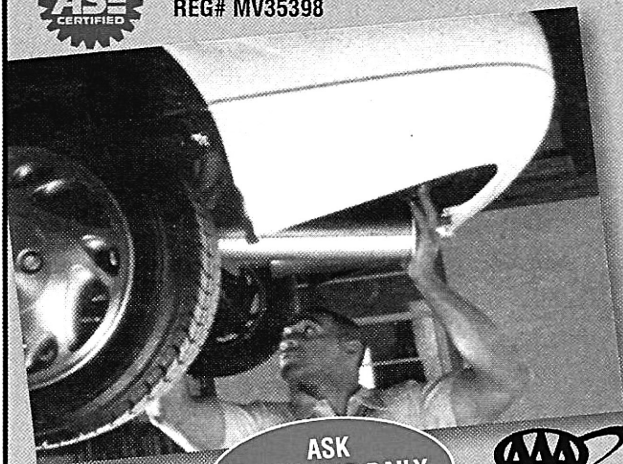
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The Ambidextrous Golfer



A group of men live and die for their Saturday morning golf game. One transferred to another city and they're lost without him. A new woman joins their Club. When she hears the guys talking about their golf round, she says, "I played on my college's golf team. I was pretty good. Mind if I join you next week?"

No one wants to say 'yes', but they're on the spot. Finally, one man says, "Okay, but we start at 6:30 am." He figures the early tee-time will discourage her. The woman says this may be a problem, and asks if she can be up to 15 minutes late. They roll their eyes, but say, "Okay." She's there at 6:30 am sharp, and beats all of them with an eye-opening 2-under-par round.

She's fun and pleasant, and the guys are impressed. They congratulate her and invite her back the next week. She smiles, and says, "I'll be there at 6:30 or 6:45." The next week she again

shows up at 6:30 sharp. Only this time, she plays left-handed. The three guys are incredulous as she still beats them with an even-par round, despite playing with her off-hand.

They're totally amazed. They can't figure her out. She's very pleasant and a gracious winner. They invite her back again, but each man harbors a burning desire to beat her.

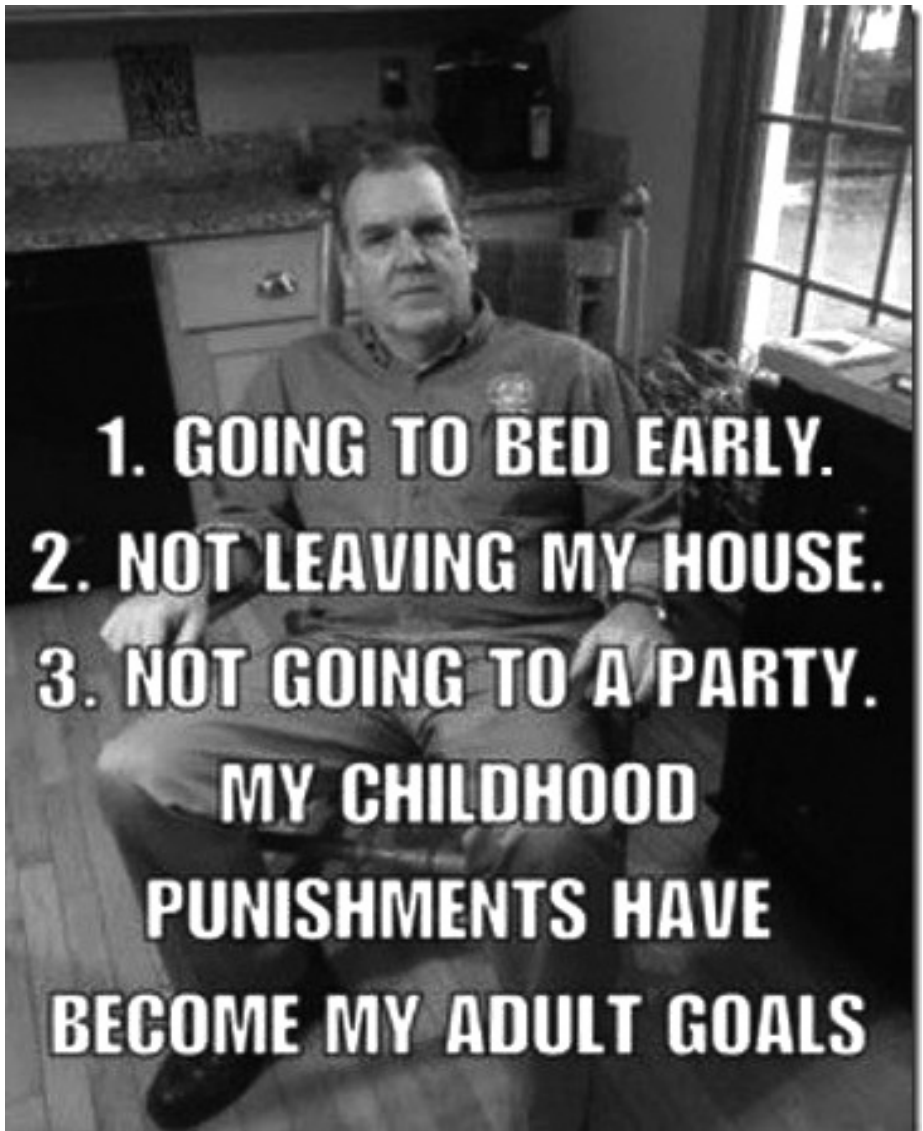
The third week, she's 15 minutes late, which irritates the guys. This week she plays right-handed, and narrowly beats all three of them. The men grumble that her late arrival is petty gamesmanship on her part. However, she's so charming and complimentary of their strong play, they can't hold a grudge. This woman is a riddle no one can figure out. They have a couple of beers in the Clubhouse, and finally, one of the men asks her, "How do you decide if you're going to golf right-handed or left-handed?"

The lady blushes, and grins. "When my Dad taught me to play golf, I learned I was ambidextrous," she replies. "I like to switch back and forth. "When I got married after college, I discovered my husband always sleeps in the nude. From then on, I developed a silly habit. Right before I leave in the morning for golf practice, I pull the covers off him. If his willie points to the right, I golf right-handed; if it points to the left, I golf left-handed."

The guys think this is hysterical. Astonished at this bizarre information, one of the guys says, "What if it's pointing straight up?" She says, "Then I'm fifteen minutes late."



what kind of tea is that??
i don't know. i found it at my grandson's room!



State of The Market - JANUARY 2017

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Cindy "Momma" Abraham

Is the Selling Machine; voted Realtor of the Year (2012/2013) and Hollywood's Businesswoman of the Year for 2016. In a market where 40% of contracts never make it to the closing table – usually because of the inspection or appraisal - Cindy will take you by the hand from listing to closing and be there every step of the way. Cindy pays for an inspection right up front to nip those issues in the bud and attends EVERY appraisal to be sure you get top dollar.



Brian "Million Dollar Man" Gaiefsky

Gaiefsky is the Master of the Deal. He can price, show, stage and negotiate top dollar for your property. Conversely, because his forte in construction and the psychology of selling, he is also great at finding, assessing and negotiating properties for buyers. His catchphrase is "I love it when a deal comes together." Whichever side he is on, everyone wins. Brian will get you to "Love Where You Live".



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Bryan Carpenter "Mr. Transaction"

Is the Man behind the Scenes. He is the guy who keeps everything and everyone on track. Real Estate transactions are a series of deadlines and according to the thesaurus a deadline is another word for closing date. When you get on the A Team train, Bryan does the driving.

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The Kitchen Korner

by Cindy Abraham

I'm not going to pretend this one doesn't take some work (lots of stirring) but it is fun to make and off the chain delicious. The other caveat is that you need to let it sit overnight and let the flavors meld. If you can't find crawfish tails, you can use lobster meat. I separated the ingredients so you know what goes into each step of the process. Making the roux is the hardest part and takes the longest time. I save my bacon grease (the other up-side to Brian's Chocolate Covered Bacon) but you can use canola oil in a pinch.

- Add broth, bouillon and all seasonings (except file powder) and simmer for 30 minutes. Add gumbo file 15 minutes before serving and remove bay leaves.

- Add the seafood just enough to heat through and serve over white rice. Better yet, let it sit overnight in the fridge. Enjoy your taste of NOLA!

NEW ORLEANS SEAFOOD GUMBO

- 4 servings



The Roux:

½ cup flour
1/3 cup bacon grease

1 lb. shrimp
1 lb. crawfish tails
½ lb. crabmeat
½ lb. andouille sausage chopped into chunks

1/4 cup chopped carrots
1/4 cup chopped celery w/leaves
½ cup chopped onion
2 minced garlic cloves

14.5oz. can crushed tomatoes
2 bay leaves
½ TBS sugar
2 TBS tabasco
1 TBS creole seasoning
1/2 tsp dried thyme
1 TBS Beef Bouillon base or powder
½ TBS Worcestershire Sauce
½ TBS Red Pepper Flakes
8 cups Seafood, Beef or Chicken Stock

1 tsp Gumbo File Powder (found it at Publix for \$1.99) or call me and I will give you some.

- Make your simple roux by whisking your flour and bacon grease together in a large, heavy based saucepan over medium heat to form your smooth brown roux. Whisk constantly for 40 - 45 minutes; or until your roux achieves a dark mahogany color.

- While the roux is cooking and you are stirring constantly, chop celery, carrots and onions. Mince garlic. Roughly chop andouille sausage.

- Add the vegetables and sausage to the roux. Simmer over medium stirring constantly for about 10 minutes or until veggies are tender.




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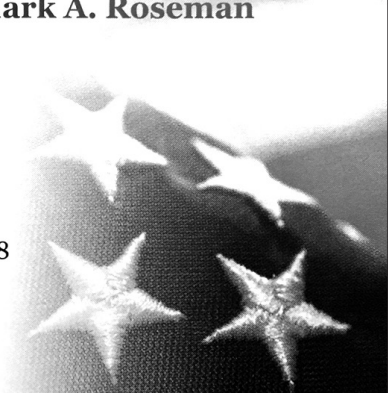
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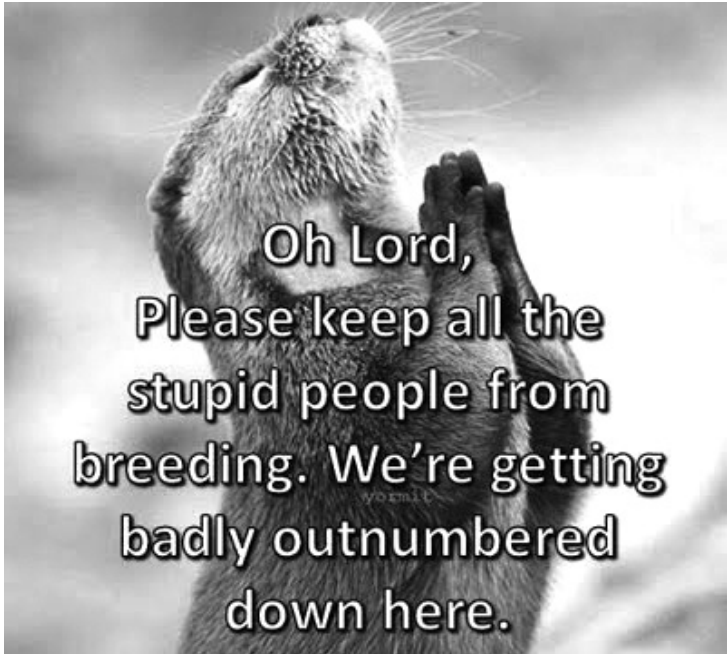
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January Report:

Resolutions Resolved

One of my friends at the YMCA reminded me of the paradox of the pre-and post- January 1 period. For about three weeks prior to New Year's Day, most gyms are rather quiet. People are shopping, traveling, whatever. The three weeks after the New Year are the busiest times for gyms because everyone is living out their resolutions to get in shape. By February 1, things get back to normal.

CRA/Commission December meetings

There was only one meeting in December, the first real one since before the election. And, as we used to say, it was a doozy. The CRA meeting began at 10:00, followed by the Commission meeting at 1:00 pm. We didn't finish until 8:45 pm. Here are some of the highlights:

Sold. The former Holocaust Documentation Center sale was completed. The property will become a space for technology startups to work and grow. This is a perfect fit for the downtown business model. It will bring people--mostly younger-- to Harrison Street. The Buro Group operates several of these co-working facilities. Sale price was \$1,150,000.

Signed a \$224,000 contract for pressure cleaning of the Broadwalk. Under discussion is an agreement with the downtown businesses ensuring all downtown sidewalks are cleaned comprehensively, rather than leaving it up to the individual merchants, which, obviously, has not worked.

Approved. Both the CRA and the Commission (same people, separate agreements) executed a purchase and sale agreement with Pinnacle Development for creation of a 120-unit senior housing community on Adams Street. The property was purchased in the '90's with a HUD loan, but during that period of economic ups and downs, the city was unable to develop it. Now we're just waiting for Pinnacle to obtain the tax increment financing enabling the project to go forward. There is good community support for this. It's also Pinnacle's forte, plus one of Pinnacle's latest projects on 6th just east of the bridge in Ft. Lauderdale, is terrific. Quality work.

Approved a purchase order for \$158,000 for dune restoration at Jefferson Street. Dunes are a critical element in our efforts to make the beach sustainable. We have also asked the City and CRA to find resources to improve other dunes, and build more.

You passed it. On November 8, Florida residents approved Medical Marijuana. While the State has not issued rules and regulations, we felt it appropriate and necessary draw a line on how many dispensaries will be allowed (2), and where (industrial areas), as well as distance separations. While the State may issue conflicting regulations, our actions still preserve some of the city's grandfathering rights.

Finally hired an auditing firm for \$695,000 annually, although the fee is negotiable.

Appointed Commissioner Traci Callari Vice Mayor for 2017. While the position rotates annually, it is still an honor and Traci will do well.

Leased 14 vehicles from Enterprise for use by the Code Compliance department. This unique program will save money and allow for replacement vehicles every two years. These pickups replace a motley collection of vehicles that includes a few obsolete former police vehicles.

Commissioner Comments

I brought forward the following comments:

Established a reserved time slot, 10:00 am on the second Commission Meeting each month. This time will be available for workshops, executive sessions or other important matters that the Mayor or City Manager may schedule, enabling us to have guaranteed time for these important activities, rather than forcing staff to coordinate the calendars of seven people, which is a lot like herding cats.

Asked for the matter of vacation homes to be elevated to evaluate what additional actions the City can take to control this burgeoning industry. We will need to understand what the State and Feds are allowing us to do. I am concerned when police make four calls to a single location in one evening, for noise, drugs, etc, yet are unable to shut these places down despite the inconvenience it causes to our residential neighborhoods. We got the necessary support and will follow up. District 4 near 37th and North Hills.

Asked for clarity on how many votes it takes during Commission Comments to direct staff to act. Lots of kick back from my colleagues, so will have to continue educating myself--and them.

Something I will be taking about with the City Manager is the application of more common sense in helping people through crazy situations. These ordinances are clear, but they also make residents scratch their heads at the absence of common sense. Sometimes, not all the time! You know what I mean.

HOW'S JOSH DOING?

Mayor Levy is doing very well. He is active, participates well in meetings and is reaching out to our neighbors and partners to establish connections. This is going to be fun.

LITERARY CORNER

I finished Hamilton (finally). Seems like it took me as long to finish as it did Hamilton to live his life. But don't get me wrong: it is a fascinating book and very relevant to today. Like the Electoral college, for example. And, broadened my knowledge of many of our founders. The music is now on my tablet, just waiting for the show to be at Performing Arts Center. Maybe 2018.

Now reading two very different books. War on Cops (MacDonald) is a strong view of the recent violence we are seeing and how police are impacted. And No Man's Land (Baldacci). One of my favorite writers--and John Puller is back! This is a fun and fast read.

NEW DOWNTOWN

At the former FACE is Pesce and Pasta, 2022 Hlwd Blvd. An elegant restaurant with a diverse, although somewhat small menu. Great for a date night. Also, Macaroon, 1919 Hollywood Blvd. Not the gooey, sticky macaroons that come to mind. These are "French style" I am told.

CHARTER REVIEW

This important process takes place every six years. A citizen board recommends changes to the City Charter. Watch for more information in the next issue of Horizons, which should be out this month.

ELECTION CLOSEOUT

Once again, thanks for all your support. I have closed out the Campaign Account by contributing to the Greater Hollywood Family YMCA for their Annual Scholarship Campaign.

Everyone, have a healthy year.

“I believe”

by Aruna Latva BK Publications, London UK

Submitted by Etta Stevens

I believe that there is a better world coming. And for that we must work very hard! Yes dears! Very hard! We can't just sit back and watch in ignorance or helplessness. Just as the dark forces are gathering their strength, so too, we 'light workers' have to gather our strength and forge ahead.

We have to do our best to live by the virtues that we so seek in the world. If we seek peace, we need to live by it. If we seek honesty or trustworthiness, we need to practice that. We must keep on moving forward with truth and integrity in our lives, and not give into our weaknesses or engage in conflict or hatred. These are the very energies that the 'dark force' takes its strength from. We have to starve them now.

I believe there is a God. Despite so many rebuttals against the concept of a Supreme Being, He does exist and I very much believe He is there for me when I need Him. However, it's very easy to blame God for all that is going wrong in the world. But do you really think that God, as a Father would want to hurt us or deprive us of happiness and His love? Think again. If we want to blame Him, it's because we need someone to blame, because we do not want to take responsibility for our actions individually or collectively. And when things are going wrong, we would prefer that God comes along as our savior, to fix all our problems, pretty much like the gadgets in our lives – click a button and get what you want. I feel, He wants us to stand up and be who we are.

I believe that we all have goodness inherent within us. Sometimes it's hard to see that in a criminal, but let us try to regress to the time before he became a criminal. Was he born that way? Of course not. There is a saint in every sinner; let us look to that saintliness. Every soul is intrinsically and naturally virtuous. We know that because that is what we are all normally drawn to; happiness, honesty, kindness, love, peace etc. So, let us look at the original soul in front of us, and not focus on the actions that are those of someone who has lost his way. By doing this we may even be able to remind this soul of his original truth.

I believe that we all have potential to make a change. There are people who just give up too easily. Or they believe that positive change can only be actioned by the rich, famous or powerful.

Yet, once we wake up to the hidden potential of the soul, we realize that we are capable of doing wonders. Everything has a reason for being, just look around you. Nothing exists for itself. Trees, rivers, plants –everything has a purpose. In the same way once we wake up to what it is each one of us is here to do, then we can change our life and change the world. For this, we have to be awake, aware and attentive.

I believe in the power of the collective. If we create a critical mass in consciousness, then we can create ripples in the world. Just as in the story of the hundredth monkey, as more and more people become aware, a tipping point of vibrational frequency is reached then the world can change very easily! In the way that we are drawn to do bad things in the company of bad people even if we have decided not to, so, in the same way if we are in a very high energy, others will be lifted into that higher vibration, closer to their true, positive nature.

I believe that within us we all know the truth of who we are. We just need to spend time with ourselves and get to know our true selves. We need to become self-empowered and self-reliant. Then we need to spread our light into the world.

It's time... To believe...

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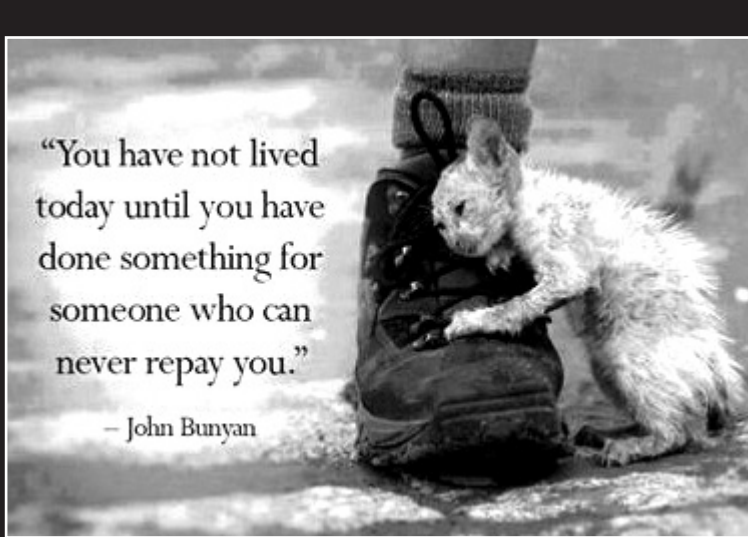
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Bring a chair and a flashlight, see you there. Hillcrest Meditation at the Championship Academy is suspended until further notice due to the teachers traveling commitments and the upcoming holidays. Watch for something new to be happening in the future!

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“You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you.”

– John Bunyan

“If you can read this, thank a teacher. If you can read it in English, thank a veteran.”

Where Shopping Is A Pleasure

A husband and wife are shopping in their local supermarket. The husband picks up a case of beer and puts it in their cart. “What do you think you’re doing?” asks the wife. “They’re on sale, only \$20 for 24 cans” he replies. “Put them back, we can’t afford them” demands the wife. They continue shopping.

A few aisles farther on, the woman picks up a \$40 jar of face cream and puts it in the basket. “What do you think you’re doing?” asks the husband. “It’s my face cream. It makes me look beautiful,” replies the wife. Her husband retorts: “So does 24 cans of beer, and it’s half the price.” That’s him, on the floor in Aisle 5.

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Eighteen Truthisms

Lying around, pondering the problems of the world, I realized that, at my age, I don't really give a rat's ass anymore. If walking is good for your health, the postman would be immortal. A whale swims all day, only eats fish, and drinks water, but is still fat. A rabbit runs, and hops, and only lives 15 years, while a tortoise doesn't run, and does mostly nothing, yet it lives for 150 years. And they tell us to exercise? I don't think so.

Now that I'm older, here's what I've discovered:

1. I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.
2. My wild oats are mostly enjoyed with prunes and all-bran.
3. Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
4. If all is not lost, then where the heck is it?
5. It was a whole lot easier to get older, than it was to get wiser.
6. Some days, you're the top dog, some days you're the hydrant.
7. I wish the buck really did stop here; I sure could use a few of them.
8. Kids in the back-seat cause accidents. Accidents in the back-seat cause kids.
9. It is hard to make a comeback when you haven't been anywhere.
10. The world only beats a path to your door when you're in the bathroom.
11. If God wanted me to touch my toes, he'd have put them on my knees.
12. When I'm finally holding all the right cards, everyone wants to play chess.
13. It is not hard to meet expenses, they're everywhere.
14. The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.
15. These days, I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter; I go somewhere to get something, and then wonder what I'm "here after".
16. Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
17. It is a lot better to be seen than viewed.
18. Did we already print this joke before?

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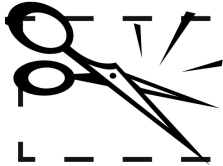




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