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COMPLIMENTARY

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MICHIGAN MAGAZINE

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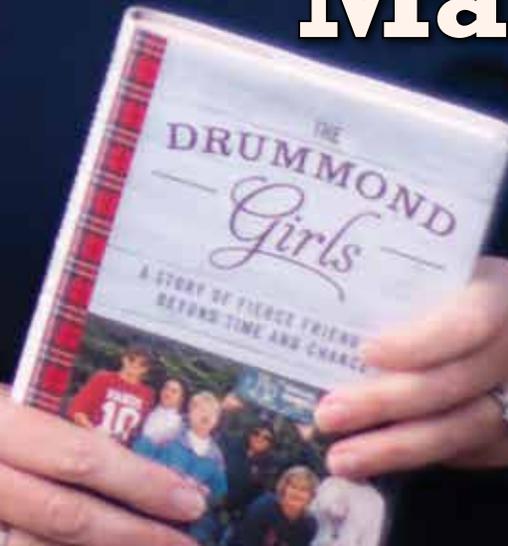
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**Mardi Jo
Link**



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Debra K. Collins
Publisher/Managing Editor



Susan Lamphier
Editor

Dear Friends,

As we enter the New Year, we celebrate many accomplishments of this year. We have reflected and refocused our goals of inspiring and empowering women.

We are determined to launch the new year with a renewed strength and purpose. The change in our logo represents this focus to our cause. We promise to continue to bring to you all of the great elements that our readership loves about the publication. As we move forward, we are challenging ourselves to expand our reach and touch as many lives as we can. Women inspiring women to empower, protect, believe and live to our full potential. Let's become warrior women stronger than yesterday - stronger together!

We would like to congratulate Miranda Matheson on her new baby and all who are experiencing new beginnings!

With Love and gratitude,

Debra & Susan

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Our Mission:

Women2Women Michigan was created to connect women with women for good to encourage, support, have fun, do business and provide links for women's resources.

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Submit your stories online at w2wmichigan.com. Article guidelines are under the magazine tab.

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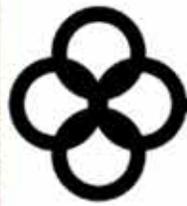


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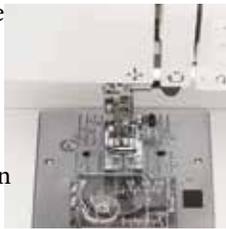
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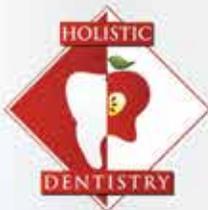


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Calendar of Events

December

2

December 2

First Friday at Longway Planetarium

6

December 6

Holiday Walk at Flint Cultural Center Campus

10

December 10

Mysteries of the Unseen World show opens at Longway Planetarium

Elf Workshop at Sloan Museum

24

December 22

Christmas Eve

25

December 25

Christmas Day

30

December 30

In the Dark exhibit closes at Sloan Museum

31

December 31

New Year's Eve

January

1

January 1

New Year's Day

6

January 6

First Friday lecture at Longway Planetarium

16

January 16

MLK Day-Sloan Museum and Longway Planetarium
free admission

21

January 21- May 21

Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition opens at Sloan Museum

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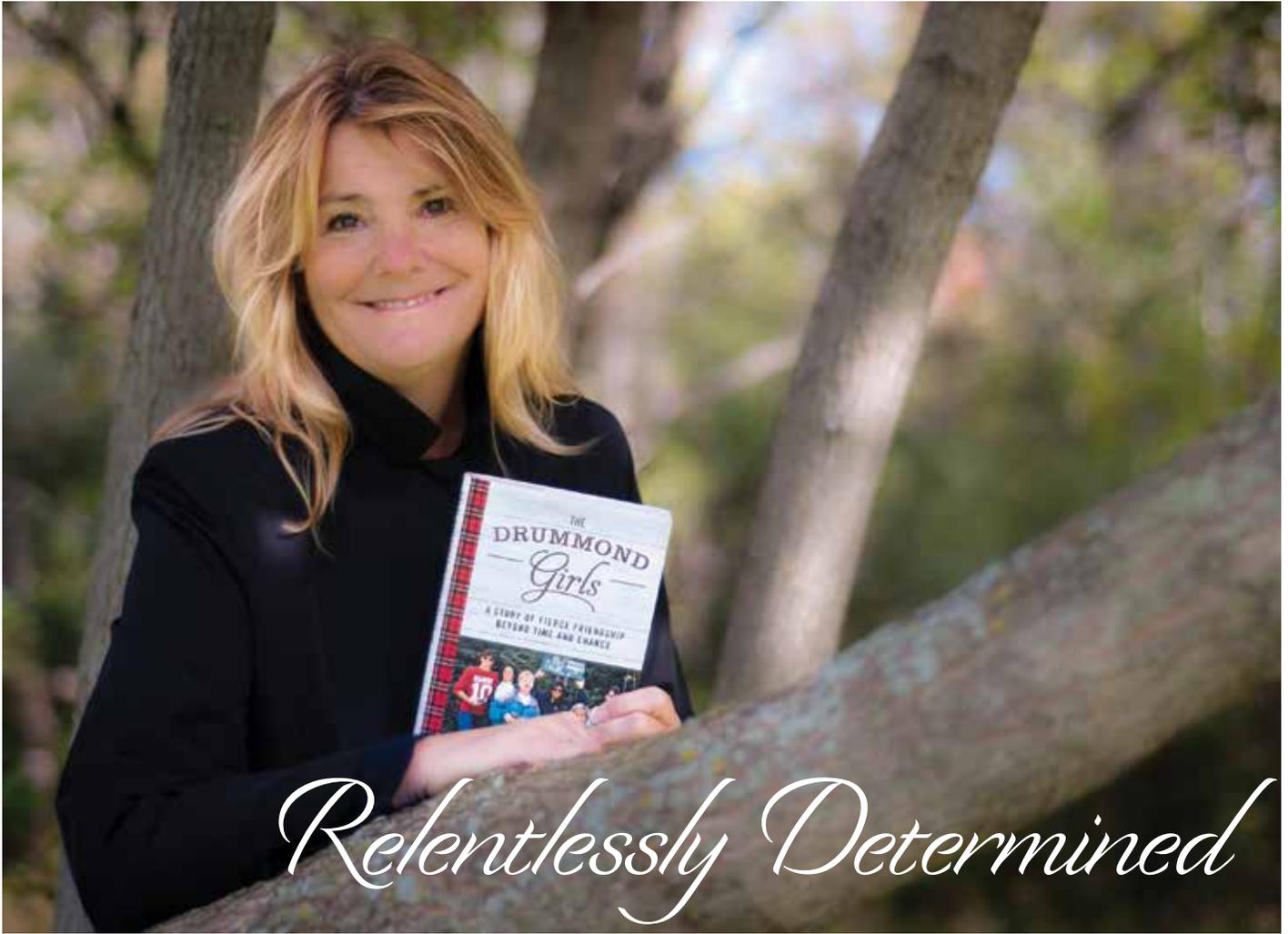
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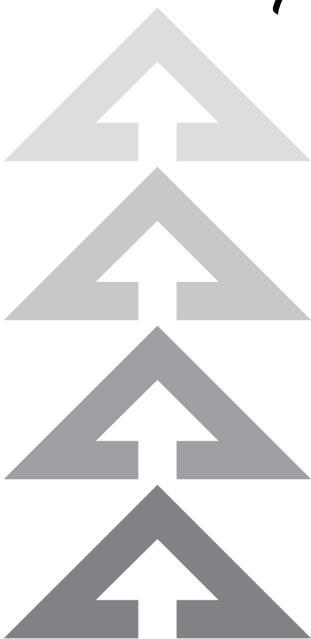
Mardie Jo Link’s book *The Drummond Girls: A Story of Fierce Friendship Beyond Time and Change* is a book that might just inspire a personal revolution. Her memoir of eight friends on an annual weekend getaway to Drummond Island in Northern Michigan is described by Link as, “A group of energetic misfits pools their resources, leaves their familiar confines in a huff, docks in a strange land, and parties like Vikings.”

The book will leave you longing to start your own group and travel to an isolated destination for some purposeful debauchery and bonding.

Link has written five books, and is the Heartland bestselling author of the critically acclaimed memoir *Bootstrapper*. This book won the Great Lakes, Great Reads Booksellers Choice Award. She is also the author of *Wicked Takes the Witness Stand: A Tale of Murder and Twisted Deceit in Northern Michigan, When Evil Came to Good Hart* and *Isadore’s Secret*.

I interviewed Link at an author event in Harrisville, Michigan where the local library scheduled a community read of her book, *The Drummond Girls*. Many of the women shared about their own groups, how they started, and the number of years they’ve traveled together. Since the release of the book, the timing of the Drummond Girls trip has been rescheduled to ward off some slightly ‘stalker-like’ behavior from the general population.

The Drummond Girls first trip — imagined by Linda, the ‘alpha girl’, and organizer of the trips both logistically and fiscally — was supposed to be a one-time retreat to dissuade a co-worker Jill from getting married. Linda, Jill, Andrea and Link all waitressed at Peegoes in Traverse City. Link was on trial as a participant that first year and desperately wanted these women as friends. Linda added four more women — Susan, Pam, Mary Lynn, and Bev — after year two to offset some of the costs.



They couldn't have been more different.

Link said, "Within the group is every combination of married, divorced, remarried, and staunchly single. We've got graduate degrees but also high schools diplomas barely and miraculously bestowed; world travelers and homebodies; Republican, Democrats, and several who self-identify as members of the 'None-of-Your-Damn-Business' Party. Besides Drummond Island, Michigan, the one thing we share is a puritan-esque independence. And by that I mean that one Drummond Girl does not ask another Drummond Girl for anything very often. When one does, no matter what it is, you do not say no."

The group encouraged Link to write their story from her own perspective and she finally came around to the idea.

From 1993 to 2013, Link relives the adventures of these women crossing a bridge, lining up for the ferry, and landing for a weekend of off-roading, drinking, and sharing – no men allowed. The result is a beautifully written memoir of a twenty-year friendship between fiercely protective women with the motto, "What happens over the Mackinac Bridge *stays* over the Mackinac Bridge."

Link said, "I've been back in Michigan since 1990 and I'm here to stay. I've traveled quite a bit domestically on book tours and speaking engagements and there really is no better state, no more beautiful or diverse state than Michigan. I live in Traverse City, also know as 'The Riviera of the Midwest', but I visit our family cottage in Ossineke in the summer in order to get away from the west side's thick tourist traffic!"

Link was born in Detroit, and raised in Battle Creek, Flint, Kalamazoo and Bay City. At Michigan State, she intended to study veterinary science and ended up in journalism. She's lived in New England where she cut her teeth as a reporter for a local paper in New Hampshire. She worked as a police and general assignment reporter, magazine editor, and freelance writer. Link said, "I moved back to Michigan to raise a family. After twenty years of marriage...I became a single parent in 2005. My children were 9, 12 and 14 at the time. That first year was tough. I detailed some of our hardships in a memoir, *Bootstrapper*. It was my women friends who helped pick me up, dust me off, and keep going."

That story provided the raw material for *The Drummond Girls*.

Link said, "I was the kid with a notebook in her pocket. I've just always written, probably because I was such an avid reader. I wanted to write things that made readers feel the way my favorite writers made, and continue to make, me feel — transported, inspired, informed and moved. In high school, I took all the English classes I could. I studied journalism in

college. I filled notebooks and diaries and journals with my writing. I made newsletters and wrote bad poetry and random short stories that went nowhere. I have the proverbial "novel in a drawer" and a stack of personal essays that have never seen print. I was also lucky enough to be raised by parents who valued literacy."

In describing what she does professionally, Link said, "I make sentences. From those sentences, I make paragraphs. Then pages, and finally, if I'm lucky and I've done the work, and I've done the revising and the research, those pages add up to a book people want to read. This might sound basic, but it really is the process! After five books, it continues to amaze and delight and humble me that I get to do this for a living. I now spend some of my time helping other writers get published via my personally tailored editing and consulting services."

Link told me her expertise is in determination. She said, "In terms of writing and publishing, I'm good at taking a whole lot of facts, research, information, complex feelings, and chronologies, and distilling them into a written narrative people can understand and feel emotionally drawn to. I'm skilled at navigating past bureaucracy and negativity."

"Writing is hard, lonely, often thankless and poverty-inviting work. It is also the most satisfying, thrilling and intellectually rewarding work I can imagine. At this point in my life and my professionally career, I'm probably unemployable. I'm too bullheaded."

"I'm relentless."

Encouraging Tips for Women to Women Readers

- ~ Care less about what other people think.
- ~ Care more about striving to improve according to your own standards of excellence.
- ~Pay less attention to people who tell you why you can't do something.
- ~Pay more attention to the people who are doing what you dream of.
- ~Nurture your own version of creativity.
- ~Feed it. Work on it. Learn.

Visit Mardi Jo Link's website: mardijolink.com to read her blog, reviews, and attend events. The paperback of *The Drummond Girls* will be printed in January.

► *Mary Ellen Jones is a former Hollywood sitcom producer - now freelance writer and filmmaker - living in NE Michigan.*



Did the Drummer Boy Have Dreadlocks?

My husband and I have adopted kids for years. Oddly, Trevor, the oldest child still remaining in our home, came into our life last. As he was settling into our world, tidbits of his former life began to be shared.

He was a foster kid and was bounced around from house to house. His last placement was in an urban area that was blighted, decayed, and dangerous. The school he began to attend was one where he was the only white boy, and the atmosphere was threatening and dangerous. Trevor told us he endured many fights and had to be very tough just to survive. He was beaten and bruised but his spirit to live endured each miserable day.

And then, one memorable Monday, a boy with dark skin and dreadlocks, became his friend. That teen, Montee, made it clear to all of the other kids at the school, that the white kid was cool and that no one was to hurt him again. It took courage to be the only kid to stand in front of violence and say "Enough!" From that day forward, the two were best friends and would do anything for the other, often having overnight visits to plot fun adventures.

Recently, I took Trevor to visit Montee, who lives miles from our city and saw the state of his house. Though clean and filled with love, there was no running water and no hot water heater. The front door was cracked and several windows were broken and covered with cloth and plastic. Poverty was wearing her finest clothing, and she was humble and proud.

A team of our friends helped to bring the family furniture and clothing. Another angel called a wealthy friend who paid for plumbing work and a Facebook friend sent a large check to buy a hot water heater. The house still needs more help, for sure, but this season, the kindness and love that one inner city kid showed for another, - came back to him in scores.

It would be easy to judge Montee's mother, even though she works full-time and does the best she can. We might all want to say, "Move!" or "Go somewhere else!" But for me and Trevor, and really our whole family, there is no tongue clicking or muttering under the breath for us.

We know that when it mattered, a kid who had nothing but the kindness in his heart to give, made another person feel safe and protected and loved.

And that young man will always have a place in our hearts, kind people to help, and a room at our inn anytime he needs it. We've met the Little Drummer Boy and we love him.



◀ Helen Hicks is an award-winning administrator and motivational speaker living in the Detroit area. You can reach her at helenk7306@hotmail.com.

Ask Shuntai

Life Is In the Power of Our Tongue

Life is in the power of the tongue. What does your life say about what you speak? I need you to do a little exercise. Find a quiet place, close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Next, you need to visualize the life you dream. If that dream involves living a life with someone you once loved or lost, then you are living your life in the past. If your dream encompasses you moving forward towards greatness but you open your eyes and find that it is impossible then you're not speaking and taking action towards your ultimate destiny. Sometimes I have found that people say what they want but when they really open their mouths, it says something different. What do I hear? I hear; fear, procrastination, insecurity, hopelessness, doubt, and a lot of "I can't's" and "If only". If you found yourself in my words than I would encourage you to use the power of your tongue and vocalize what it is that you imagine your life to be. Now, I want you to take action and prepare yourself for your greatness. Remember, everyone will not be as enthusiastic as you are because it is your dream. In the beginning, it will be difficult and you may become distracted. However, if you are focused, passionate and determined to achieve your greatness then you will not allow the power of someone else's tongue to destroy your dream. You will turn that negative energy into positive fuel to move your life in a way you have never witnessed before. You have the power to be great; just sync your thoughts, tongue and actions in concert with one another to produce the story of your best life.

Happy New Year's Readers,

Love your life or live trying



◀ Shuntai Beaugard, MA, LLPC
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HEALTHY HOLIDAYS

How do you balance wanting to look great in your holiday party attire while navigating all the extra food and drinks of the season?

DRINK UP!

And by that, I mean water! Carbonation and any artificial sweeteners will sabotage even the best efforts to feel energetic and slim. Being slightly dehydrated (and most of us are) can make us feel lousy. It can also add to the problem of water retention, which can cause our tummy to bloat. Always keep a full glass or bottle of water nearby to encourage regular sips. If you feel like you want a snack, try drinking a full glass of water- You might just be thirsty! For extra tummy flattening power, add lemon slices to your water.



CUT THE ACID!

Holiday foods are usually rich and full of all the things that encourage an acidic system in our bodies. This can lead to a whole host of problems ranging from headaches, body aches and digestive issues. Along with the lemon slices I already mentioned (lemon actually alkalizes the body) try adding a few drops of chlorophyll to your water. Meats and dairy are really acidic, so try reducing or even eliminating them this month. Sugar and grains, especially when combined, also wreak havoc on maintaining a balanced gut.

SIT UP!

Standing taller and pulling your shoulders will instantly make you look 5 pounds lighter! The way we stand in front of the mirror is rarely how we stand throughout the day, but watching our posture doesn't only look better, it will make you FEEL better, too!

EAT SMART!

Before you head to that party, enjoy a small healthy meal and some peppermint or ginger tea. Once you arrive at the party you won't have those pesky hunger pangs telling you to eat everything in sight and you'll start with a calm tummy to prevent digestive upsets.

FIGHT BACK!

I offer a short 3 day program that will get rid of pesky bloat, get those cravings back in check or prepare you for the next party when you want to look your best. It's simple and doable no matter what your schedule is, and you'll feel lighter without starving or taking weird supplements. It's a healthy tool I often use to aid my fitness efforts, especially when I'm surrounded by gift baskets and trays of cookies!



◀ Tamra Klaty is a health and fitness coach and certified instructor for CIZE Live classes. You can learn more about what she does at her facebook page at www.facebook.com/DesignedHealth

A Simple Dress

The dress was a soft velvet in the prettiest shade of red with a black lace collar. It was tea length with a the same lace peeking from the hem. I wore it with pride paired with black tights and patent leather flats. It was one of the best holiday seasons that I remember. I was 12 years old and felt so fancy!

I have such fond memories of how exciting and festive our family holiday celebrations were each year. My mother would spend a great deal of time decorating our house for parties to reunite family and friends. My sister and I couldn't wait to get new Christmas dresses that we would wear as many times as possible until after the New Year. That red velvet dress hung in my closet for several years even after I could no longer wear it.

I still love to dress up for the holidays. It reminds me that this is the time of year when things are a little more special than usual. It reminds me that we take a little extra care for ourselves as well as for others. So even though I won't be wearing the red velvet dress, I will be wearing something that makes me feel just as special. A simple dress can be part of creating lifelong memories. Not just for ourselves but those around us. A simple dress can inspire and encourage us to stand a little taller. A simple dress can be anything we desire when worn with intention. Add kindness and a giving spirit and you have yourself a perfect, beautiful Christmas outfit.



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COULD YOUR CHILD HAVE SLEEP DISORDERED BREATHING?

Does your child have any of these symptoms: ADD/ADHD, bed-wetting, mouth breathing and poor performance in school? These and more are symptoms of an often overlooked or misdiagnosed problem called Sleep Disordered Breathing, or SDB. Studies show 9 out of 10 children have this condition.

Sleep Disordered Breathing happens when there is a restriction of the air to and from the lungs through the nose and pharynx. More commonly referred to as Hypopnea (low breathing) or apnea (stoppage of breathing), it interrupts a child's sleep cycle, preventing a full night's rest. According to Earl O. Bergersen, DDS, MSD (former assistant professor Northwestern University Orthodontic Dept), nighttime mouth breathing occurs frequently in children. "Any child that snores fairly frequently and sleeps with their mouth open often suffers from lack of sleep and as a result also frequently has oxygen desaturation of the blood."

A child who is sleep-deprived experiences much the same as an adult who didn't get a good night's sleep: crabby the next day,

or irritable, or withdrawn. Some have dark circles under their eyes. However, unlike an adult, a young child with a blocked airway often knows no difference, because the child never gets a good night's rest.

Your pediatrician might not notice this, as it is a dentally related problem. Most dentists are taught to wait until a child is old enough to have orthodontic braces to straighten their teeth. Twenty years of research have led to the amazing Healthy Start System. Early treatment is the key. Once the jaw is encouraged to develop properly, and the teeth move into alignment without the need for future braces or orthodontics.

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◀ *Sherry Regiani has been in the dental field since 1970; first as an assistant then as a hygienist. Over the past 30 years, Sherry transitioned into dental management and serves as practice administrator for her husband, David W Regiani DDS.*

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TITANIC

THE ARTIFACT EXHIBITION

Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition takes you on a journey back in time to experience the legend of *Titanic* like never before. The galleries in this fascinating exhibition feature over 100 real artifacts recovered from the ocean floor along with room recreations and personal stories; each highlighting a different chapter in the compelling story of *Titanic's* maiden voyage.

Tickets to the exhibition are timed. Advance purchase is recommended.



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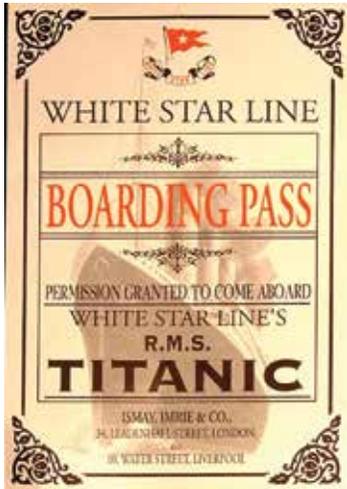


JANUARY 21-MAY 21, 2017

real objects | real stories

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TITANIC



Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition will be at Sloan Museum January 21-May 21, 2017, and is sponsored locally by HAP. Visitors will take a trip back in time. The galleries of Sloan Museum will be transformed for this fascinating exhibition that puts you inside the Titanic experience like never before. Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition features real artifacts recovered from the ocean floor along with room re-creations and personal histories, each highlighting a different chapter in the compelling story of Titanic's maiden voyage. board Titanic with a replica White Star Line ticket



was traveling to New York to sell his samples, china etched with the logo of the elite White Star Line, even pieces of the Ship itself-- these and many other authentic objects offer haunting, emotional connections to lives abruptly ended or forever altered.

Visitors are quickly drawn back in time to 1912 upon entrance, as each receives a replica boarding pass of an actual passenger aboard Titanic. They then begin their chronological journey through the life of the Titanic, moving through the ship's construction, to life on board, to the ill-fated sinking and amazing artifact rescue efforts. They will marvel at the re-created rooms, and press their palms against an iceberg while learning of countless stories of heroism and humanity. In the Memorial Gallery, guests will take their boarding pass to the memorial wall and discover whether their passenger and traveling companions survived or perished.

Over the past 25 years, more than 40 million people have seen this powerful exhibition in major museums worldwide - from Chicago to Los Angeles and Paris to London. RMS Titanic, Inc. is the only company permitted by law to recover objects from the wreck site of Titanic. The company was granted Salvor-in-Possession rights to the wreck site of Titanic by a United States federal court in 1994 and has conducted nine research and recovery expeditions to the Titanic, rescuing more than 5,500 artifacts.

During this exhibit, January 21 - May 21, 2017, Sloan Museum will be open Monday-Saturday, 10 am-5 pm, and Sunday, Noon-5 pm. Tickets to see Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition are: \$14 adults, \$12 seniors (60+), \$11 youth age 2-11, \$10 ASTC, \$5 members, free children 1 and under. Veterans/Military Families/Teachers: \$7 adults, \$6 senior (60+), \$6 youth (age 2-11). Due to contractual agreements, there are no discounts or free passes accepted for this exhibit. Tickets to the exhibition are timed. Advance purchase is recommended. To reserve them online in advance of your visit, SloanMuseum.org or call 810-237-3450. Sloan Museum is located at 1221 E. Kearsley Street, Flint, MI 48503.

belonging to an actual passenger, touch an iceberg, and learn about artifact recovery and conservation. Historical actors will also be in the exhibit to give this experience a one-of-a-kind feel. Tickets are \$14 adults, \$12 for seniors, and \$11 kids age two to eleven. Tickets to the exhibit are timed. Advance purchase is recommended. The exhibition is presented by Premier Exhibitions. Get all the details or buy online at SloanMuseum.org.

The Exhibition has been designed with a focus on the legendary RMS Titanic's compelling human stories as best told through authentic artifacts and extensive room re-creations. Perfume from a maker who



THIS.

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Charity:



The Long-Lasting Benefits of Changing Lives

Holiday giving usually involves exchanging gifts with those we love; but what if this year we consider giving beyond our family and friends? The charity we extend to others has the potential to create long-lasting benefits to society now and for future generations to come.

I know there are some who hold the notion of charity in a negative light and equate it with an undeserved handout. Yet for centuries, religious theologians have held *charity* as the core virtue of their institutions. St Augustine, a 4th century Christian Bishop and Theologian, explains “*charity is the root of all other Christian virtues because it is how we are united with the Divine.*”

During my research I discovered two critical aspects. First, *charity is the voluntary giving of help to those in need.* Many of us do this as we empty our closets of unwanted items, give money to our church or volunteer at soup kitchens. Others, even more committed, build volunteer activities into their weekly schedule or work in social service jobs making less than they could in the private sector.

The second and more challenging aspect is *charity as a kindness and tolerance in judging others.* Distinct from acts of voluntary giving, this mind-set or heart-set is how we engage others. Charity is a disposition of the heart which leads us to think favorably of others.

A charitable heart helps us maintain compassion, concern and kindness as we face difficult situations and challenging people.

“*Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not.*”

Dr. Seuss

Throughout the ages, leaders from Aristotle to Mother Teresa have called us to tend to the least among us. We are asked to be charitable in our hearts and actions in order to relieve their distress. This is how we transform lives and society.

“*The test of a civilization is in the way that it cares for its helpless members.*” Pearl S. Buck

Most of us have probably benefited from a hand-up; I know I have. When I struggled as a single mom, the only thing my neighbors saw was someone in need and they reached out to me – without judgment.

Their charity changed my life and reminded me to always give back and give others the benefit of the doubt. Instead of using charity as a house cleaning tool or a tax write off, charity gives us the power to transform the lives of those less fortunate.

I hope this Holiday season you and your loved ones will create new year-long traditions of charity and extend your hands out to help change lives.

“*Let no one be discouraged by the belief that there is nothing one person can do against the enormous array of the world's ills, misery, ignorance, and violence. Few will have the greatness to bend history, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events. And in the total of all those acts will be written the history of a generation.*” Robert Kennedy

“How wonderful that no one need wait a single moment to improve the world.”

Anne Frank

► Elaine Stenger, PhD., is the Author of “Dancing in the Rain” and Co-Founder of Cairn Venture Group which produces Leadership Retreats for Women. “Connecting women to help change our world.”

Visit: www.elainestenger.com or contact Elaine at estenger2@gmail.com



THE GIFT OF *Yourself*

During this, the “gift-giving” season, have you ever thought that YOU could be the gift—and all year long?

Now before you start to argue that there is no way that you feel at all like a gift, especially right now when you are harried and bedraggled trying to keep all the details of this busy season straight, just read on.

It is my firm belief that each one of us is a valuable light in this world. There is no one else like you, who can do what you do, in the way you do it. (Profound, huh?)

So, how can YOU be a gift? Well, every day our actions affect the people we come in contact with--either positively or negatively. With intentional choices, we can add value to their lives. That's a gift!

Here are some suggestions:

- Smile into the eyes of that person you squeeze past in your rush to accomplish your errand.
- Hug, hold, or touch someone who is alone and hasn't felt human warmth in many weeks.
- Visit the one who is physically trapped inside a home, longing to see the sunshine and feel the breeze, and to hear another person's voice.
- Sit, in the moment, with grief and pain, and breathe alongside another to divide the burden.
- Join in celebration of another's blessing without asking “why not me, when's my turn”.
- Listen with stillness, full intention, and focus as someone, with stuttering breath, reveals their story of need.
- Care for the child of a friend who needs to “not-be-a-mommy” for a bit.
- Take the time to write and mail a note expressing gratitude toward someone who has given their time and heart. There are many, many unsung heroes in our lives.

When I am feeling especially stressed, which often leads to self-criticism, I find that directing my focus away from myself to help someone else renews my own spirit.

Yes, you are busy. But taking a few extra minutes to really connect with another person will brighten your day while enabling you to shine your unique light.

That's how YOU become the gift that keeps on giving—all year long. Won't you join me?

► *Mimi Matthews believes in the power of words to change lives. She calls herself “Passionista At Large” because she is always on the prowl to encourage and empower, inspire and ignite anyone she comes in contact with. Mimi's life experiences have given her rich material and wisdom to help others learn truth. You can read her life stories and uplifting posts on her blog <http://particularpassions.me/> and buy her encouraging and empowering words on unique cards and gifts on her Etsy shop here: https://www.etsy.com/shop/EmPOWordmentCards?ref=hdr_shop_menu*



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HURLEY SENIOR CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

By Catherine Metz, PT, MBA – Orthopedic & Geriatric Service Line Administrator, Hurley Medical Center

Hospital choice matters, especially for our valuable yet most vulnerable population – Seniors. As the number of older adults rises, Hurley’s Senior Center of Excellence is focused on providing exceptional comprehensive care to our senior patients to prevent worsening functional status, delirium, falls, medication complications, infection, malnutrition, dehydration and immobilization during hospitalization. “Over the course of the last several years, Hurley’s Senior Center of Excellence has added programming, new services and extra layers of safety for our older patients making Hurley Medical Center the safest place for seniors,” states Cathy Metz, Orthopedic and Geriatric Service Line Administrator.

Hurley Medical Center is the **ONLY** area hospital with:

- The highest nursing award given to hospitals for excellence in care of seniors. A NICHE Exemplar hospital, Hurley is the only medical center in Genesee County, one of only four in the state of Michigan, and one of only 90 in the country to achieve this status. NICHE (Nurses Improving Care for Health System Elders) is a highly prestigious nursing initiative.
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Hurley is leading the way in providing the most advanced and comprehensive care for our community seniors. Choice matters. Choose Hurley’s Senior Center of Excellence. For more information call 810.262.6339.



Happy Holidays!

We wish you a very happy holiday season
and a peaceful and prosperous new year!



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My Dearest,

Let us momentarily bask in the imaginary smells, of the oxymoron, collectively known as “The Holidays”. The sweet fleeting aromas of turkey, ham, pies, stuffing, gravy, cookies... but wait... there’s company coming, beds and breakfasts to make, a house to clean and decorate, a table to prepare, clothes and gifts to buy...all making it simultaneously soothing yet hectic. We’ve all been there; we’ve all done the “Holiday Scramble”, unable to find enough hours in the day, becoming tense and irritable, with loved ones who are unwilling to share our sense of urgency let alone our passion for perfection. We tackle dinner demons and kitchen gremlins, alone, while they watch football...complaining, silently, to ourselves...mostly due to the fact that there’s no one within ear shot because WE chased them out. *“No, no, I’ve got this. You go relax.”*

You may have fooled yourself into thinking it would get easier, over the years, after the kids were grown and gone, ha, I say! Now, they come with their growing family, often toting the in-laws. Your mom no longer “does it”, so count them in. Oh yes, where are your siblings and their families supposed to go?? They always went to mom’s. You thought you were stressed out before...Again I say HA. So, now your to do list grows, as does your grocery list, shopping list and the number of gifts to buy. Holiday Mayhem!

Sound familiar?

Suddenly, the whirlwind ends, the food and the company have vanished... we’re exhausted, shocked, that we seemed to have missed all of the fun. Now, to clean up the mess, undecorated, regroup and get back into the groove.

It’s Thanksgiving!!! Let the crazy begin!

Why we put ourselves through this whirlwind, year after year after year, is beyond me, so I’m guessing you are asking yourself the same question.

Yes, I have been guilty of past holiday martyrdom, self inflicted, doomed to suffer alone, in the kitchen with an apron on to protect my new hairdo and sweater (that nobody has complimented)...Not this woman...NOT THIS YEAR!! Won’t you join me in abolishing this unnecessary holiday burden that we proudly display, like a horsehair sweater, hating how it feels but loving the way it looks to everyone else because they can see us suffering...choosing to do nothing...because we have discouraged it for way too long.

This year, will be different, I promise myself. I will be involved in the laughter, share the funny stories, catch up with the out-of-towners and play with the little ones.

How, you might ask am I going to accomplish this seemingly magical fest and feast? Well, sit down, let’s talk about it.

I’m a list person, when it comes to planning, a schedule person when it comes to big family meals. The problem being, I do not start the prep work in advance. Soooo, in order to get off to a good start, this Thanksgiving is going to my most relaxed

yet (to be duplicated at Christmas, if necessary again at New Year’s Eve)...here’s the plan: Shhhhhh, don’t tell anyone, it will be our secret.

1. Shop for and wrap gifts early. Even before food. Gifts keep indefinitely, unlike food, unless the gift is food...I over-think things sometimes...
2. Shop for non perishable food items WAY in advance. Store all of them, together, in a special spot, one that you will remember.
3. Before shopping for the final food options, prepare a “cooking schedule” with each item timed and temperature for a grand crescendo.
4. Prepare some items, such as the pies, cookies and cranberry sauce a minimum of two days ahead.
5. Set the table, with all of its holiday glory, your fine china and best silver, the day before.
6. HAVE SOME PEOPLE BRING FOOD (and/or beverage) ITEMS. Please read this one again.
7. Pull the cooking schedule out and commence in the culinary preparation.
8. Put a trusted family member, possibly one who shares your inclination toward perfectionism, in charge of something you don’t have time for. A last minute chore, like mashing potatoes or making gravy.
9. Do not be the last to sit down or finish your meal. Say these words, loudly, with love, as you rise from the table, *“That was delicious, let’s clean up”*. Rehearse as needed.
11. Relax and enjoy the company. Be Thankful that you were able to provide this feast. Be thankful for these people, this life, this world.
12. Embrace the crazy!
13. Have a glass of wine.

This is my plan. It has not been tried and true. It may only be a work in progress...time will tell. I’ll let you know next year.

Enjoy this holiday season with everything you’ve got. Go through it with gusto and joy. Hug, love, laugh and give. Be Blessed.

Happy Holidays!

With Love, Deb

► Deborah St.Hilaire is a women’s holistic life and transitions coach, author, host of *The Divalution Show* and CEO of *W4DIVAS.com*. Her mission is to empower women. She can be reached at 419.366.8091 for coaching, workshops and speaking engagements.





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INSPIRATION

The seasons are changing, the holidays are approaching, the family gatherings are in full swing and it's time for a little inspiration. The Dictionary defines INSPIRATION as: *"The process of being mentally stimulated to do or feel something, especially to do something creative"* A walk right outside your own front door may be the only stimulant you need to inspire you to do something creative with your look whether it is big or small for the merriment of the season.



For almost any beauty professional, inspiration comes from nature because nature is beauty in its purest form. What



hair colorist hasn't been inspired by the russet leaves in autumn or the burst of color from the setting sun? But you don't have to be an expert to influence a change for yourself, you just need a muse. So grab your camera or iPhone or whatever you



wish and take a walk in your own back yard and let's see what you can inspire in yourself. Try thinking outside the box. For instance, the variegated spikes of a feather may inspire you to try a different approach with your lashes or add a sultry flair for that evening look. Or the burst of seasonal color may inspire you to want to change up your hair color for this festive time of year. The end result is stepping outside of your comfort zone and allowing your own inner inspiration and beauty collide. Have a Beautiful and Inspirational Holiday Season!

► *Tami L. Sackett is a freelance writer and a hair and skincare expert with over 30 years in the beauty industry. She is always on the lookout for better products at a value price that keeps you looking young and feeling good. You may reach Tami at her email: tlsackett@yahoo.com*



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CLUTTER-FREE GIFT GIVING

We all have family holiday traditions. Some families buy gifts for everyone in the extended family, others buy only for the children under 18 and have an exchange for the adults, some families have a strict “no-gift” rule for the adults. Whatever your tradition, there are ways to streamline gift-giving so that you are letting others know you are thinking of them, while not breaking the bank.

Here are some good things to keep in mind:

Give to a charity on behalf of an individual.

Instead of giving gifts, do you want to plan a family vacation?

Think of creative memories. Create a calendar or photo book of your favorite memories or perhaps someone is celebrating a special anniversary or birthday that year. You can create a special book for them.

Another great idea when buying gifts is what does the person like to do? Do they like go to the movies? Eat at a favorite restaurant? Read? Cook? Perhaps this year, you can buy them a gift certificate.

Thinking about themes can also be fun for a new tradition. One family I know chose holiday ornaments as the theme and selected special ornaments to give from one family to another. The following year they chose another theme. Other themes to consider could be games or even homemade treats such as a special candy or cookie.

A white elephant exchange can be fun. The children exchanged store purchased gifts under \$10 and the adults each brought a household item to exchange among them. Lamps, books, and even bottles of wine were exchanged and then traded for. It made for a fun activity. They each went home with something they enjoyed and cleared out clutter at the same time.

Budget – what is going to be your budget this year? You don’t want to start off your new year heavily in debt! Set a budget and stick to it.

Gift buying – in many families, people have picked names out of a hat and then you only buy for that individual. On my side of the family, we also have a budget for our nieces and nephews and we just buy for them and not the adults.

Ask people for ideas. On my husband’s side, we pick names and then everyone provides people with a list of ideas. We also discuss a budget too.

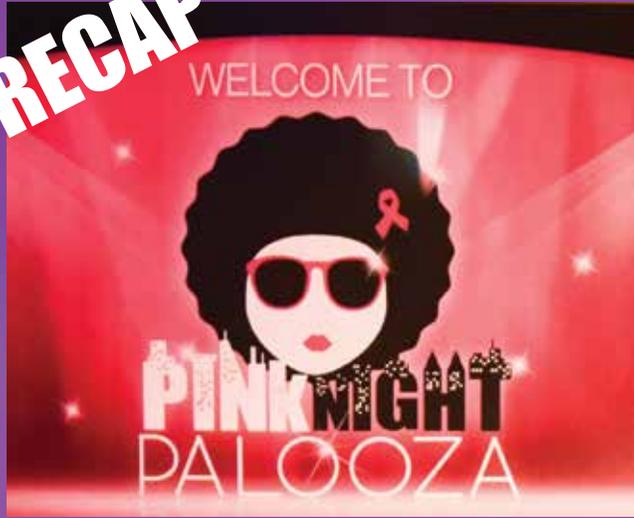
Make a list of all the individuals you are buying for and what you have purchased. When you put it on paper, it is easier to keep your eye on the budget.

Just a note: Keep all your receipts in one envelope so that if anyone needs to return or exchange the gift, it is easy to put your hand on the receipt. Or, just ask for a gift receipt when making the purchase and tape it to the gift or place it in the card attached to the gift. Easy does it!



◀ *Betty Huotari is a professional organizer who services all of Southeastern Michigan. She can be reached at 810-348-1772 or betty@logicalplacement.com. Betty publishes a monthly newsletter. For more information please visit her website www.LogicalPlacement.com.*

RECAP



THANK YOU to all who came out to Pink Night Palooza! Your support will help countless local women battling Breast Cancer! Our Breast Health Navigator Fund helps women fill financial gaps while undergoing treatment. Thanks to all the sponsors and volunteers for making this spectacular!

The Hurley Foundation is proud to announce that \$120,000 was raised for Hurley's Breast Navigator Fund, exceeding the fundraising goal of 100,000. The funds raised come from a variety of events over the past year including Pre-Pink Palooza, Pink Night Palooza at Holiday Inn Gateway Centre, along with various fundraisers and merchandise sales, to date. This vital year-round Breast Navigator Fund helps fill financial and other gaps for women



during their breast cancer journey. Representatives from Hurley, Financial Plus Credit Union, a Pink Night Palooza Founding sponsor, and Halo Burger, a Pink Night Palooza Platinum sponsor, attended a special press conference at Hurley Medical Center on November 22, 2016. During the press conference, Halo Burger presented Hurley a check for \$8,219, proceeds from their month long 'beefy double' fundraiser held at participating Genesee County locations.



THE WHITING YOUTH USHER CORPS INITIATIVE

This season, in addition to the array of live programs and performances at The Whiting, we are excited to have launched a new Youth Usher Corps initiative. At Whiting, we strive to provide entertaining, educational and engaging experiences for our entire community. Through the Youth Usher Corps program, generously supported by the Ruth Mott Foundation, we are able to provide employment opportunities, access to live performances and professional development training for local high school students.



Youth Ushers work with The Whiting's exemplary front of house team to provide unmatched experiences for all of our patrons, guests and visitors at every public performance at The Whiting, and within a year at the Capitol Theatre as well. Aside from their work as ushers, students in this program also participate in personal and professional development workshops that hone skills and provide career and educational guidance. The workshops are delivered in partnership with local businesses and organizations, making the entire Youth Usher program a true collaborative initiative that involves the entire community.

To learn more about The Whiting's Youth Usher program and how you may be able to get involved in it, or any other Whiting educational program, please do not hesitate to contact us at lmurphy@thewhiting.com or 810.237.7342. We look forward to continuing to engage and connect with the community and we hope to see you at a Whiting event in the near future.



◀ *Loe'l Murphy is the Whiting's Education and Community Engagement Manager. A soon to be mother herself, she looks forward to continuing to develop and deliver programs and experiences for our community's youth.*

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FINDING THE MOTIVATION TO *Get Fit*

With the new year arriving, many of us are making our resolutions to get in shape. Unfortunately for many of us, starting and keeping up with an exercise program is typically harder than we would like. According to the American Heart Association, 80 percent of Americans aren't getting the recommended amount of physical activity

Instead of getting overwhelmed with starting your journey to physical fitness, use these five tips to help keep you motivated..

SET A GOAL

Before you start a workout program, pick your ultimate goal. It could be "I want to lose 20 pounds," or "I want to be able to fit into my skinny jeans again." Leave reminders for yourself throughout your house to keep you motivated. Hang your favorite pair of jeans that don't fit right anymore where you can see them and motivational post-it notes that cheer you on.

The American Heart Association encourages you to simply move. But if you're looking for something with more impact and a team environment, consider joining a gym. With CrossFit in particular, coaches work with each person to guide their workout to meet their independent goals. "CrossFit is a hard workout, but anybody can do it. We have some members who are athletes and some people whose goal is to get healthy," said Michelle Stewart, owner of Mission 1 CrossFit in Caro, Michigan.

Now, you may be thinking "CrossFit! No way!" But sometimes going all in can keep you motivated, explained Stewart.

FIND A WORKOUT PARTNER

When motivation is low, look for a friend or your gym-mates to help keep you motivated. Stewart explained one of the reasons she started CrossFit was because her friends were going. "At first I wasn't interested, but after a couple weeks I went with them. I found having that community made working out more fun and kept me motivated."

Even if your workout buddy doesn't live near you, commit to either heading out the door to go for a walk or run at the same time or doing the same at-home workout program. Try to set a consistent time to work out together.

PUSH THROUGH PLATEAUS

Plateaus are a major reason why people will stop their new exercise routine. Stewart says, "when you hit a weight-loss plateau, look at how you feel. When I started CrossFit I actually gained 10 pounds, but you wouldn't be able to tell by looking at me because the weight-gain was all muscle."

Look for ways your body is changing that the scale doesn't reflect. Have you increased how much weight you can lift? Can you now make it around the block? Is your mile time faster than before? Do your pants fit a little better?

EAT THE RIGHT FOOD

Getting in shape cannot be achieved by exercise alone. In fact, your diet has a larger impact on your over-all health than exercise. Make sure you are providing your body with the right fuel to help reach your goals.

Stewart suggests bananas for workouts. "Before and after a workout I like to eat a banana because it's fast, healthy sugar that my body uses up fast instead of storing for later."

Also make sure you are getting enough water. The common thinking is drink half of your body weight in ounces. So if you weigh 200 pounds, drink 100 ounces of water each day. Keep in mind that people that tend to sweat more or have diabetes or heart disease require more water than others, according to the American Heart Association.

MAKE LITTLE LIFESTYLE CHANGES

The American Heart Association recommends getting at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity at least five days a week. The good news for people just starting out is you don't have to complete those 30 minutes all at the same time. Squeeze in 10-15 minutes of exercise two or three times a day. Take a walk on your breaks at work.

Little changes like taking the stairs and parking at the back of the parking lot when you go into the store can really start to add up. Not everyone has the desire to become an athlete, but everyone wants to be healthy.

If you're looking for some encouragement, accountability and support with your diet and activity, join the American Heart Association Mid Michigan's Go Red Get Fit 21 Day Challenge group on Facebook. The event kicks off February 1 for American Heart Month. In 3 short weeks you can develop a healthy habit that can stick with you throughout 2017 and beyond.

► *Stacy Sawyer is the senior communications director for the American Heart Association in Michigan. A mom to two and husband to one, you may see her on television, hear her on the radio or pass her on the road as she taxis her kids to one activity to another. She is a heart health cheerleader.*



PROBIOTICS



► Erin Caudell owns and operates *The Local Grocer* inside the Flint Farmers Market where sells all natural produce grown at her farm in Beecher, MI. Learn more about the farm and the store at www.TheLocalGrocer.com.



Probiotics are more and more a topic at our store, everyone's talking about good gut bacteria. Fermentation isn't new, it's been used all over the world to preserve food for hundreds of years. Fermenting your vegetables is actually easy, you don't need to make a large batch. I like to make them in mason jars, enough for a week or so of meals. Saurkraut and kimchi are some of the most popular fermented recipes, but you can easily do a simple single vegetable ferment.

FERMENTED CARROT STICKS

- 1 quart water
- 1-3 Tbsp. sea salt
- 2-3 pounds carrots, cut into sticks

Dissolve salt in water. Place the carrot sticks in the jar and pour the liquid over the carrots, leaving 1-2 inches headspace. If necessary, weigh the carrots down under the brine to keep them submerged. Cover the jar with a tight lid, airlock lid, or coffee filter secured with a rubber band. Culture at room temperature (60-70°F is preferred) until desired flavor and texture are achieved. If using a tight lid, burp daily to release excess pressure. Carrots are finished after 7-10 days. Change to a tight lid on the jar and move to your refrigerator. The flavor will continue to develop over time in the fridge.

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TAKE A BREATH, MY FRIENDS



Yes, yes, yes...I know that I have many topics to cover for this issue of W2W (which is W@W if you forget to let go of the SHIFT key...I kind of like that better).

Anyhow, I do have many topics to choose from this year. It's a presidential election year (despite my numerous requests for a do-over).

My daughter is getting married in November. It's almost Christmas. I will turn

50. Simply too many milestones to choose from.

So let's hit 'em all.

Perhaps the biggest news as we approach the end of the year is the fact that reality TV has finally consumed every aspect of our lives. We've watched dancers, weight-losers, singers, some guy choosing a bride. And now politics. This is my only explanation. Clearly, Simon Cowell has co-opted our government and created a level of entertainment never before witnessed in human society.

I, for one, am impressed. I was suspicious when Jennifer Lopez joined the moderator panel at the early debates, but it became obvious when the contestants began tweeting nasty comments about one another. How did the rest of America miss it?

So, from now on, if you're unhappy with the way things are going, don't write to your congressman. Write to Simon.

Despite the shift in our representative republic to a performance based system of choosing our leaders, my daughter has

chosen to get married. I'm not sure what one has to do with the other. If you think of a better segue, let me know.

I tried to warn her that, much like presidents, he will not be the same person in a few short years. He will increase spending when he discovers that the Comcast plan doesn't include all the NFL channels. He will send the children into foreign homes and forget about them. He will buy a new car when he hasn't paid off the loan on the last one.

But she's moving forward, claiming that, without a husband, her life will fall into chaos and she'll have to take on all responsibility for herself. I waited for the downside, but she only shouted "yes we can!" and stomped off.

Did I mention I'm turning 50?

Honestly, not much has changed since 40. Except that the house is emptier, my knees ache a little more, and I worry more that my wife will realize that she should declare her independence and cut ties with this arrangement.

I've also gotten a lot more pessimistic.

Or maybe not. I don't think we get more pessimistic so much as we finally understand that it's been a reality show all along. We've chosen our spouses out of thousands of potential candidates. We've lost the weight, regained, lost it again. We've displayed our best talents for the world to see. And the best we can hope for is not to get voted off the island.

No, that's not pessimistic. If we're still on the island, despite the chaotic nonsense that is this life, we're doing pretty darn good. Take a breath, my friends. That still belongs to you alone (and hasn't been taxed...yet).

Oh, and Merry Christmas.

▶ Ron Estrada resides with his wife, Kelly, two children, two cats, and a terrier-mix in Oxford. When not pursuing the spiritual gift of napping, he's at work on his latest novel or some freelance project (he accepts cash, check, PayPal, or smoked pork shoulder). You can email him at rmestrada@ameritech.net or visit his website at ronestrada.com.



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and children

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intimate partner

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women are
stalked

250,000
purse snatchings
occur every year

Every 7
Minutes
a child is
being bullied

2,000
children go missing **EVERY**
day in the United States

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of child sexual abuse
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