Lighten Up

A FATHER, A DAUGHTER AND A DOG

How the love of a dog can change your perspective

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Klara's recipe for New Year's resolutions

THE SECRET

How to uncover The Secret. Take the journey.

BEGIN EVERYDAY WITH A SMILE



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FROM THE EDITOR: Happy New Year everyone. This issue finds us going into our fourth year for The Chatterbox. (Now Lighten Up) How time flies.

Hope this finds everyone healthy and happy after all the Christmas goodies and trimmings. I was bound and bent that I was going to hold onto my weight this season and boy, I sure did, every last added pound. I had to take hold of it or it would have been dragging behind me as I rolled down the street.

Snow-filled Christmas happened. That was nice. I used to love the snow...and then I got so I would just love to see it for Christmas Eve and Day and now that my age has crept up upon me along with my weight, I really don't care if I see any at all

Lots of goodies in the paper this time...something for every discerning mode of humour. Klara has given us her New Year's Resolutions and I hope all of you have at least made them, even if you forgot them that day! Take care...keep smiling. Liz

A Father, a Daughter and a Dog - story by Catherine Moore

"Watch out! You nearly broadsided that car!" My father yelled at me. "Can't you do anything right?"

Those words hurt worse than blows. I turned my head toward the elderly man in the seat beside me, daring me to challenge him. A lump rose in my throat as I averted my eyes. I wasn't prepared for another battle.

"I saw the car, Dad. Please don't yell at me when I'm driving." My voice was measured and steady, sounding far calmer than I really felt. Dad glared at me, then turned away and settled back.

At home I left Dad in front of the television and went outside to collect my thoughts.... dark, heavy clouds hung in the air with a promise of rain. The rumble of distant thunder seemed to echo my inner turmoil. What could I do about him?

Dad had been a lumberjack in Washington and Oregon. He had enjoyed being outdoors and had revelled in pitting his strength against the forces of nature. He had entered gruelling lumberjack competitions, and had placed often. The shelves in his house were filled with trophies that attested to his prowess.

The years marched on relentlessly. The first time he couldn't lift a heavy log, he joked about it; but later that same day I saw him outside alone, straining to lift it. He became irritable whenever anyone teased him about his advancing age, or when he couldn't do something he had done as a younger man.

Four days after his sixty-seventh birthday, he had a heart attack. An ambulance sped him to the hospital while a paramedic administered CPR to keep blood and oxygen flowing. At the hospital, Dad was rushed into an operating room. He was lucky; he survived, but something inside Dad died. His zest for life was gone. He obstinately refused to follow doctor's orders. Suggestions and offers of help were turned aside with sarcasm and insults. The number of visitors thinned then finally stopped altogether. Dad was left alone.

My husband, Dick, and I asked Dad to come live with us on our small farm. We hoped the fresh air and rustic atmosphere would help him adjust. Within a week after he moved in, I regretted the invitation. It seemed nothing was satisfactory. He criticized everything I did. I became frustrated and moody. Soon I was taking my pent-up anger out on Dick. We began to bicker and argue.

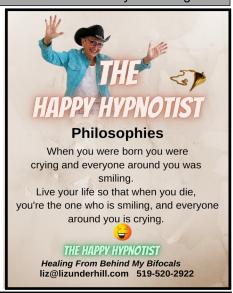
Alarmed, Dick sought out our pastor and explained the situation. The clergyman set up weekly counselling appointments for us. At the close of each session he prayed, asking God to soothe Dad's troubled mind. But the months wore on and God was silent. Something had to be done and it was up to me to do it.

The next day I sat down with the phone book and methodically called each of the mental health clinics listed in the Yellow Pages. I explained my problem to each of the sympathetic voices that answered in vain. Just when I was giving up hope, one of the voices suddenly exclaimed, "I just read something that might help you! Let me go get the article."

I listened as she read. The article described a remarkable study done at a nursing home. All of the patients were under treatment for chronic depression.







OLD is when your friends compliment you on your new lizard sandals and you're barefoot.





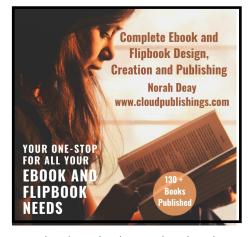
The Secret

A man is driving down the road and his car breaks down near a monastery. He goes to the monastery, knocks on the door, and says, "My car broke down.

Do you think I

could stay the night?"

The monks graciously accept him, feed him dinner, and even fix his car. As the man tries to fall asleep, he hears a strange sound; a sound like no other that he has ever heard. The next



morning, he asks the monks what the sound was, but they say, "We can't tell you because you're not a monk."

The man is disappointed but thanks them anyway and goes about his merry way. Some years later, the same man's car breaks down in front of the same monastery. The monks again accept him, feed him, and even fix his car. That night, he hears the same strange mesmerizing sound that he had heard years earlier.

The next morning, he asks what the sound was, but the monks reply, "We can't tell you because you're not a monk!"

The man says, "All right, all right. I'm dying to know. If the only way I can find out what that sound was is to become a monk, how do I become a monk?"

OLD is when and "all-nighter" means not getting up to pee.

OLD is when "getting a little action" means I don't need to take any fiber today.

OLD is when you are cautioned to slow down by the doctor instead of by the police.

The monks reply, "You must travel the earth and tell us how many blades of grass there are and the exact number of sand pebbles. When you find these numbers, you will become a monk."

The man sets about his task. Some forty-five years later, he returns and knocks on the door of the monastery. He says, "I have traveled the earth and devoted my life to the task There are 371,145,236,284,232 blades of grass and 231,281,219,999,129,382 sand pebbles on the earth."

The monks reply, "Congratulations, you are correct, and you are now considered a monk. We shall now show you the way to the sound."

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"Soup ta Nuts"

New Year's Resolutions

Hi Folks.

Another year has whizzed by. Christmas is over and the New Year is here waiting for all our promises that we rarely keep; the kind that sure feels good when we release them into the sky hoping someone up there will hear them and magically with no effort on our part, be done; *my* will be done sort of thing.

I started to make up my usual list prayerfully:

- 1. Dear Lord: just have to lose weight right away and I don't want it to be painful. I want all that cake, chocolate and Christmas goodies to pass on through leaving no traces of their fat behind and certainly not on mine.
- 2. Dear Lord: I need help with procrastination. I could get things done a lot quicker if you would stop me from leaving what I am doing to find out where I hid those darn sweets, so the rest of my family couldn't snitch them all on me.
- 3. Dear Lord: I need help to be nicer to people. I find I'm not my usually sweet self when others aren't doing exactly what I want, when I want and how I want it done. Sometimes it just isn't fair Lord.
- 4. Dear Lord: I need to be more organized. I am tired of throwing clothes, dirty laundry, books, and stuff into the closets when someone comes to visit. Why the other day I looked for Crabby Dog and discovered in my haste, he had been tossed in there too.

Guess that's enough Lord.
While I await your help, I will put my
feet up on the couch and nibble away
on my famous Konkers that I had hid
under the cushions. Oh yes, Amen and
Thank you Lord. Ms. Klara

With a little Bit of Luck Lessons from Life's Journey by Buzz Lightly 9 aka (Doug Lester)

Shinny

As a country boy, organized hockey was not part of my life. We did know about the Richards, especially the

Rocket, and the Mahovolich's, especially Frank, Jacque Plant, and Johnny Bower.

I was lucky enough to have an older friend who took me to the arena a few times and helped me graduate from skating on my ankles to using the blades.

Somehow my brother and the other neighbourhood boys got an old pair of skates and we all headed to the field ponds which was a polite name for the frozen puddles in the hay fields.

Here we honed our skills of putting on skates in the middle of a snow bank and skating across ridges and frozen mud with occasional pieces of plant material growing up through the ice.

Once we all got skilled enough to stand and old enough to head out on an adventure, we began to dream of a real pond with the ice cleared and our own outdoor hockey game.

My brother and I managed to get used sticks and a puck from one of our "town" friends. We practiced our shooting in the basement until we could lift the puck. Then we broke a basement window and when the window and the dents in the furnace were discovered, our hockey was banned from indoors.

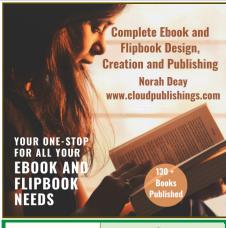
That was just the motivation we needed. We got a collection of Sears and Eaton's catalogues and jar rubbers to attach them to our shins. We took sticks, shovels, protective equipment and our puck and headed to the pond some mile and a half away. As we trudged through January snowdrifts, we discussed what we would use for goals and the rules we would follow.

By the time we got the ice cleared of six inches of snow, put on our catalogue shin pads, and found broken tree branches for goals, we were exhausted. We did manage to play a bit of hockey.

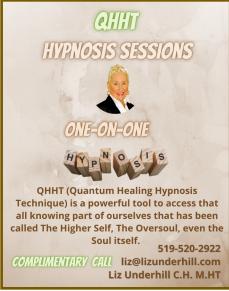
Soon the jar rubbers cut off the circulation in our legs and then one of us got hit where there was no protection and the Norman Rockwell moment was over.

Our game disintegrated into arguments about the final score, who was going to carry the shovels back, and why we couldn't just leave the catalogues at the pond.

By the time we arrived at our house we were friends again, and as we enjoyed hot chocolate around our kitchen table we told of our adventure to my mother and knew that with a little bit of luck we would soon be playing shinny.









A Father, a Daughter and a Dog

Continued from Page 2

Their attitudes had improved dramatically when they were given responsibility for a dog.

I drove to the animal shelter that afternoon. After I filled out a questionnaire, a uniformed officer led me to the kennels. The odor of disinfectant stung my nostrils as I moved down the row of pens. Each contained five to seven dogs. Long-haired dogs, curly-haired dogs, black dogs, spotted dogs all jumped up, trying to reach me. I studied each one but rejected one after the other for various reasons: too big, too small, too much hair.

As I neared the last pen a dog in the shadows of the far corner struggled to his feet, walked to the front of the run and sat down. It was a pointer, one of the dog world's aristocrats. But this was a caricature of the breed.

Years had etched his face and muzzle with shades of gray. His hip bones jutted out in lopsided triangles. But it was his eyes that caught and held my attention. Calm and clear, they beheld me unwaveringly.

I pointed to the dog. "Can you tell me about him?" The officer looked, then shook his head in puzzlement. "He's a funny one. Appeared out of nowhere and sat in front of the gate. We brought him in, figuring someone would be right down to claim him. That was two weeks ago and we've heard nothing. His time is up tomorrow", he gestured helplessly.

As the words sank in I turned to the man in horror. "You mean you're going to kill him?"

"Ma'am," he said gently, "that's our policy. We don't have room for every unclaimed dog."

I looked at the pointer again. The calm brown eyes awaited my decision. "I'll take him," I said. I drove home with the dog on the front seat beside me. When I reached the house I honked the horn twice. I was helping my prize out of the car when Dad shuffled onto the front porch. "Ta-da! Look what I got for you, Dad!", I said excitedly.

Dad looked, then wrinkled his face in disgust. "If I had wanted a dog I would have gotten one. And I would have picked out a better specimen than that bag of bones. Keep it! I don't want it." Dad waved his arm scornfully and turned back toward the house. Anger rose inside me. It squeezed together my throat muscles and pounded into my temples. "You'd better get used to him, Dad. He's staying!" Dad ignored me. "Did you hear me, Dad?" I screamed.

At those words Dad whirled angrily, his hands clenched at his sides, his eyes narrowed and blazing with hate. We stood glaring at each other like duelists, when suddenly the pointer pulled free from my grasp. He wobbled toward my dad and sat down in front of him. Then slowly, carefully, he raised his paw. Dad's lower jaw trembled as he stared at the uplifted paw. Confusion replaced the anger in his eyes. The pointer waited patiently. Then Dad was on his knees hugging the animal.

It was the beginning of a warm and intimate friendship. Dad named the pointer Cheyenne. Together he and Cheyenne explored the community. They spent long hours walking down dusty lanes. They spent reflective moments on the banks of streams, angling for tasty trout. They even started to attend Sunday services together, Dad sitting in a pew and Cheyenne lying quietly at his feet.

Dad and Cheyenne were inseparable throughout the next three years. Dad's bitterness faded, and he and Cheyenne made many friends. Then late one night I was startled to feel Cheyenne 's cold nose burrowing through our bed covers. He had never before come into our bedroom at night. I woke Dick, put on my robe and ran into my father's room. Dad lay in his bed, his face serene. But his spirit had left quietly sometime during the night.

Two days later my shock and grief deepened when I discovered Cheyenne lying dead beside Dad's bed. I wrapped his still form in the rag rug he had slept on. As Dick and I buried him near a favorite fishing hole, I silently thanked the dog for the help he had given me in restoring Dad's peace of mind.

The morning of Dad's funeral dawned overcast and dreary. "This day looks like the way I feel," I thought as I walked down the aisle to the pews reserved for family. I was surprised to

see the many friends Dad and Cheyenne had made filling the church. The pastor began his eulogy. It was a tribute to both Dad and the dog who had changed his life. And then the pastor turned to Hebrews 13:2. "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it." "I've often thanked God for sending that angel," he said.

For me, the past dropped into place, completing a puzzle that I had not seen before: the sympathetic voice that had just read the right article. Cheyenne 's unexpected appearance at the animal shelter, his calm acceptance and complete devotion to my father and the proximity of their deaths. And suddenly I understood. I knew that God had answered my prayers after all.



Perks of Being Over 50

 Kidnappers are not very interest-

ed in you.

- In a hostage situation you are likely to be released first.
- 3. No one expects you to run anywhere.
- 4. People call at 9pm and ask, "Did I wake you?"
- 5. There is nothing left to learn the hard way.
- Things you buy now won't wear out.
- 7. You enjoy hearing about other people's operations.
- 8. You get into heated arguments about pension plans.
- 9. You have a party and the neighbours don't even realize it.
- 10. You sing along with elevator music.
- 11. Your joints are more accurate meteorologists than the national weather service.
- 12. Your secrets are safe with your friends because they can't remember them either.
- 13. Your supply of brain cells is finally down to manageable size.

Your investment in health insurance is finally beginning to pay off.

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The Secret

Continued from page 3

The monks lead the man to a wooden door, where the head monk says, "The sound is behind that door."

The man reaches for the knob, but the door is locked. He asks, "May I have the key?"

The monks give him the key, and he opens the door. Behind the wooden door is another door made of stone. The man requests the key to the stone door. The monks give him the key, and he opens it, only to find a door made of ruby. He demands another key from the monks, who provide it. Behind that door is another door, this one made of sapphire. And so it went on until the man had gone through doors of emerald, silver, topaz, and amethyst.

Finally, the monks say, "This is the key to the last door."

The man is relieved to be at the end. He unlocks the door, turns the knob, and behind that door he is astonished to find the source of that strange sound. It is truly an amazing and unbelievable sight.

But I can't tell you what it is because you're not a monk.



A History Lesson

The next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be. Here are some facts about the 1500s: Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and they still smelled pretty good by June. However, since they were starting to smell. Brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children... last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, "don't throw the baby out with the bath water"!

Houses had thatched roofs - thick straw - piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying "it's raining cats and dogs".

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying, "Dirt Poor". The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until when you opened the door, it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entranceway. Hence: "a thresh hold".

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could, "Bring home the bacon". They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat".

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous.

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5 pearls of Scottish wisdom to remember.

1. Money cannot buy happiness but somehow, it's more comfortable to cry in a Mercedes Benz than it is on a bicycle.

- 2. Forgive your enemy but remember the jerk's name.
- 3. Help a man when he is in trouble and he will remember you when he is in trouble again.
- 4. Many people are alive only because it's illegal to shoot them.
- 5. Alcohol does not solve any problem, but then neither does milk.

GAMES FOR WHEN WE ARE OLDER

- 1. Sag, you're It.
- 2. Pin the toupee on the bald guy.
- 3. 20 questions shouted into a good ear.
- 4. Kick the bucket.
- 5. Red rover, Red Rover, the nurse says bend over.
- 6. Doc goose.
- 7. Simon says something incoherent.
- 8. Hide and go pee.
- 9. Spin the bottle of Mylanta.
- 10. Musical recliners.



Don't Mess With Dogs!

One day an old German Shepherd starts

chasing rabbits and before long, discovers that he's lost. Wandering about, he notices a panther heading rapidly in his direction with the intention of having lunch. The old German Shepherd thinks, "Oh, oh! I'm in deep trouble now!"

Noticing some bones on the ground close by, he immediately settles down to chew on the bones with his back to the approaching cat. Just as the panther is about to leap, the old German Shepherd exclaims loudly, "Boy, that was one delicious panther! I wonder if there are any more around here?"

Hearing this, the young panther halts his attack in mid-strike, a look of terror comes over him and he slinks away into the trees.

"Whew!" says the panther, "That was close! That old German Shepherd nearly had me!"

Meanwhile, a squirrel who had been watching the whole scene from a nearby tree, figures he can put this knowledge to good use and trade it for protection from the panther. So, off he goes.

The squirrel soon catches up with the panther, spills the beans and strikes a deal for himself with the panther.

The young panther is furious at being made a fool of and says, "Here, squirrel, hop on my back and see what's going to happen to that conniving canine!"

Now, the old German Shepherd sees the panther coming with the squirrel on his back and thinks, "What am I going to do now?," but instead of running, the dog sits down with his back to his attackers, pretending he hasn't seen them yet, and just when they get close enough to hear, the old German Shepherd says...

"Where's that squirrel? I sent him off

an hour ago to bring me another panther!"

Moral of this story...

Don't mess with the old dogs... Age and skill will always overcome youth and treachery!

Brilliance only comes with age and

A History Lesson

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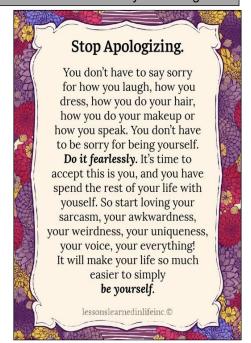


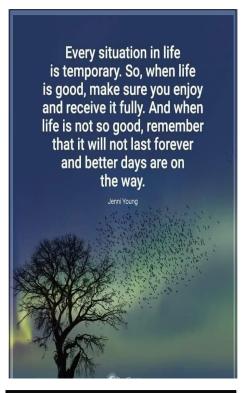
Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or "the upper crust:.

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of "holding a wake".

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a bone-house, and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive, so they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the graveyard shift) to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be, "saved by the bell" or was considered a "dead ringer".







On a thundering rainy day, Mom went to pick her six year son from school thinking that he will fear lightning. But she found him smiling at the sky for every lightning.. She asks, "Why are you smiling..?"
Son: "God is taking my Pictures & I need to look good.."

Life is simple. we complicate it. 🕮

Texting Codes?

The kids have all their texting codes...like:

BFF (best friends forever) LOL (laughing out loud)

ROFL (rolling on the floor laughing)

So why not some codes for seniors:

ATD - At the Doctor's

BFF - Best Friend's Funeral

BTW - Bring the Wheelchair

BYOT - Bring Your Own Teeth

CBM - Covered by Medicare

CUATSC - See You at the Senior Center

FWIW - Forgot Where I Was

FYI - Found Your Insulin

GGPBL - Gotta Go, Pacemaker Battery

Low

GHA - Got Heartburn Again

HGBM - Had Good Bowel Movement

IMHO - Is My Hearing-Aid On?

LMDO - Laughing My Dentures Out

LOL - Living on Lipitor

LWO - Lawrence Welk's On

OMSG - Oh My! Sorry, Gas

ROFL...CGU - Rolling on the Floor

Laughing...Can't get Up!

WAITT - Who Am I Talking To?

WTFA - Wet the Furniture Again

WTP - Where's the Prunes

WWNO - Walker Wheels Need Oil

GGLKI - Gotta Go, Laxative Kicking in!

Anagrams

When you rearrange the letters.

DORMITORY = DIRTY ROOM

SLOT MACHINES = CASH LOST IN ME ANIMOSITY = IS NO AMITY

ELECTION RESULTS = LIES - LET'S

RECOUNT

SNOOZE ALARMS = ALAS! NO

MORE Z'S

A DECIMAL POINT = I'M A DOT IN

PLACE

THE EARTHQUAKES = THAT QUEER

SHAKE

Anagram Answers: anagrams, April, August, bingo, car spa, cleaning, clowns, December, fall, farm supply, February, flowers, humour, insurance, January, July, June, lose weight, March, May, money, months, music, November, October, pay, personal care, pizza, plumbing, puzzles, rain, real estate, repairs, resolutions, roads, September, smoking, snow, spring, storm, summer, thunder, travel, vehicle, winter, work year

ELEVEN PLUS TWO = TWELVE PLUS ONE PRESBYTERIAN = BEST IN PRAY-FR

ASTRONOMER = MOON STARER DESPERATION = A ROPE ENDS IT THE EYES = THEY SEE

GEORGE BUSH = HE BUGS GORE THE MORSE CODE = HERE COME DOTS

And for the Grand Finale

MOTHER-IN-LAW = WOMAN HITLER



My wife and I got stuck in an elevator and when we got home, we told the story to our kids. They just looked at us and said,

"Soooo.....
...did ya get out?"

My wife and I looked at each other and made a pact to go ahead and start drinking away their college fund.

JANUARY ANAGRAM

Subject is General - 47 Words - Answers Bottom Left Page 7

Ε S O L U Т 0 Ν S Ε G В Χ В Ε R G Ζ Ζ F D Н U S В 0 0 Χ Ζ D N ΧE Ζ 0 R Y Ζ R M R Ν U G U F S Ν M Α S Ζ С Χ D Τ Ν Ε В Ζ Α Ζ Ε S R С Τ С G X Ε S R Ε M N AH Z MТ Т G R N RRRΝ V D N Н G Ε Т D В Ε В Κ R V L I R P A B Q K T R A V E L M C L K C R N W