

The Neptune Mirror



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Editor: Linda Morganstein Fen

“When God created time, He made enough of it.”

“I am grateful for the things I have, and for the things I don’t have.”

- Connie Baker



FROM THE EDITOR

Linda Morganstein Fen

Winter has arrived in Canada. We greet with delight the sparkling beauty of the first snow, followed by the stark reality of the insurmountable snow banks, slippery sidewalks and muddy grey slush soaking through our boots - daunting for those of us who yearn for a brisk walk to No Frills or beyond. The joys of winter skiing and skating are denied to those of us whose nimble years are long gone. The days grow shorter and the weather colder. The silhouettes of black leaf-shorn trees against a winter sky so brilliantly blue that it hurts the eyes only serve to underscore the wind-chill numbing arctic temperatures.

But soon the world will reach the turning point when each day gifts us with just a few more minutes of daylight and the promise of spring.

We celebrate with joy, brightly coloured lights or candles commemorating historic miracles replete with wonderful tales to capture the imagination of young minds, filling them with the magic of their ancestral faith.

In the meantime, let us bask in the warmth of friendships made and nurtured here in our home at 2 Neptune, the good and kind hearts of our chosen family.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Elka Pelt

Our previous issue of The Neptune Mirror, September 2022 arrived Erev Rosh Hashanah, in time to welcome the New Year 5783, a time of reflection and introspection. On both days of Rosh Hashanah residents gathered in our Social Hall to listen to the plaintive, wondrous sound of the forty blasts of the Shofar. A time of reflection, introspection, hope for Peace, health, personal fulfillment and asking for forgiveness of our wrongdoings and absolution for the wrongdoings of others. Yom Kippur brought closure to the ten days of self introspection. Our Sukkah was decorated with devotion and everyone was welcomed inside, to say the brochat, to have Kiddush and for those who chose, to be able to have their repast within the Sukkah. As in year's past, the annual Sukkot windstorm proved triumphant in damaging the Sukkah which had not been properly secured. The Ritual Committee has been charged with finding a solution before next year's High Holliday season.

We have many new residents who moved in over the past months with more lined up to move in, joining us here in our 2 Neptune Home. How fortunate we are to be able to live here together - good friends, concerned and helpful neighbours, maintaining our independence as best possible while aging in place.

For those of our community who have moved on to more dependent lifestyles, please remember they will miss us, as we will miss them. Some are close by either at Apotex or Baycrest Terraces and really are only as far away as a telephone call or a



short walk.

Our in-house entertaining programming season launched into full swing with the return of Happy Hour in mid-September, 2022, sponsored by Elka Pelt in honor of her husband Mel's 80th birthday in March of 2020 . COVID had shut down 2 Neptune activities in March of 2020. The monthly Birthday Parties also resumed and 2 Neptune residents were offered a variety of Baycrest@Home virtual programs. Some sessions were better received than others and the 2 Neptune participation will end at the end of December. Several live entertainers and lecturers have been brought in for our entertainment the past three months including The Enchanted Flutes, Across the Pond, a presentation by the Jewish Archives, a Dog Obedience School in house demonstration of their trained tricks, an outing to see Broadway Bound at the Teatron Theatre, performances by Rick Levine, Rudy and Esther at our December Birthday Party which also celebrated an Anniversary. Still to come are our Chanukah Dinner Party with entertainer Jonno Lightstone and the January 1st Brunch event with entertainer Rhonda Silver.

Our in house Library is now being revamped by a re-activated Library Committee, our monthly Book Review Club continues to evolve, and our Thursday morning Coffee Club in the Lounge for all residents is very successful, being open for business from 9:00 AM when our first Grocery shopping Bus leaves and continues sometime till 12:30. The last shopping bus arrives by 12 noon. The weekly shopping excursion alternates between Fortinos one Thursday and No Frills the alternate week. Metro did not work out so well on our trial. Lawrence Plaza was the preferred store but the Plaza protocol did not allow for our Shopping Bus to drop off and pick up close enough to the entrance.

Our Social Director Robert Danchuk has recently been challenged to undertake an overhaul in the choice of daily programs being offered to the residents. Some sessions are a re-vamp of long existing programs while others are entirely new program offerings. Many changes all presented at the same time require quite an adjustment and hopefully after a sufficient trial period there will be an increased participation level in these new daily activities.

We have a weekly piano performance in our Lobby on Mondays, 12:45 to 1:10 PM by Sara Lavner, a Lubavitch High School student. Sara is the daughter of the Associated Hebrew Schools Music Director Mr. Lavner who often entertains our residents with his outdoor program for the school. He also comes to Neptune before Chagim with classes of the students

and at Sukkot, just a short while ago, we are annual guests invited to their Sukkah to enjoy a bowl of soup made by the students. Because of rain on invitation day we were treated to indoor seating, but regardless of venue it was a very freilach visit with the children. We always enjoy the great sing along with the students.

Our beautiful outdoor garden is gradually bedding down for the winter season. The shrubbery is protected,. The outdoor furniture is being stored away; the beautiful flowering giant planters have changed to their winter evergreen and brightly decorated costumes. The snow blower is ready for driveway and courtyard action, though we are in no way encouraging an early demonstration. The winter season gradually approaches. Our Neptune snowbirds have taken flight and soon we will hear the shrieks of delight from our neighbouring school yard as the snowballs fly mid air and the snowmen don their caps and face decor.

For our own 2 Neptune winter observance, please, everyone, remember we are all vulnerable in regard to our health. **Medical advice offered continues to be to wash our hands, sanitize our equipment and though masks are not mandatory, we are told they are still the best protection.**

Enjoy the winter season and until Spring approaches....

Stay well! Test Negative!

MY AGONIZING BATTLE WITH AGING..

Rose Lenkov

I understand only too well the difficulties of a failing body. Even walking comes with the price of pain. Nothing like a little arthritis, or perhaps its cousin osteoarthritis, to remind you that you aren't 16 anymore!

Although it's true that I've been young and I've been old, and young is better, there are some compensations - not a lot. But we all know that growing old is much better than the alternative. And the nice thing about wrinkles is that they don't hurt!

No matter the physical challenges we face daily and their increasing intensity as we age, we "gotta accent the positive and eliminate the negative" to win and survive each little battle. Allow more music into your life to lift your spirits; be grateful for all your little blessings and enjoy more sunrises as you wake up each morning and start your day!

* Stay active: Remember, if you don't use it, you lose it.

* Smile: Even when the old "bod" is aching.

* Don't get discouraged: Just put one foot in front of the other and move forward.

* Stay proud: Since there's no shame in it, maybe just accept your seniority and the wisdom that supposedly comes with it.

I am reminded of a quote from artist Edward Stieglitz:

"And in the end, it's not the years in your life that count; it's the life in your years!"

Tsu Gezunt; Tsu Lebn; Tsu Longeh Yorn!

To Health; To Life; To a Long, Lively Lifetime Ahead!

DAME MAGGIE SMITH

Memorable quotations

* There's a difference between solitude and loneliness.

* Every woman goes down the aisle with half the story hidden.

* No life appears rewarding if you think about it too much.

* Speak your mind even if your voice shakes.

* Hope is a tease designed to prevent us from accepting reality.

* I am not a romantic but even I will concede that the heart does not exist solely for the purpose of pumping blood.

When Dad danced in the basement

Pearl Karal, September 2022

It was a cold wintry day in Winnipeg. The basement of our house was chilly because the heat produced by the wood-burning furnace was sent upstairs through the pipes to warm the rest of the house.

One day, when I was about ten, my mother asked my father to go down to the basement and bring up some dill pickles for dinner. Every fall, mom bought freshly picked cucumbers to make pickles. In a big wooden barrel, she put water, kosher salt, freshly peeled garlic, pickling spice, and a large stalk of dill. Then she added the cucumbers and let them sour, slowly and naturally.

That day, after mom sent dad downstairs to fetch pickles, she noticed that he'd been gone a long time and had not come back upstairs. So she sent me down to the basement to find out what was holding him back. I was halfway down the steps when I saw him. He was dancing around the room! What on earth would cause my father to dance in the basement? He was clutching at his clothes, his pants and his shirt, and was hopping from foot to foot. Then he stamped his feet, one foot, then the other. He kept repeating, "Go away! Go away!" It was quite a sight.

I was speechless. Had my father gone crazy? I had no idea what was going on, and my dad must have read that on my face. He kept hopping around, bending over, bending sideways, trying to do something... but I had no idea what.

Finally my dad blurted out, "A mouse ran up my leg under my pants!" Now I understood. His dance routine was his effort to shake



the mouse off his body and down his pants so it could come out through the bottom of his pant leg, without getting harmed. And he didn't want a squished mouse against his body.

As I stood there and stared, dad at last stopped dancing, and the mouse came out the bottom of his pant leg. It ran out of view, probably into the wood pile, and disappeared forever.

Now I understood why dad had been clutching at his body and his clothes and dancing, so the mouse could escape. But the mouse must have had other ideas. Maybe it didn't want to leave my father's warm body because the basement was so cold. It had found the only place in the basement where it could stay warm.

Finally my dad's strange behaviour made sense to me. We laughed all the way back up the stairs. I don't even remember if we brought pickles upstairs that day because we were so busy laughing.

Once we were upstairs, dad told the whole family what he had gone through. Everyone had a good laugh at my dad's adventure in the basement. Dad never saw that mouse again.

I don't know whether we had dill pickles for supper that evening, but we certainly had a good chuckle. And now we knew why dad had danced in the basement.

Another Day at the North York General Hospital Emergency

Simon Abecassis

(Editor: This took place a few summers ago. Has anything changed?)

It's a lazy summer Sunday afternoon in Toronto. The forecast says hot and muggy with lots of rain. But we need food so, rain or shine, it's grocery time.

Supermarketing is not exactly the most exciting thing to do but it must be done.

On a brisk walk to the car in the underground garage - suddenly, BANG! I hit my head on this massive piece of equipment hanging from the ceiling. I ran back to the apartment for emergency ice to try to calm the big bump quickly developing on my forehead and spreading, it seemed, everywhere. Serious. It was time to check it out.

I wanted to Uber myself to Emergency but Elaine insisted SHE had to take me, in spite of my protesting and reminding her the ordeal would take long, painful and boring hours. SHE TOOK ME ANYWAY because she is my guardian angel.

Half an hour later we were there. I had never seen such an overcrowded ER waiting room. With over 42 years in North York since we moved from Montreal, and several trips to the Hospital for my family and me, I should get frequent flyer points – maybe an X-ray. Two more times and I qualify for a Cat scan.

Based on previous experience, I thought it would take a good 12 hours before I would



even be seen by a doctor. Elaine was tired and needed to rest. I pleaded for her to go home and phone later for an update but she wouldn't have any of it. She was as anxious as I to know what was happening.

I had mixed feelings. I didn't want her to be so inconvenienced but at the same time, felt secure having her by my side. Her presence and moral support significantly reduced my stress and anxiety. I was in excellent hands.

Now the fun began. While Elaine went to park the car, I stood in line to see the receptionist, with ice on my head, feeling weak and in pain. The patient in front of me brought me a wheelchair and we traded places. What a gesture. It restored my faith in humanity. That is – until the unfriendly and overworked receptionist yelled: “NEXT!!!”

Like a robot she sped through a whole bunch of questions. Her body language gave the unequivocal message that she hated being there and I was one of the irritants.

“Why are you here?” (Like I really wanted to be here.)

“List of medications.” “When did it start?” and so on and so forth.

Every time it took more than a few seconds for me to answer, she displayed signs of disdain and exasperation – with no allowance for my condition.

I usually carry a list of meds before going to the doctor but this was an emergency – an unplanned emergency. (Aren't they all?) I was not organized. I take so many pills. To compound the problem, many of the prescriptions had been changed since my last visit to the ER, and the ones they had on file were identified by their chemical names – most of which I couldn't even recognize, let alone pronounce.

By that time my savior was back. The ice pad on my head was getting lukewarm and Elaine quickly asked security for another one.

The receptionist ordered me to go and sit in the Waiting Room and wait to be called by triage. This was to be the first long wait in a series of waiting rooms.

"Simon, please go to Triage B." the nurse called. She was pleasant, asked relevant questions, took my blood pressure, and told me to go to the Registration Waiting Room and wait to be called.

Another crowded area filled with patients mirroring Toronto's demographics – from infants to seniors – believe it or not, some even older than I am. People sneezing and coughing, moaning, talking loud enough to deprive others from their boring personal conversation, some even sleeping. Babies crying. Very encouraging. I'm here for the long haul.

"Simon, go to Registration Booth 2" Great! It's me. How sweet it is to hear my name. Maybe they will finally take me.

They put a band on my wrist just like tagging a piece of merchandise. They gave me a yellow folder and coincidentally asked me to follow the yellow arrows on the floor and yes, asked me to wait in the Waiting

Room. I know why we are called patients. Because you really, really have to be patient.

"Simon, please follow me. I'm Dr. X". A very pleasant young doctor. So young I don't think he even had his Bar Mitzvah yet. What does he know about medicine?

He asked the right questions. Less than a couple of minutes later, he ordered a Cat scan - I must have had enough frequent visitor points.

Shortly afterwards, an orderly took me to Imaging. You guessed it – to another Waiting Room. By now the ice pack was boiling. Elaine, who was always by my side and diligently advocating for me, brought another ice pack. She took a picture. I think she took it to remind me to be more careful in the future.

The Cat scan was taken quickly. What seemed like hours later, Dr. X called me and said the results showed – no concussion. Everything was normal.

Big sigh of relief. Both Elaine and I were elated and rushed back home.

I know there are better ways to spend your Sunday evenings, but reflecting on that incident, it is so gratifying to have the moral support of loved ones and, notwithstanding the imperfections of our Health Care system, we have the infrastructure, the equipment and more importantly, the people to come to our rescue.

NOTE: this incident occurred before the COVID-19 pandemic when non-Corona Virus-contaminated senior patients were still allowed to go to the hospital or buy groceries by themselves.



TO HONOUR YOU

Author unknown

“To honour you, I get up every day, take a breath, and start
another day without you in it.

To honour you, I laugh and love with those who knew your smile
and the way your eyes twinkled
with mischief and secret knowledge.

To honour you, I take time to appreciate everyone I love.
I know now there is no guarantee of days
or hours spent in their presence.

To honour you, I listen to music you would have liked,
and sing at the top of my lungs,
with the windows rolled down.

To honour you, I take chances, say what I feel, hold nothing back,
risk making a fool of myself,
dance every dance.

You were my light, my heart, my gift of love, from the very highest source.
So every day I vow to make a difference, share a smile, live, laugh and love.

Now I live for us both, so all I do, I do to honour you.”

TERROR AT THE AIRPORT

Beverley Kelman

Every year, May 30th is a reminder of the Lod Airport massacre and how it affected my life.

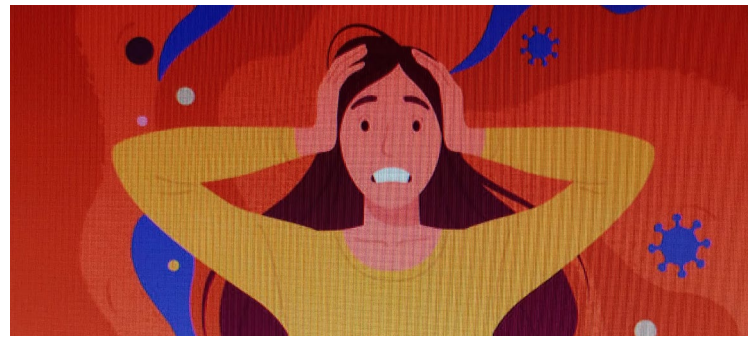
My parents decided to visit Israel for the first time in their lives. They were going to go with an organized Zionist group. However, very good friends had made Aliyah, and so they made the decision to go a few days earlier so as to spend some time with them. They were to join the group later.

They left on May 29th and were to arrive at Lod Airport (now Ben Gurion Airport) the following day before noon.

The following morning I happened to turn on the radio while I was washing the breakfast dishes. The news came on with the following news bulletin:

There has just been a terrorist attack and massacre at Lod Airport around noon in the arrivals section of Lod Airport.

Three members of the Japanese Red Army recruited by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – External Operations, attacked Lod Airport near Tel Aviv, killing 26 people and injuring 80 others. Two of the attackers were killed. While a third, Kozo Okamoto, was captured after being wounded. The dead comprised 17 Christian pilgrims from Puerto Rico, eight Israelis, as well as U.S. and Canadian citizens. The weapons used were Assault rifles and grenades.



My friend, who had heard the news, came flying over and we sat there and cried, as well as praying and saying Tehillim.

I then went to the phone and got the number of my parent's friend residence in Netanya, which was at least an hour from the Airport.

In those days, Long Distance calls were very expensive. After an hour and a half, someone answered the phone.

"Is Mrs. Lister there?"

"Just a minute" the person announced.

My heart was beating so fast with trepidation – and then my Mom got on the phone.

She began to yell and reprimand me. "We just arrived. Why are you calling already? This is Israel. Do you have any idea what kind of phone bill you are going to get from this call?"

I started to laugh and cry at the same time. My parents had fortunately not been aware of the incident. My Mom said that they had they had no idea what had occurred. However they had noted that about 20 minutes after they left there seemed to be soldier tanks going in the opposite direction past them.

What a close call! It reminds me of how fragile we are and that we never know what the future will bring.

From the mouth of a child

Pearl Karal

We were in a shoe store. Mother needed a new pair of shoes. I was about six, and my brother John was a year younger. I was sitting beside Mother on a chair. I remember exactly how we were sitting. The salesman made some pleasant comments, such as "What a nice family you have!" and he asked Mother several questions. He asked, "How old are your children?" She told him our ages, and said she also had an infant who was at home with my

grandmother. Mother told the salesman that John and I were one year apart. The salesman said, "It must be quite a challenge to deal with children so close together in age." Then I piped in, saying, "We really hadn't planned on having John, but you know how it is. We couldn't help it." My mother's face flushed a beet red. She paid for her shoes, and we left the store.

My mother never forgot the incident or her embarrassment. Mother couldn't figure out where I got those ideas. And to this day, neither can I.

Giving and Sharing

At the Eaton's store in downtown Winnipeg, parents could bring their children to see Santa Claus before Christmas. Santa wore a bright red hat and a long white beard. Each child came in turn and sat on his lap and told him what he or she wanted for Christmas.

I remember when I was about six, my mother walked me through the toy department to see all the toys, and we saw all the children lined up to see Santa, so my mother lined me up too. My mother and I waited in the lineup until my turn came. I wasn't shy. I walked right up to him and climbed up on his lap. He said, "What would you like for Christmas?" I mentioned a few things, and then I said I wanted a doll carriage. He said, "Well, if you're a good girl and do everything you're told, maybe Santa will bring you one." I replied, "No, last year I told you I wanted a doll carriage and I didn't get it. I don't believe you now." When my mother and I left the store, she told me she was very surprised at how I had talked back to Santa.

Since then, I've pondered why mom brought me to see Santa Claus. I do remember her saying, "We don't believe in Santa Claus but it's lots of fun." I now understand that she did this so that I as a Jewish girl would not feel left out at Christmastime. I wasn't going to get any Christmas presents, and I wasn't going to get anything from Santa Claus for sure. So she did this for me to be part of the



Christmas festivities to the extent that I could share in them.

Hanukkah was around this same time of year. My family celebrated Hanukkah by going to my grandparents for dinner on the first night of the holiday. My grandmother lit the Hanukkah candles in the Hanukkiah. She placed the Hanukkiah in the living room window where passersby could see it. I later learned that this was a custom so that the world would know that this was a special holiday for Jews. Each child in the family received a round chocolate covered with gold foil as a Hanukkah present.

When I had children, every year I gave my daughter a Christmas ornament to bring to the woman who lived across the street to hang on her Christmas tree. I wanted my daughter to experience the pleasure of participating in a joyous connection without the religious element. My daughter was happy to receive a candy cane in return. When she grew up, she told me that she had fond memories of that ritual. And I was pleased that she could experience the joy of giving.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE REPORT

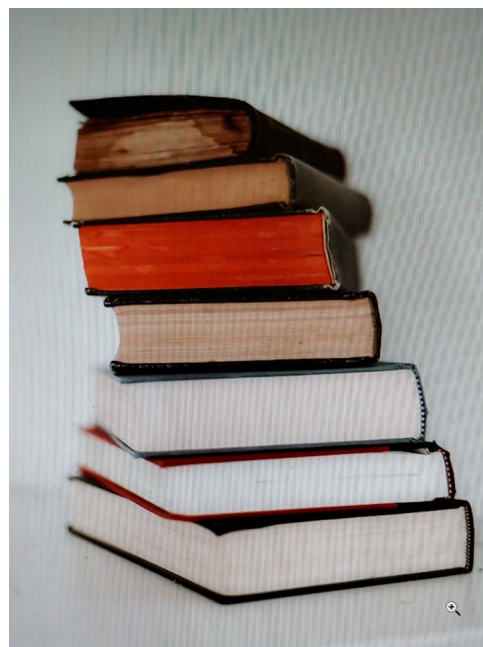
Sid Kardash

One of the enjoyable surprises encountered as a volunteer attending to our library duties is the finding of donated books that prove to be of fascinating interest to our readership. (Many of these, unfortunately, are of little interest or suitability for our residence.)

On a recent occasion, something immediately caught my interest and soon served to arrest my complete attention: a book by the Oxford historian and US Holocaust Memorial Museum scholar Gunnar S. Paulsson. This book, entitled “Secret City”, is subtitled “The Hidden Jews of Warsaw 1940-1945” and tells of a little known or discussed topic related to Holocaust studies: with the creation of the infamous Warsaw Ghetto, some 28,000 Jews, nearly a quarter of the remaining Jews, were able to escape by means of a secret network of established underground routes, aided by Jews, Poles and even Germans, so that some 11,000 Jews managed to survive to the end of the war in 1945.

(Even after the Warsaw Ghetto uprising of 1943, it was still possible to escape and blend into Polish society. It was difficult and fraught with danger, but possible.)

The author summarizes the fascinating history of that time “as the largest prison break in human history.”



The discovery of this one book opens up for all of us yet another “What if...” as related to our ongoing encounter with the shadow of the Holocaust.

So, after an emotional excursion into our fascinating past, I come back to the present, back to my perennial concern about the current state of our library which, for all intents and purposes, no longer serves as a special place where our thoughts can dwell in other worlds and other times. Books of all kinds are available but the solitude and immersion into other places and times that reading a book offers in a library setting, seems to have eluded us.

I and our committee would welcome any suggestions as to how we could make our 2 Neptune Library a more welcoming and rewarding experience.

A memory that makes me smile

Brucha Kazman

It was 1967 when the North York School Board had money to hire new teachers for the last two weeks of the school year to relieve teachers to do reports and have parent interviews. I was one of the new teachers.

One day when I was teaching, a man holding a clipboard came into the classroom, looking at the lights. I looked up, smiled and continued teaching

The next day I was called down to the principal's office. I was nervous, thinking something was wrong... thinking that maybe they had hired me too fast.

"Do you know who was in your class yesterday?" the principal asked.

"Yes, a lighting inspector." I replied.

The principal started laughing. I was puzzled but then he said, 'It was Dr. MacIntosh, the head of Special Education. He wants you to teach a Special Education class and you will be paid an extra five hundred dollars.'

(Considering my salary was forty-one hundred dollars in those days, that was a lot of money.)

"No, I am not interested" I said. "After all, I'm only trained to teach regular classes."

"You don't have a choice" he argued. "Dr. MacIntosh says "Special Education teachers are not made; they are born."

"Then I need to take a Special Education course."



"You need two years of teaching experience, so you don't qualify," he said.

So, I ended up teaching at Derrydown Public School in an Opportunity Class, as they were called then, with 17 kids, aged 10 to 14, with no aid. I was 20 years old and planned individual lessons till almost 2am every night except Shabbos. Needless to say that was the beginning of my Special Education teacher's career, very rewarding and meaningful. I loved it.

It makes me laugh, and I can still hear the laughter of that principal.

Another funny incident was when I was preparing for my first parent interview. I was so meticulous about looking older. I wore my hair in a French braid and dressed 'maturely' in my turquoise shirt and blue jumper. So, Robert Burley's parents said, before I could introduce myself, "My G-d, Mrs. Green, you look like a teenager!" (I was all of 20 years old.)

I guess G-d gave me the words. I said, "Thank you, but those days are long gone."

The last thing I will say that touches my heart is what a parent wrote on a card when I retired. "You have left footprints in our hearts."

SOMETHING FROM NOTHING

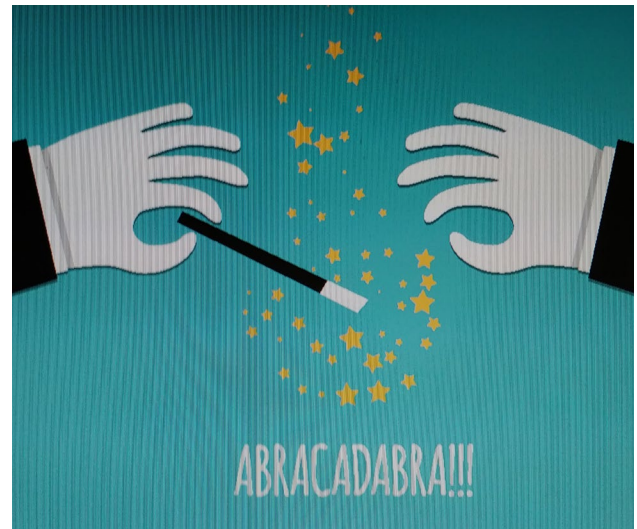
Linda Morganstein Fen

My grandmother Pearl was one of those wonderful women who could make something (usually something beautiful) out of nothing.

She was only 8 years old when her parents came to Canada from Romania in the late 1800s and, like most immigrants, they were desperately poor. As she grew up, she learned all the usual household chores and skills from her mother but had her own very specific idea of how things should be and look. She learned how to knit and crochet and later, she used those skills to create exquisite clothing for the ten children who were to come. I still have a (now-framed) pair of long stockings that were made for my own mother when she turned ten. They have an intricate and lacy fish scale pattern but, interestingly, were for everyday use!

Money was in short supply in those days and I remember watching my grandmother carefully unwind and separate ordinary household twine into fine threads with which she could create delicate lacy doilies. Ordinary household twine! She could also design and knit without patterns – she was an artist in her own right.

One day she brought one of her knitted dresses to Eaton's and was hired on the spot to create sample dresses and sweaters for the mannequins in the wool department. Her days were filled with



looking after her husband, mother-in-law and ten children (in a two bedroom house) so that the only time remaining for this fancy work was nighttime. And so it went. What stamina!

One might ask what she did with the money she earned. Yes, some of it went into the household but she had aspirations well beyond that. You see, my grandmother Pearl was a social climber, eager to win the approval of those she perceived as her social betters.

She took her hard earned pennies to buy such extravagances as sugar, walnuts, raisins and flour, and those “golden hands” would turn out the most delicious and delicate pastries for her highfalutin guests to marvel over.

Her specialty was strudel with made-from-scratch phyllo dough as thin as tissue paper. There were even those, usually men, who would carefully peel away the phyllo thinking it was indeed tissue paper.

As a teenager, I would watch her making the dough, carefully mixing it by hand,

literally by hand, rolling it out and then stretching it out, larger and larger until this tiny ball of dough covered the entire table. Her hands would reach under the dough and with her knuckles, stretch it carefully so thin that you could literally read a newspaper through it. It was magic to watch her. I was desperate to learn this wonderful skill and begged her to show me how. Modern teen of the 50's as I was, I'd hoped for a recipe and I sat at the table, pencil and paper at hand. "Well", she said,. "You take some flour and add the oil and a bit of water. Mix it together and there you have your dough." "But how much flour and how much oil?" "Just enough", she said, "until it feels

right." I never could get it right but my grandmother made that strudel until she entered a nursing home at the age of 90. On her last doctor's visit, she brought him a package of her famous strudel, crispy and delicious. I have never since tasted any dessert so sublime and, I'm sure, neither had he.

How many people take something and turn it into nothing. My grandmother could take nothing and transform it into something wonderful.

THE RING

Connie Baker

One day when Saul and I were dating we were out for a walk on College Street when I felt something under my shoe. It looked like a crushed ring. I must add at this point that often over many years I have found various things but nothing like this. Saul by trade was a jeweler who worked with gold, diamonds, etc. He studied this piece of "junk" that I had picked up and, after several minutes, said, "Would you like me to take it to work and see if I can do anything with it?" "OH, YES!" my 18 year old self replied enthusiastically.

Some time passed and one morning bright and early, he called, and in a short time



told me that he had shown the 'new' ring to his father who studied it, turned it over and around, and then said in his broken English, "WIT SUCH A RING, GOLD AND DIAMONDS AND RUBIES, A PERSON COULD BE ENGAGED."

SILENCE on my end of the phone...

Then I said, "OKAY WITH ME", and so I was engaged. On the phone.

Thus began an amazing 72 year marriage.

NEW NOISE

Selma Lis



Help!

There has been an invasion of my
ACOUSTICAL AIR SPACE!

New noises have penetrated my unit
and destroyed

the peace and serenity I once knew.

Electrical impulses fly around my ceiling and produce irritating
sounds such as pops, clicks, clanks and crackles.

Horrors! Post-midnight knocking sounds have also entered
my bedroom, causing sleep disturbance
and related health deficits.

And, to add injury to insult, there is the occasional
VERY LOUD, EARTH SHATTERING, morning bedroom bang!

What could this be?

What could possibly be causing these unusual sounds that have
proven to be resistant to the traditional noise blockers I have tried,
such as sound machines, ear plugs and carpet?

Nobody seems to know anything about the source of this disturbance!

IT REMAINS A MYSTERY!

MY EARS TRY TO INTERPRET WHAT MY EYES CANNOT
SEE.

Can it be a motorized electrical device which uses a sound pick-up
to modulate and direct force?

Can it be a main switch that makes a LOUD pop sound
when turned on/off?

Who knows? Just a guess!

The problem is not only the degree of loudness, which can be measured in decibels,
but the electrical signals which penetrate my body and ears.

NEVER, NEVER IN MY TENANCY CONTRACT DID I AGREE TO
SHARE

MY UNIT'S ACCOUSTICAL AIR SPACE!

THEN, ONE DAY, FOR WHATEVER REASON, CHANGE OCCURRED.

For whatever reason:

some of the sounds seemed muffled and less jarring
- but the problem was still there!

For whatever reason:

months later, the disturbing noises sounded more distant
- another partial improvement!

For whatever reason:

unfortunately the improvements were not consistent
- the noise "occupation" remains!

It's been quite a "noise journey."

It is better now but it is not over.

A change from NEW NOISE to NO NOISE,
both literally and figuratively
would be a most welcome New Year's gift!

HAPPY 2023

GRIEF IN BITS AND PIECES

Lorraine Levinson

Downsizing is a particular word for shedding – the leaving behind as you move on, the letting go of the un-necessities you could never part with, which became finally dispensable but terribly, sadly, forever gone. When that day is your day, the ground shakes. It is an activity forcing you to redesign the person you thought you were – toughly grounded and dependably flexible to adjust to the unknown. But here you are reducing your life's gatherings to ghostly memories, treasures disappearing by bits and pieces. Each loss must be grieved, as the lesser new things will sadly not have time to be exchanged and loved.

You fight for the exceptions, and then watch with hooded eyes as the losers each march out the door with not even a goodbye.

The steady exit called 'downsizing' is suppose to lighten the load of gatherings from your lifetime of marriage and children to a simple, easy spare presence. Unfortunately the inevitable loneliness and descending silence inhabit the emptiness. The smiles of familiarity and the warmth of all the past clutter are timed out.

It was the next piece after that last piece, leaving its emptiness behind that feels like death. The loss is not from your body like a finger or an arm or toe, but all bits of you. Their home was your heart.

How to accommodate to the denuded surroundings, which a short time ago billowed with life giving warmth, is a test

of your seemingly steely endurance. Each photo of those whose hair turned white, and those long gone, can be named. In the preciously preserved photos they still give you back their smiles of youth from childhood, reminding of years at the beach or living rooms of celebrations, drinks in their hands and exquisite gowns in proud formal attire. Decisions, to take them or leave them to their time, put more sleepless hours into your war against relentless grief.

They say I will feel better when all the clutter has disappeared and my rooms are neatly and beautifully spare, every corner useful to the last particle, leaving space for a newly invented activity for tomorrow. It is a time for new beginnings with other downsized souls, they say, but time is quickly becoming yesterday, when it is too late to hurry.

I will wake up tomorrow and clear out the last of the dust covered nameless space takers at the back of the closet. Downsizing is the song of grieving.

When all the bits and pieces have marched out the door, leaving just the minimal essentials, to which you can add a few additions to colour and fill your new stage, you lock the door and smile for the ones you dearly love who have aided your downsizing, and who have prayed for your resilience. You and they both know that without them, your endeavour and resolve would not have endured.

You see their tears behind the façade of strength and hope they gift to you.

They knew those were only things that marched out the door and that you have

all lost them together. You will heal, and they will be by your side, continuing to cherish you and their past as they always have.

The fact of downsizing is indigenous to many species. For some, it is called shedding. They may grow new warm feathers or healthy thick fur when winter comes and life tells their bodies it is time. So it is with us.



Miscellaneous December 2022

To my children:

Never make fun of having to help me with computer stuff.

I taught you how to use a spoon.

My kids laugh because they think I'm crazy.

I laugh because they don't know it's hereditary.

THE BIG ROBBERY - MY HERO

Arlene Shnall

In the 1980's, drugs and cigarettes were the big commodity for theft. Our drug store was broken into many times with drugs the main target. Even though the alarm would sound, they never got the drugs but the damage to the store entrance would have to be repaired that same night. Many nights the alarm company would call us and we were awakened to go down to the store.

It was very common for stores to have major theft. One time there were 2 break-ins - the front door was broken and then the front window.

The first time it happened, the front door was ajar and the alarm had stopped. As soon as we arrived at the store, I reported it to the police. Their comment was, "You go in; then call us." "Are you kidding?" I said. "Send a car!"

Then, on one particular evening about seven pm, this happened. Although I usually locked the door, for some reason I was distracted. A man, well-dressed and clean shaven, walked in and bought a package of gum.

He walked to the back of the store and handed a note to my husband. I thought he was handing over a prescription but I was wrong. My husband called me and said, "Come to the back. He has a gun and has asked for Percodan."

My husband walked slowly to the narcotic cabinet and slowly opened the



door. The man was getting impatient and said, "Get the Percodan!" My husband slowly looked into the cabinet and finally pulled out the bottle. He walked very slowly towards the man, went down the step into the store, past the man who began to yell, "'Give me the Percodan!!!"

In walked a customer, not sure what was going on but witnessing my husband still walking slowly, and the man shouting "Give me the bottle!"

My husband walked to the front door, opened it and moved to the side, noting that the lobby and hall were filled with people. The man, seeing that he could not get the Percodan, fled.

Unfortunately, the customer, who I knew was an undercover narcotic agent, had just come back after a skiing accident and could not run after him. We went down to the Police Station to see if we could identify the would-be robber but there were no mug shots.

We were on City TV that night but the experience haunted us for some time.

SMOKE - A LOVE STORY

Lorraine Levinson

At another time, in seemingly another world, on Dec. 25th, 1927, the nurse opened the door of the delivery room of the Gale Hospital, carrying a 9 pound baby girl with brown curly hair. "I am sorry, Arthur, I couldn't bring you Jesus," she said, "but I brought you Mary."

Did that tiny newborn catch the waft of cigar smoke even then, as Dad gazed into the barely open eyes of his third daughter? Perhaps there was even a glowing cigar that he had just deposited in an ash tray, so he could take me into his arms.

All his life, I recall a cigar between the pointer and third fingers, and I can smell the smoke that permeated the house. Every ash tray was especially positioned to receive the daily stale cigar butts, whose after smell circulated relentlessly, an odour that Mother hated. (Cigar smoke is supposed to be particularly unpleasant, but not for me. It has forever been the precious reminder of a father that I adored.) Dad's perception of cigars was entirely different. He long ago declared that there would be no smoking of any kind in our home. "It is a stinking and rotten habit, and none of you will ever smoke." Period!!! His wife and 3 daughters never did.

I bucked all temptations to smoke while growing up, in spite of the cigarette frenzy among all my friends. Then World War II struck. Everyone's anxiety was on a new high. Each day brought terrifying news which came only on the radio or in newspapers or newsreels at the movie theatre between films.



Hollywood went into high gear to ameliorate the fearsome news of wartime terrors and uncertainty everywhere. The fighting was over there, on the other side of the world. But here in small town America, the war brought unrelenting news of horror, never ending fear for the men who went off to fight. We all ached for any moments of forgetting.

Meanwhile Hollywood was gloriously busy creating dreams, designing escape – music, grand exorbitantly gala films, and glorious love. Everyone was aching to be transported into a fairy story. They ran to see the likes of Clark Gable and Vivian Leigh, Humphrey Bogart and, Ingrid Bergman, and listen to the velvet heartwarming strains of Frank Sinatra. Or joyously jump with the Andrew Sisters, or swing with Benny Goodman. All that helped us forget the frightening nightmares of war.

In addition to the magnificent men who sent us into glorious groans of screeching delight, Hollywood came to the rescue with an exciting new sex symbol – the cigarette. The silent swirling smoke rings

in a cigarette moment were fabulously titillating, a timely and welcome substitute for overt sexual encounters. I would have died to have Paul Henreid light two cigarettes and gaze adoringly into my wistful eyes as he slipped one lighted cigarette between my eager lips, just as he did with Bette Davis in “Now Voyager.”

After four grueling war years, peace was declared. It was time to retrieve the vitality of our old lives and go on. Cigarettes had become the norm, and it was all the rage in colleges, where I was about to embark on the next step of my life.

On my first day at the Junior College where I was to spend the next 2 years, I was introduced to the in-place on campus, a small house with a special room called the “smoker”. Eager to fit in, I forged ahead, and opened the door into a hazy cloud of barely visual chattering magpies. I choked in unrelenting gasps, and groped my way out through the smog, reluctantly accepting my sentence of denial, forever. I would never be that irresistible Hollywood doll with a cigarette between those perfect fingers and a come-on look. My future would be smokeless.

Three years after Junior College, I was finally admitted to McGill University in Canada. Co-ed colleges all over America had accepted only returning male war veterans immediately after the War, and I was determined to attend a co-ed college.

On the McGill campus, my first week in Montreal, there walking towards my girlfriend and me, was a tall, handsome, young medical student. He was smoking a pipe. We were introduced.

On our first date, I knew my single days were numbered. Smitten and dumb with love, we gazed into each other’s eyes over a candle-lit table. He slowly withdrew a beautifully carved pipe from his lusciously inviting lips, (Pause), and then blew exquisite swirls of smoke rings into my love-dazed eyes, suddenly fogging my killer glasses. “Vous fumez mes fenetres.” I proudly proclaimed in my brand new adulterated French – which translates into “You smoke my windows!!” I felt wonderfully clever, as I had just arrived in very French Quebec. He fell in love with me immediately – I had found my very own Paul Henreid, and I was his own Bette Davis.

As smoking became unsexy and an unquestionable health hazard, my husband’s array of exquisitely carved pipes was relegated to a beautiful mahogany pipe rack. They were lined up like soldiers. Next to the pipes was a special little drawer filed with fresh loose tobacco, and holding a special pusher to tamp it down perfectly, waiting for a divine interlude of a perfect smoke.

One day, years later, all the soldiers, the tobacco, the pusher and the mahogany pipe rack, just disappeared.



LONE SOLDIER JOURNAL ENTRY

This is from the journal of a Canadian young man, 18 years old, who had made Aliyah as a Lone Soldier, one who has no family in Israel. He had barely begun his Basic Training and was asked for his impressions.

“So far, in one month, strangers turned into friends, friends turned into memories, vodka turned into water, and family turned out to be a thing I actually liked. Learned how to make sexual references about your mother in six languages but never learned how to apologize, and learned that vodka yogurt is gross. Had some great memories back home, but tonight it’s time to make more.”

“Haven’t experienced anti-Semitism once in the last 6 weeks! (Perhaps that’s because everyone on the Ulpan is Jewish?)”

Someone back in Canada asked me “How’s the Promised Land treating you, buddy?” “Good. It’s everything they promised.”

“Most people stop the first time they get it right. That’s when professionals are just starting.”

He went on to make his mark, both physically and morally in the IDF, and to make his family immensely proud.



OVEN BAKED SESAME CHICKEN

2 chicken breasts (or 5 boneless,
skinless thighs) cubed

1/3 cup flour

Place chicken in a zip lock bag
with the flour. Shake to coat.
Place in 8x8 pan.

SAUCE

¼ cup ketchup

½ cup brown sugar

¼ cup vinegar

¼ cup (olive) oil

1 T prepared mustard

¼ cup warm water

Mix together until smooth.

Pour sauce over the chicken and
sprinkle with 1 T sesame seeds.

Cover pan tightly with foil and
bake at 350F for 1 hour.

Uncover pan and bake another 15 minutes.

Serve with rice.



Life with Tubby

Pearl Karal

Dad went to the barber one day and came home with much more than a haircut.

He was holding in his arms a little black bundle of fur, -- a puppy. Dad had not intended to buy a dog, but the barber's dog had just had puppies, and my father couldn't resist. Dad knew that Mother loved animals and that she would not have the heart to say no to a puppy.

This little puppy was round, with big black eyes and a waggly tail. His breed was undeterminable, just like his mother.

My father had known that my mother could not resist. And she did not. She welcomed the puppy, held him, and immediately designated one of our plates for his food and another for his water. Tubby had arrived. We were all delighted to welcome the new family member.

When we were discussing what name to give him, I thought he looked a little tubby. Underneath he had a big tummy for a small dog. So I suggested the name Tubby. And Tubby it was.

He settled in easily. He received a great deal of affection, and Mother carried on long conversations with him in soft tones. He soon became very devoted to her.

We could not afford to buy a bed for him, so he decided to sleep on the pile of dirty laundry that was generally on the bathroom floor waiting to be washed. He made his own bed by pawing at the pile of laundry to loosen it, then wiggling himself into it for warmth.



I don't remember how Mother trained him, but I do recall that she talked to him a lot. In Yiddish. And I remember how he looked at her and listened with such attention. He was fixed on what was coming out of her mouth. She'd say things like, "You mustn't scratch the door." Or, "You go over there now." And he would obey. He was housetrained easily. Mother spoke to him with a pleasant, encouraging and praising tone of voice, and she was very patient. When she had to reprimand him, his head would hang down, his tail would lie flat, and he avoided her eyes. He could not say it in words, but it was clear that he understood he had misbehaved. He was quick to learn what was expected of him.

Tubby fitted into our family easily. Little did we know what a character we had adopted, and what surprises were in store for us in life with Tubby.

Wait for the next instalment of "Life with Tubby" in the next issue of the Mirror.



EMMA LAZARUS AND THE STATUE OF LIBERTY

As a Jewish American writer and activist Emma Lazarus (1849 - 1887) is most famous for her poem “The New Colossus”, a tribute to refugees and immigrants that is engraved at the base of the Statue of Liberty.

Lazarus, who was of Jewish Portuguese and Sephardic background, was asked to write the poem to raise money for the construction of the statue’s pedestal. She drew inspiration from the work she did as an aide for refugees on Ward’s Island.

“GIVE ME YOUR TIRED,
YOUR POOR,
YOUR HUDDLED MASSES
YEARNING TO BREATHE FREE,
THE WRETCHED REFUSE OF
YOUR TEEMING SHORE.
SEND THESE, THE HOMELESS,
TEMPEST-TOST TO ME,
I LIFT MY LAMP BESIDE THE
GOLDEN DOOR.”

-

THE PROMISE OF THE NOVEMBER WINDS

Linda Morganstein Fen

The skies are the colour of dingy sheets on the clothesline, the sun a washed out Frisbee, perhaps just a figment of our imagination.

One brilliantly coloured leaf rimmed with brown finally gives up the ghost and releases its stubborn hold on an otherwise bare tree branch. She soars like a hawk riding the thermals but eventually descends, perhaps just wanting to join the others carpeting the yellowing garden below.

Just as our aerial traveler has almost reached her destination, another gust of wind picks her up and tosses her high, far above the ground, making her twirl round and round in a frantic hora, dancing ever closer to the trees.

The wind seems to be trying to reunite the leaf with the tree that gave her life but, alas, it is not to be. Down she goes again. Here she will shrivel and die, as she and the others cover and protect the garden from winter's scourge. The sleeping plants will survive and in the spring, their beauty will once again astonish and delight us.

Thank you, leaf. Sleep in peace...



KEEP YOUR LEGS STRONG

Editor: this article from March 2021 is being reprinted by request by one of our residents. It is still relevant and important today.)

* Aging starts from the feet upward. When we are old, our feet must remain strong.

* Among the signs of longevity, as summarized by the US magazine "Prevention", strong leg muscles are listed at the top as "the most important and essential one."

* Do not move your legs for 2 weeks and your leg strength will decrease by 10 years.

* As our leg muscles weaken, it will take a long time to recover, even if we do rehabilitation exercises later.

* Therefore, regular exercise like walking is very important.

* The whole body weight remains on the legs, with the feet bearing the weight of the human body.

* Interestingly, 50% of a person's bones and 50% of the muscles are in the legs. Both legs together have 50% of the nerves, 50% of the blood vessels, and 50% of the blood flowing through the human body. It is this large circulatory network that connects the body.

* The largest and strongest joints and bones are also in the legs.

* Strong bones, strong muscles and flexible joints form the "Iron Triangle" that carries the most important load on the human body.



* 70% of human activity and burning of energy is done by the two feet.

* Did you know this? When a person is young, his thighs have enough strength to lift a small car?

* Only when the feet are healthy does the current of blood flow smoothly, so people who have strong leg muscles will definitely have a strong heart.

* As a person gets older, the accuracy and speed of transmission of instruction between the brain and the legs decrease, unlike that of a young person. In addition, the so-called Bone Fertilizer Calcium will sooner or later be lost with time, making the elderly more prone to bone fractures.

* Did you know that 15% of elderly patients will die within a year of a thigh-bone fracture? Fractures in the elderly can easily trigger a series of complications, especially fatal conditions such as brain thrombosis.

* Exercising the legs is never too late, even after the age of 60 years.

* Although our feet will gradually age with time, exercising them is a life-long task.

* Please walk for at least 30-40 minutes daily to ensure that your legs receive sufficient exercise so your leg muscles will remain healthy.

THE JEWISH HISTORY OF BAZOOKA BUBBLE GUM

(From a penny candy business to a global cult sensation)

Joanna O'Leary

Chew on this: One of America's most iconic gum brands was originally a Jewish-owned tobacco business.

In 1891, Morris Chigorinsky emigrated from Russia to the United States, where in the early 1900's he assumed control of the American Leaf Tobacco Company. But by 1938, Chigorinsky's (who by then had changed his surname to Shorin) business was flailing. His four sons, Abram, Ira, Joseph and Philip decided to save the family from certain penury by starting a new penny candy business, Topps Chewing Gum Inc., whose name was borrowed from the eponymous Chattanooga candy company they purchased.

Following the end of the Second World War, the Shorin brothers aggressively set about supplanting their then-dominant competitor Double Bubble, manufactured by Fleer, through the launch of Bazooka Bubble Gum. The gum cleverly capitalized on the nation's post-war patriotic pride in the wake of their recent victory, not only via its name (derived from the rocket-propelled weapon invented and deployed by American troops) but also through its red, white and blue packaging.

The product sold well, but in 1953 Topps made an alteration to the design that proved to be a game changer: the inclusion of small comic strips starring Bazooka Joe, a swashbuckling kid who donned a black



eye patch and got into various scrapes and adventures with his crew of streetwise companions. The wrappers (of which there were ultimately over 1,500 manufactured) also featured fortunes and immediately became collector's items among consumers and candy enthusiasts, who still buy and sell vintage strips on online auction websites. While the original flavor continues to be the best seller, Topps has also introduced variations such as Grape Rage, Cherry Berry and Watermelon Whirl.

In 2012, Bazooka discontinued the inclusion of comics in favour of "brainteaser" wrappers and subsequently found themselves in a sticky situation. Loyalists were displeased and chewed out corporate honchos for the most unwelcome change. In 2019, Topps responded to the call to adhere to the original look by issuing a Throwback Pack intended to be "inspired by the brand's iconic original packaging" with "nostalgic 1980's graphics and Original Flavor Bazooka Bubble Gum wrapped in classic comics."

Testaments to Bazooka's enduring popularity have bubbled up over the

years in sitcoms such as “How I Met Your Mother”, “Seinfeld” and “King of Queens”. The candy made a particularly sweet cameo in an episode of “30 Rock”, in which NBC exec. Jack Donaghy (Alec Baldwin) erroneously and hilariously claimed Bazooka’s founder inherited a quarry of pink rocks, and then baked them to transform them into gum.

While Bazooka continues to be cherished in many countries, the gum has amassed a

particularly unique cult following in Israel. In the 1960’s, Islico Ltd. began making Bazooka in Tel Aviv; it was taken over by Lieber Co. in the 70’s, then assumed in the 1980’s by the food conglomerate Strauss-Elite, which continues to manufacture the candy today – in addition to snack mashups like Bazooka-flavored marshmallows and even milk!

TRADITION

Lazar Greisdorf

My parents, who were both born around the beginning of the last century, met in a teachers’ seminar. They wanted to get married but there were a few hurdles that had to be overcome first.

First, my father didn’t have enough money to buy a wedding band, so my mother borrowed a wedding band from her older sister, and also asked her to bake a honey cake (a lekekha)

Eventually my father scrounged together enough money to buy a bottle of vodka. Armed with the wedding band and the bottle of vodka, they went to the local rabbi to prepare the ktuba.

But there was one more hurdle to overcome. According to Jewish tradition, three adults were needed to act as



witnesses. So, my father stepped outside and invited three beggars to come in.

No doubt everyone enjoyed some vodka with a piece of lekakh. And so the knot was tied permanently.

PUNS OF THE DAY

Can you keep from groaning?

- * When everything is coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.
- * Cows have hooves because they lac-tose.
- * I have a few jokes about unemployed people, but none of them work.
- * She had a photographic memory but never developed it.
- * What's the difference between a hippo and a Zippo? One is really heavy and the other is a little lighter.
- * Hear about the new restaurant called "Karma"? There's no menu – you get what you deserve.
- * I went to buy some camouflage trousers yesterday but couldn't find any.
- * What do you call a bee that can't make up its mind? A maybe.
- * I tried to sue the airline for losing my luggage. I lost my case.
- * A cross-eyed teacher couldn't control his pupils.
- * Is it ignorance or apathy that's destroying the world today? I don't know and I don't care.
- * I wasn't originally going to get a brain transplant but then I changed my mind.
- * Which country's capital has the fastest growing population? Ireland. Every day it's Dublin.
- * My ex-wife still misses me. But her aim is starting to improve.
- * The guy who invented the door knocker got a no-bell prize.
- * I used to be indecisive; now I'm not so sure.
- * Sleeping comes so naturally to me, I could do it with my eyes closed.
- * What did the grape say when it got stepped on? Nothing – but it let out a little whine.
- * What do you call a super articulate dinosaur? A Thesaurus.

