Honored Senior Dianne Bubnar
Energizing the Older Persons’ Commission for over 21 years!!

By Diane Kaniut

Dianne Bubnar, OPC’s Enrichment Manager, will be retiring in December. Everywhere you find Dianne you find her smiling face, enthusiasm, and willingness to do whatever is needed for the success and members’ enjoyment of OPC programs. She has pep in her step and a can-do attitude. Dianne welcomes everyone with open arms (members, volunteers, community partners, and guests). She is always an ambassador for the people and the organization wherever she goes—even dancing on a parade float. Hers will be big shoes for the new person to fill.

Dianne joined the Older Persons’ Commission staff in June 1998. Initially she worked part time in the Volunteer Department recruiting volunteers to support programs and services. Coordinating this critical function was done totally by telephone—no computers then. She soon learned which specific volunteers she could call on who liked which events. Membership was growing and every program relied heavily on many volunteers.

Dianne says, Marve Miller was the driving force behind the expansion of the center and move to our current location. When plans for the new building began, the biggest project was to get a tri-city bond millage passed. Dianne, along with coworker Fran Wolfert and Christy Weisenbach, soon became the “Bond Girls.” Constant effort was required to recruit and organize volunteers to make phone calls and write personal notes to encourage seniors, friends, family, neighbors, and local tri-city residents to vote “yes” on the millage. During this same time, Barbara Bush came to OPC (complete with Secret Service people and trained dogs). Dianne says, It was an exciting and unforgettable day.

In 2003 Dianne moved to the Program Department to work with Rhonda Nelson, just as OPC moved into the new building. The Grand Opening of 650 Letica Drive was the building’s first big event with a special invitation to recognize the generous donors and volunteers, along with the public, to view the new OPC home. Since then Dianne has been responsible for programs that include the India group of card game players, the “jamming” guitar group, the ukulele “strumming fun” group, foreign language groups, computer classes, various music activities, and a variety of dance classes. The Lifelong Learning program with Oakland University professors provides lectures that contribute to the knowledge of the membership.

The Women’s Luncheon is fun to plan with special speakers and specific menus, provided by the amazing OPC Nutrition Department, that are kindly served by the OPC men waiters. Dianne recently took over the performing arts programs that include the 650 Players and 650 Nite Club. She still chuckles as she relates the story of her own 650 Players debut….

I have always wanted to be part of the 650 family, to perform with them. One show had a wedding scene and the part of the bride was played by a very slender young lady. Unfortunately, she came down with a virus and by virtue of my size I was drafted to be the bride at one performance. Fortunately, there was a veil to conceal the fact that this bride was really too old! It did produce laughter among the staff at the lunch table!

Since I have been employed at the OPC, I have attended every production of the 650 Players. You should too!

I so appreciate the talent and versatility of this group of seniors!

Renee Cortright, OPC Executive Director, said,

The first time I met Dianne, she was so welcoming. Her positive energy was as contagious then as it is now. Dianne is a walking encyclopedia with OPC and Rochester history, plus a few saints in her back pocket. Dianne will now have a chance to sit back and enjoy the programming she’s worked so hard to develop over the years. She not only deserves it, she has earned it!!

Dianne has been organizing the very popular OPC Picnic event filled with entertainment, food, and camaraderie. Dianne and Paula Bedsole, Fine Arts and Crafts Manager, have combined their talents and energy to plan and oversee many successful events that support the department. They became fast friends that love and respect each other. Warmly, Dianne reflects,

Paula is the right brain, artsy one, and I’m the left brain, analytical one…combined we’re a special team that balances each other! It is not often that you find someone who can finish your thoughts and do what needs to be done before the words are out of your mouth!

(Continued on page 2)
As the OPC membership grew to the current 17,000 seniors aged 50+, programs responded to changing interests. According to Dianne, Seniors are interested in education and taking care of themselves—exercising, eating better, having fun!

Programs are both the traditional, long-time offerings and the new, up-to-date topics that add to the lives of OPC members. Dianne is quick to share with the readers that her favorite stories are always about how the OPC touches people's lives.

It happens every day at the OPC! After a recent October Healthy Brain series was over, I stopped by the room to retrieve the signage for the sponsor. There were two ladies at one of the tables lost in conversation with one another. I stopped to chat and get their feedback on the program. They shared with me that they had just met and were exchanging phone numbers and making plans to get together! There really is no better feeling than bringing people together and enriching their lives. This happens all the time, all over the building, in every department.

Dianne, beaming her familiar smile, says, The baby boomers are creating a silver tsunami. Younger seniors bring even more ideas and contagious energy to OPC. Our older members bring their wisdom, spunkiness, and experiences.

Dianne is quick to emphasize: Everything I’ve done has been a team effort. What I have achieved has been possible only because of strong support by every OPC staff member and countless volunteers. I couldn’t have done it without each and every one—from the hundreds of bond volunteers, to the people who brought me new ideas and made them happen, to that cadre of staff who support programs week in and week out. As a teen, Dianne received an “I Dare You” award that encouraged her and others to make a difference in their world. Their motto was: “Aspire nobly. Adventure daringly. Serve humbly.”

Dianne reflects...

I will be forever grateful for my years here! Working at the Older Persons’ Commission, affectionately called “The OPC,” has been more than just a job for me. Every time we touch peoples’ lives, we make a difference.

And Dianne, this is what keeps that warm, welcoming smile on your face. We are grateful and honored. We’ll see you around the OPC...still energizing and spreading your enthusiasm.▼
When Sammy saw Santa Claus

By Sam Seabright

Little Sammy lived on the hill up the creek, and he loved Christmas. He was a four-year-old—when life is filled with endless possibilities. It was Christmas Eve after supper and already dark outside. Sammy sat at the kitchen table putting together a jigsaw puzzle. His mom was washing dishes. His dad went downstairs into the cellar to shake clinkers in the coal furnace.

The season was full of anticipation as Sammy looked up to see his large, empty, red Christmas stocking hanging in the doorway to the front room. Sammy wondered what it would contain the next morning—candy, toys, puzzles—or a lump of coal? He tried to be a “good” boy by doing daytime chores that his mom assigned and by practicing numbers and letters most evenings with his mom and dad at the homemade blackboard on the wall. Next year he would be in the first grade of school, and he would be ready.

His mind drifted to what he wanted for Christmas. What he really wanted was an electric train—like the pictures he saw in the Sears catalog. He fervently hoped Santa would deliver. Sammy had high hopes!

From the corner of his eye, Sammy saw something flash by the window. It was probably a snow flurry. But then the image returned. It was a person. Sammy jumped up from his chair and ran to the window. Sure enough, there was a bearded old man in a red coat and red toboggan hat. Oh my! There is only one person that could be: Santa Claus! Sammy ran to another window, only to see Santa fading away into a windblown swirl of snow.

Sammy screamed, “Mommy, Daddy, did you see him? I just saw Santa Claus outside.” His mom was still doing dishes, and his dad was still in the cellar. Sammy jumped up and down and ran back and forth, almost bouncing off the walls. He screamed, “Daddy, Daddy, come upstairs! You can’t believe who I saw! Santa Claus!”

His dad came up from the cellar, scooped up Sammy and hugged him, and his mom turned around and hugged them both.

Next morning, Sammy was the first one awake, and he bolted downstairs from his bedroom. He looked at the Christmas stocking, now full and heavy. In the front room there was a real Christmas tree with lights, icicles, and ornaments, and there underneath was an electric train all hooked up and ready to run. His mom put the big red Christmas stocking on the kitchen table for Sammy to empty. He pulled out nuts, an orange, new socks, and a new toothbrush. Digging deeper, he found a yoyo, top, slicky, and penknife. Even deeper, down in the foot...there was candy.

His mom said his dad also got a Christmas gift: a bonus and a raise. Sammy thought that sounded pretty good too—they all hugged again. Yes, little Sammy, you saw Santa Claus: the image of hope and caring and of life’s pleasant surprises. Always keep that sense of wonderment and joy.

Our Best Christmas Gift Given

By Jim Ahearn

Until age 20, I was an avid model airplane builder and successful free-flight contest competitor. One of my winnings was an eight millimeter Kodak Brownie movie camera. Thus began an almost lifetime home movie collection.

Movie cameras improved over time, and I updated mine at several intervals until I finally stopped with a Sony Hi8 Video Camcorder, just before the first tiny digital cameras appeared on the scene. Hence, my movie collection consisted of various types of film requiring two different projectors or a wire connection from my latest camera to a TV or computer to show my family movies.

And so it was until my wife and I heard a radio commercial for Legacy Box, a company that takes old movies, in any format, and digitizes them. They then return the originals along with your choice of DVDs, thumb drive or a placement in the Cloud. You can request all three forms if you are so inclined. I requested DVDs and a thumb drive. I then copied the thumb drive seven times, one for each of our children, who received them as a Christmas gift last year.

Some of our younger children had not seen, or had not remembered seeing, movies of their parents before we were married or of their grandparents and great grandparents. Family camping trips filled conversations at the next get-together after Christmas, as did their mode of dress on their first day of school. Of course each had the opportunity to see themselves from birth to late into their adult lives. Cousins, aunts, and uncles who have long since passed away, or some who moved too far away to be seen regularly, came again to life or to visit through technology. These often required my wife and me to explain who some of these seeming strangers really were or are. Other true strangers to them, such as their father’s and mother’s friends, also required an introduction.

Excitement was a common reaction exhibited by our now very adult kids when viewing past Christmas gifts and being able to identify at what age they received them. Also they were astonished that we as parents could lavish them with so many gifts on a teacher’s salary. That gave me the opportunity to explain that their mother was good at managing finances among her many other talents. Getting this video and giving it as a Christmas gift was also her idea.

Because I was the eldest child in my family, this video also captured my younger brother and three sisters’ early years. Eventually I produced copies relevant to their lives: school days, graduations, and marriages along with family outings that included all our broods.

Perhaps you can imagine, perhaps it is needless for me to say, nevertheless I must repeat that this is the best Christmas gift we have ever given our children. Never before have we received such gushing Thank You responses from each of them.

These moving pictures of their childhood activities and childhood friends, as well as subsequent lifetime events, all on one thumb drive, were gift-wrapped with bows of their visual history.
The Accident

By Adam Thiny

One early evening, about two weeks before Christmas, I was driving home from my place of work situated in the New Center Area of Detroit. The snowfall that had begun earlier that afternoon was still dumping wet flakes across the concrete pavement. My route led me south on Woodward Avenue toward downtown Detroit—perhaps not always the friendliest area to be stranded in at night, especially during a snowstorm. Well, just a couple more blocks and I would merge onto a plowed I-94, the conduit that would funnel me home.

And then it happened! I stopped for a red light; the vehicle behind me stopped too late. I pulled to the side of the road and stepped out of my car. The driver of the other vehicle pulled in behind me. He hobbled over to where I was gazing at the wounds of my Lilly Marlene (1971 Pontiac LeMans). The other man’s car, being enshrined by dents and scrapes, was not too obvious of any new damages. Between the look of his car and the frayed garments draping his lean body, it seemed to me that his worldly assets were limited. But then looks can be deceiving.

Neither he nor I sustained injuries. So, what should I do? Notify the police, but how? I didn’t have a phone; I don’t think cell phones had yet been invented. I could walk to the gas station located a few blocks away or drive a little further south to the downtown police station. To me, it all sounded too complex and time consuming.

So the man and I began to converse. He was polite and apologetic, although he seemed worried. He pleaded with me not to report the accident. Maybe we could resolve this unfortunate occurrence among ourselves, so he suggested. He then offered to reimburse me for all expenses. I can trust him, he proclaimed; he is an honorable man. Reimburse my expenses, trust. Yeah, right, I was also eager to buy the Penobscot Building.

Re-assessing the damage to my car, I estimated a cost around $100. Oh, what the heck, the man could use a break—after all, it is the holiday season. What can I possibly lose: $100 at the most? Although still skeptical, I agreed. I would not report the accident. We exchanged names and phone numbers, and I promised to call him when I received the final repair cost.

Early next morning I stopped at the auto dealership where I had purchased my vehicle. Their estimate exceeded $200. I felt that that was too high. Then I remembered a small bump shop I had passed numerous times located near Harper and Eight Mile, only a few miles from where I lived. They quoted me a price under $100. I was satisfied and left the car there to be repaired.

Three days later, after my car had been fixed, I picked up the phone and dialed the number the man had jotted down. To be blunt, I had not expected an answer; I jumped to the assumption that he had probably given me a nonexistent number. After many rings, I began to worry. Finally he answered. I told him the amount. He promised to mail me the money. Of course I was still somewhat skeptical. Within a week I received a money order, and to my surprise it was for more than what I had quoted him. With an accompanying letter, I refunded his overpayment in cash, and thanked him for his prompt response and honesty.

Supposedly, that well-known saying “don’t judge a book by its cover” has some merit. The goodness within a person outweighs all those outward wrappings.

Merry Christmas!
HOLIDAY GREETINGS, LOUIS PRANG!

Dear Mr. Prang,

While researching the history of Crayola LLC, I came across your name. I was intrigued. It prompted the memory of receiving a little black box of eight Prang crayons at school one year. They were, I venture to compare, of very high quality, and I wanted to find out more about the man behind the Prang name.

Initially dismayed to read about your childhood health problems in Poland (and lack of standard schooling), I was encouraged by the assurance that both led to an apprenticeship with your father. His employ as a printer of calico textiles taught you the art of dyeing as well as engraving and printing. Your travels in Germany learning from other calico printers, coupled with your work as a chemist at a paper mill, certainly prepared you for a career course of your own.

Emigrating to Boston after escaping political turmoil in Europe in the mid-1800s was a blessing for all concerned. How nice to discover that your marriage to Rose Gerber, who encouraged you to partner with Julius Mayer, led to your new occupation as a lithographer. Eventually you were able to buy him out and move forward incorporating as L. Prang & Company!

I am impressed—financial setbacks during the Civil War only sparked your enterprising spirit. The maps you printed of southern battles and your “album cards” designed for those interested in following the war quickly became collectibles; several cards featured paintings by the noted artist Winslow Homer. Thankfully you also depicted more pleasant scenes of local landscapes, animals, and flowers.

After further studies in Europe of their lithographic methods, your high-quality reproductions of art works secured your name within those circles, enabling you to open offices in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco...a bold move! Assisted by agents in London, Berlin, and Melbourne, Australia, orders poured in. Awards followed!

Your exhibit at the Vienna World’s Fair in 1873 led to selling your floral business cards as Christmas cards that were all the rage in Europe the following year and introduced to the American market in 1875, thankfully. I was gratified to learn that you employed little-known artists, many of them women. Truly exemplary.

Returning to that little box of crayons, I had no idea you also created drawing books and drawing cards for beginners and published art education textbooks. In addition, after selling the business you traveled extensively advocating art classes in public schools.

Yet I digress. My reason for this letter centers on your reputation as “The Father of the Christmas Card.” I will think of you this year when I sign and mail greetings to family and friends!

With sincere appreciation,

Alyson Denyer
By Margaret Shepard

Mother and I arrived in Florida in late October 1945 at the end of WWII. We had driven across four states to get there, but we still were there ahead of Dad’s ship, the Martin H. Ray, a destroyer escort. Dad was in charge of plumbing and refrigeration. The ship was going to be decommissioned in Florida, and then Dad would be honorably discharged. Until Dad arrived and his ship decommissioned, we moved into a room that Mother found in the local St. Augustine paper.

Finally, Dad’s ship arrived in Florida and was sent to Green Cove Springs on the St. Johns River to be slowly decommissioned. About a month later we moved to a plantation called “Old Oak” on the St. Johns River. Two of Dad’s shipmates had discovered that the plantation house could be rented and needed a third family to share expenses (especially one with a car for transportation). The house needed a good bit of cleaning but was large enough for our little family and for the two shipmates and their wives. It had a large porch all the adults called a veranda. The house was painted a light yellow and sat on property close to the river with a small jetty. I had a small bedroom of my own with a little cot. Remembering it now, I think it was a closet.

The property had scrub brush and a few trees. My favorite was a huge live oak that the Old Oak plantation was named for. It was dripping with Spanish moss, and I loved to run under the branches and hide. Mother became angry when I did that; she was afraid I would be covered in strange insects and dirt. I never was, but I can understand her concerns now. I loved that tree!

Best of all, at least to me, the plantation’s owners were raising turkeys. They were beautiful bronze birds. I loved watching the sun turn the feathers a rainbow of colors. Even better, they were afraid of me. I could run at them and they would scatter. I did that a few times until the owner of the estate stopped me and told me not to chase them. (She and her husband had moved into a small house near the plantation house.) When I asked her, “Why not?” she told me she was trying to fatten them up to sell for Christmas dinner. If I made them run around they would lose fat and the meat would be tough to eat. I couldn’t resist scaring them a little.

As Christmas approached, I was a little worried. The house had several fireplaces, but I wasn’t sure Santa would know I lived there. I voiced my concern to Dad, and he assured me that there would be no problem; Santa would know all about me.

A week before Christmas, Dad took me for a walk in the woods on the plantation property. Most of the bushes were a tad taller than I was. Dad was careful not to let the turkeys twig me in the face as he led the way through the brush. He was carrying a hatchet which I found very curious. What were we going to do? I had never seen him carry a hatchet on a walk. Finally, he stopped at a small evergreen tree, about four feet tall. “This one will do. It’s a good height, not too large, and has lots of good branches.” He proceeded to chop it down and carry it back to the house as I followed in his footsteps.

Mother and Dad struggled to set the tree up in the living room, also known as the parlor. They didn’t have a proper base to put it in so their final solution was to tie it to hooks that were in the room. It looked rather shaky, but it stayed in place. The next problem was how to decorate it. I asked Mother, “How can we make it look pretty? We don’t have decorations!” Mother said, “Wait and see!”

Dad had bought some colored construction paper and paste. Mother deftly cut the paper into small strips. The sheets were purple, red, yellow, orange, green, and blue. She showed me how to paste the strips together to make a paper chain. I was thrilled! We placed the chain on the tree and, simple as it was, the tree was starting to look like Christmas! Mother wasn’t done. She popped popcorn, and we strung the kernels on thread intermingled with cranberries that Dad had purchased in town. Now the tree was very festive!

Christmas Eve was very exciting, but also scary for me. What would Santa bring me? Except for chasing the turkeys, I had been very good. Dad said not to worry, Santa would find me and leave presents. Mother and Dad helped me put out a glass of milk and a plate of cookies for Santa. And then it was off to bed for me…I had a very hard time falling asleep.

Finally, Christmas morning! I hopped out of bed and ran into the living room. I couldn’t believe my eyes! Santa had been there all right! There was a baby doll and a doll house with tiny furniture. I looked at everything, but I didn’t touch the toys. Dad asked me why I wasn’t playing with my new toys. It was hard to express what I was feeling. The toys were exactly what I was hoping for. But…I knew Mother and I always traveled light with no room for Santa. And then it was off to bed for me. I had a very hard time falling asleep.

Looking back, that was one of the best Christmases I ever had.
December 2019

My Uncle Bill...A talented man...An interesting life

By Michael Flannery

I feel very fortunate to tell the story of my Uncle Bill (William Edward Flannery) who was both an architect and an art director of many Hollywood movie films during the 1930s through the 1950s and TV productions in the 1950s.

Uncle Bill was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1898, and passed away in 1959 at age 60. He was the son of my grandfather William John Flannery and his first wife Julia (nee Wall), who passed away a few years after giving birth to my Uncle Bill. William John was a funeral director in Cincinnati and had a stable of horses used for his funeral business.

When the automobile industry took off, William John refused to use autos for his funeral business instead of horses even though many customers demanded he do so. In 1907, he got out of the undertaking business, moved to southwest Detroit, and brought my Uncle Bill with him. William John took the streetcar, bus, or walked because he refused to use an automobile.

After moving to Detroit, my grandfather married the grandmother I knew, Anna Flannery, who came from County Cork, Ireland. They had two daughters and a son, my father, Gerard John Flannery. While Uncle Bill lived in Detroit, he designed the basement altar in the Holy Redeemer Church in Southwest Detroit.

In the early 1920s Uncle Bill moved to Los Angeles, California, and married the silent film actress Mary Mercedes Campbell. They had one son, Patrick John. Uncle Bill became a trusted friend of the newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst and one of his architectural projects was to design the renovation of Hearst’s ocean estate is now the Annenberg Community Beach House at Santa Monica State Beach, open to the general public.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the construction and building industry slowed down so my Uncle Bill turned to art direction for motion pictures. He worked at Paramount Studios on 43 films with some of the biggest names in Hollywood. Many of those films are considered classics even today.

Uncle Bill was honored by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 1955 with an Oscar for Art Direction in the film Picnic starring Kim Novak and William Holden.

Some of the films that Uncle Bill worked on include:

- Million Dollar Legs (1939) — Betty Grable
- Dixie (1943) — Bing Crosby
- Going My Way (1944) — Bing Crosby
- Incendiary Blonde (1945) — Betty Hutton
- Murder He Says (1945) — Fred MacMurray
- Bells of St. Mary’s (1945) — Bing Crosby
- Arch of Triumph (1948) — Ingrid Bergman and Charles Boyer
- The Velvet Touch (1948) — Rosalind Russell
- My Son John (1952) — Helen Hayes and Van Heflin
- PHFFT (1954) — Jack Lemon
- Picnic (1955) — Kim Novak and William Holden
- The Harder They Fall (1956) — Humphrey Bogart and Rod Steiger

During the 1950s, Uncle Bill also worked on various television productions including:

- Damon Runyon Theater (1955)
- Playhouse 90 (1957)
- The Ford Television Theater (1956-1957)
- Father Knows Best (1956)
- Shirley Temple’s Playbook (1958)
- The Donna Reed Show (1959)

Uncle Bill was very good friends with Bing Crosby and worked on a number of his films. I have a holiday picture of my Aunt Helen, Bing Crosby, and my Uncle Bill taken at Paramount Studios in California that I display every year on our piano at Christmas time along with other holiday items.

I am happy to share our family history of Uncle William Edward Flannery. He was an extraordinary architect and art director who played important roles in the 1930s through 1950s in both architectural design and for many memorable movies and television shows in art direction.

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War Dog stamps now available

A follow-up to the Michigan War Dog Memorial cemetery story in the Vintage Views’ March 2019 issue

By Michael Flannery

In August 2019, the Postal Service issued four new 55-cent first-class stamps featuring Military War Dogs. There is one stamp each of a German shepherd, Dutch shepherd, Labrador retriever, and Belgian Malinois. These four breeds most commonly serve as war dogs.

Each stamp features a dog wearing a working harness against a backdrop of a white star against a red or blue background. These stamps honor our country’s brave and loyal canines that provide explosives and narcotics detection, search and rescue operations, and security services.

You can obtain these wonderful stamps honoring our military war dogs at your local post office.▼

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Aunt Helen Flannery, Bing Crosby, and Bill Flannery.

William John Flannery, Grandfather,
SOLE MATES

By Gladys McKenney

My stylishly dressed friend asked me, “Gladys, you know what's the worst thing about growing old?” Arthritis or something crossed my mind right before she sighed and said, “Having to wear these old lady shoes!”

I think of Lois today as I slowly put on my Sass Oxfords to get ready for the day. But I also think of my life's shoe history from the first baby shoes, which my mother saved, to my current old lady shoes. I think of my husband Bob's shoe history which was very simple compared to mine. As I remember Bob's shoes, they were simply wing-tips, Oxfords, or bedroom slippers. Oh, yes, and those athletic shoes—separate shoes for golf, tennis, baseball, and running—but style wasn't much of a concern, as I recall.

By comparison, it seems I have had a checkered shoe history. As a young child I was afraid I'd NEVER learn to tie those shoes and thus would never get to go to school. What a relief when I mastered that daunting task! But as a child, shoes interfered with the free feeling of going barefoot, even though each summer at least one honeybee would find my delicious toes.

Other girls had separate Sunday School shoes, but mine were just new shoes to be later worn as school shoes. I remember my classmates in my one-room country school laughing about one of the boys' shoes having barnyard remnants from his doing chores. I also remember the teacher chastising them for laughing, and she talked instead about how hard he worked.

Saddle shoes were fun and seemed to be a badge of adolescence. I remember my first pair of pumps which made me feel quite grown up. At Michigan State, walking across campus required comfortable shoes, mostly still the saddle shoes, but higher heels for dancing. I especially remember a pair of bright red platform-soled heels which were great for dancing—particularly when twirling out and in with my husband-to-be at the Lake Lansing dance hall.

But, probably my favorite parts of my shoe history were my running shoes. You see, as a child I had asthma so badly that one doctor warned my parents not to expect me to live to be 21. That doctor would have been very surprised to see me wearing running shoes in the 1970s as I went several times to the Adams High School track to run five miles before I went to teach at Rochester High School. I often think of that and, at age 91, I remind myself to be thankful for the beautiful memories and pleasant experiences. Today was another day enjoyed with the OPC walking track group.

Combining comfort and style seems to me to become increasingly challenging and important. Now I enjoy looking at other women's footwear and marveling at how younger women can travel so smoothly on those spikey heels. This seems quite miraculous to me as I magically glide along in my old lady shoes, thankful that I can still put one foot ahead of the other.
Raising Cane
By Nancy Knitter

I know this is the holiday issue of the Vintage Views, and I could be writing about those sweet, striped candy canes. Well, in a way, I am. But first, the thought of a walking type of cane was known to me only from my mom and grandmother who used canes in their later years. Grandma Mary had a rather plain, generic looking cane. My mom had a hand-carved cane created by my brother who added silver rings and a scroll design on the handle. Mom not only used her cane to assist with her walking but for an unbelievable number of tasks. She used the hook of the cane handle to pull down items too high to reach. The wide and heavy doors on a 1989 Buick LeSabre were easier to push open with the end of her cane. (The groove is still visible.) She also adapted the cane to be a mop by adding a sponge on the end to allow her to swab out the bathtub and clean the floors.

About five years ago, I was awarded THE CANE. Apparently, my degenerative spinal issue is genetic. I tried using Mom’s cane, but it was too short for me so I went cane shopping. Who knew I would have such a variety of walking aids to consider? There are hiking canes, folding canes, quad canes, canes with laser lights, glow-in-the-dark canes. We won’t go to all the choices of flowers, stripes, and carved designs of canes. I now have choices of six canes and, when needed, I use two for balance and longer distance walking. Of course, they have to match, glow in the dark, and match my many outfits. I have also acquired flowered canes, herringbone design canes, and a cane for a very dressy occasion. Oh, I also have hiking canes in case I decide to hike the Rockies (chuckle).

I use my cane as Mom did for her chores plus a few added uses such as to reach the handicapped button to open doors and tapping my smoke alarm when it beeps in the middle of the night. I have observed the benefits of using a cane as well. Doors get opened for me and people are more gracious. Small children are intrigued by the style of canes. My friend’s cat likes to play with the wrist strap that hangs from the handle of my cane. How cool is that. Now I face another challenge. It was suggested I consider a walker to use for traveling and added support. Oh no— I looked at the walker choices I had before me! I need a break before I tackle that decision.

I do have another cane to conquer—the candy cane. Only one choice and color to choose, and I can savor the fun as opposed to just the functionality of my walking canes. See, I told you there would be a holiday connection to my musings. And another holiday plus, I can use my cane to lift ornaments onto the higher branches of my Christmas tree. It would be interesting to hear how other walking-cane lovers use their assistance devices. If you see me around, let’s hook a seat and chat a bit about your innovative uses for the simple, or not so simple, walking cane. Yours might be a hand-carved sturdy tree branch like the cave person probably used. When no longer useful, they could re-use it in the fire pit to keep warm (chuckle). Now that was early recycling.

Something is different!
By Bill Kroger

Recently I was standing on a bus shuttling me from an airplane to the terminal. A young woman rose from her seat and offered it to me. I smiled and declined; she sat back down. All my life I have been the one to rise and offer my seat to a woman or an elderly person.

What has changed? The other day my youngest daughter lifted and relocated a concrete birdbath that an animal had tipped over in our patio garden. This took place as I held her ten-week-old, newest daughter. She said she did not need my help. A rental car bus driver not only helped load my baggage on the bus, he insisted that my wife and I should enter the bus at the front entrance because the step was lower.

I find that these days people are constantly asking me if I can walk, lift, carry, push, or just get on with living my normal life. I feel like I have a sign on me that says “feeble—caution—he may fall on you without warning.” Perhaps it is the gray hair or pot belly. Maybe it is the uncertain gait. I am glad I can still do some things, and I am grateful for the offered help.
Meet the People Behind the Newspaper...*Vintage Views*

**ADAM THINY**...I am a retired architect and live in Rochester with my wife, Herta. I enjoy hiking local trails, reading, and watching cowboy movies. I joined *Vintage Views* in 2003. At first I just typed up handwritten submittals, but with the editors’ guidance I graduated to writing stories, proofing, and computer page layouts. I feel privileged to belong to the OPC team that turns out this informative and entertaining publication.

**CAROL Lee**...I have been a compulsive proofreader since winning a spelling bee in 6th grade and then diagramming sentences for fun in high school. I read in the OPC newsletter, after retiring as a church administrator for 23 years, that *Vintage Views* was looking for proofreaders so I began attending committee meetings and proofreading issues to be published. Soon the editors encouraged me to write articles, and I became hooked. I have been on the *Vintage Views* staff for 11 years. When not writing I enjoy bicycling, gardening, singing, volunteering, and traveling.

**JAMES F. AHEARN**...My experiences include: altar boy, paper boy, model plane enthusiast, high school baseball pitcher, being a draftsman for three years after high school, and a night school student at the University of Detroit. I worked one year in a steel mill before starting a 38-year teaching career. A father of seven and avid fisherman, I began my writing career after retirement. I've written for *Vintage Views* since 2003. I was honored as the first Poet Laureate of Rochester in September 2018.

**DIANE KANIUT**...Wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother; fund raiser for non-profits; Meadowbrook Garden Club newsletter editor; *Vintage Views* writer and former editor; pickleball player; and committed exerciser. My involvement with OPC began in 1996 when husband Paul and I moved to Rochester Hills. A lifelong volunteer, I began volunteering at OPC—first to “type a bit”, but that soon morphed into layout editor then co-editor for 16 years. I continue to write and do the layouts. OPC activities and friends keep my life interesting.

**MICHAEL FLANNERY**...I had a 35-year career in banking, Systems Development and Trust Operations Management. I am an avid collector of sports memorabilia, a dog lover, and enjoy golf, fishing, music, and attending grandkids activities and sporting events. I have two children and five grandchildren. I started writing poems 20 years ago, but never wrote stories. I joined *Vintage Views* in March 2018 and have contributed poems and stories ever since. I hope readers enjoy my writings and poems as much as I enjoy writing them. It’s a great opportunity and venue.

**KAREN LEMON**...I first learned about *Vintage Views* from the late Gerry Coon. With my publishing background Gerry recommended I attend a committee meeting—that was 2014 and I was hooked! I didn’t think of myself as a writer although with editorial help from the committee I started writing. I currently partner with Maryann Wilshere as co-editor. I also enjoy graphic design and layouts. I couldn’t be happier contributing to *Vintage Views*!

**SAM SEABRIGHT**...I retired in 2006 as an Environmental Manager and Engineer. I also taught advanced engineering classes and created an Engineering Degree program at a college in Windsor. I have written for *Vintage Views* for nine years and also prepare digital layouts for publication. My wife Brenda and I have been married for 53 years. My favorite hobbies include sewing, woodworking, photography, home improvements, and the environment.

**MARYANNE O’DONNELL**...Beginning with being editor of my school paper and yearbook, I progressed to becoming a wife and mother of 3 sons. I later founded an exercise company, followed by being hired as marketing director for National Television News. I then went on my own as a public relations consultant. I love creativity and writing! Retirement brought me two precious grandchildren, pickleball, studying Spanish, volunteering as a client guide at Leader Dogs for the Blind and...*Vintage Views*!

**TOM SCHEIL**...A native of Detroit, Warren, and Rochester, I have spent my life as an accountant, both in public and private accounting. I have written 40 articles for the *Vintage Views* over the past 10 years you may remember the “The Paper Clip” and “Remembering the Gravity Flow Furnace.” My articles tended toward the informatively funny. Sadly, I recently “retired” from the committee, which I proudly attended and will always remember fondly.

(Continued on pages 11 and 12)
Meet the People Behind the Newspaper... *Vintage Views*

**NANCY KNITTER**... I started writing for the *Vintage Views* ten years ago. I love to tell stories with a humorous twist or those that touch the heart. I look at everyday life experiences from a slightly different view and share them with the reader. My husband, who was a writer, encouraged me to give it a try and here I am ten years later—enjoying the creative experience.

**HANS KOSECK**... *Wer schreibt, der bleibt,* was the devise. It rhymes and means *who writes, exists.* I wanted to exist, so I wrote. Writing, printing, typing, word-processing, entering, and saving are the last stage of the development of a poem or story. A scribblix can do that. We *writers* invent and compose. I dream, I think, I originate, I weigh, I splash in the stream of consciousness, I research, I prove, I create. Sometimes I try to be funny. Sometimes I share true experiences. Be my readers!

**GLADYS MCKENNEY**... A long-time contributor to *Vintage Views,* a community activist, and a state inductee to Michigan Women’s Hall of Fame and Rochester Hills Community Hall of Fame. A dedicated women’s rights activist, giving lectures and classes using doll replicas to teach about “Our Fabulous Foremothers.” As a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, I encourage women to study history and participate in the political process.

**BILL MIHALIC**... My entire career was in the auto industry, but at age 55 I got the itch to try comedy writing and this became my enjoyable part-time job (when I got paid) and hobby (when I didn’t). My jokes were used by a standup comedian, radio stations, and an online newspaper. I joined *Vintage Views* earlier this year. It’s an outstanding publication and perfect for my favorite topic: the serious and humorous trials and tribulations of seniors.

**JEAN WAID**... I enjoyed contributing to high school and college papers as well as local papers. After reading *Vintage Views* stories by others, beginning in 2004 I was inspired to share some of my travels, humorous events, and poetry. My husband Roger and I are proud of our three adult sons and five precious grandchildren. We have fond memories residing in Rochester Hills for forty years.

**RICHARD DENGATE**... I am a retired high school and university teacher. Have written two books, one a personal memoir of my life and that of the family going back to 1699. I wrote it primarily for my children, grandchildren, and all others who will follow. The other is a memoir of my 50 years in the classroom. It was natural to become a member of the *Vintage Views* staff. I like writing. Most of my articles are about economics and history. Writing is said to be the most intense form of thinking...a perfect way to exercise the brain.

**MARGARET SHEPERD**... I am a retired librarian and auto industry information specialist. My writing and publishing experience has been limited to internal technical reports and a few publications in library-related magazines. I have written some of my childhood memories from traveling in the United States with my mother during World War II. However, my initial *Vintage Views* article is the first one to be published. I always read *Vintage Views* cover to cover. I love it and wanted to share some of my memories with the readers.

**BILL KROGER**... In 2003, after 40 years in Human Resources, I began life as a full-time helper at home, traveler, grandparent, and community volunteer. After my wife and my OPC adventure in Peru, the late editor of *Vintage Views,* Gerry Coon, asked my wife to submit an article about the trip to *Vintage Views.* Jean suggested that I write the article and ten years later I am still writing articles along with proofreading the newspaper.

**GRETCHEN O’DONNELL**... In my younger life, I was comfortable with words on paper, especially characters in a good book. But I grew to appreciate real people and real life. My husband Mike and I met at a post-grad history class and 61 happy years later have five children and ten grandchildren. I’ve written (not published) two books: one about the year we spent teaching English at a small medical college in the mountains of southwest China and one about Mary, mother of Jesus. I enjoy words, writing, reading, the sounds and layers of meanings. I especially enjoy poetry. (Continued on page 12)
Meet the People Behind the Newspaper… *Vintage Views*

**ORVILLE HOKSCH**… I have been married 59 years and together we raised four children and are the proud grandparents of seven. My pre-retirement career was first in the Air Force then with Hughes Aircraft. In retirement I have steadily volunteered here at the OPC and elsewhere. I am a member of the Rochester Hills water and sewage committee. At OPC I man the front desk on Thursday mornings and assist with the visually handicapped monthly meetings. I have been a proud author and member of *Vintage Views* since September of 2013.

**MARY ELLEN WARNER**… As a person with progressive, bi-lateral profound hearing loss, my goal through my writing has been to provide support for people who have a hearing loss and the people who love them. I have had an article in almost every issue since my first piece was published in September 2009 about Charlie—my deaf kitty. It has been a pleasure to be a member of the *Vintage Views* committee for ten years.

**GEORGE SCHUETZ**… After retiring in 1999 from the emerging Gourmet & Health Food business, I moved my family from Philadelphia back to my native Michigan to be with relatives and friends. I have been a member of OPC since then. I have been writing since I was a teenager and have had articles and poems published. As part of the *Vintage Views* committee, I continue to enjoy authoring a variety of subjects.

**ALYSON DENYER**… After retiring ten years ago, I became a member of the OPC and chose the *Vintage Views* Committee right away. I wanted to rub elbows with people who enjoy reading and writing. It was the right decision! I welcome the challenge of choosing and researching a topic that I hope our readers will find curious and informative.

**BRUCE RAYMOND**… I am grateful to have been introduced to *Vintage Views* by the late Gerry Coon to be a photographer. Happy I can help! My interest in photography started in junior high where I photographed sports and school events and did much of the dark room developing. I became a mechanical engineer and I found myself testing muscle cars during the 60s and then moved on to designing and testing engines. I retired after 45 years and since then enjoy being at the terrific OPC, especially Tai Chi class and line dancing.

**MARYANN WILSHERE**… After retiring in 2008 from an employee engagement career in event planning and customer service training, I learned about OPC and soon joined the *Vintage Views* “family” thinking it would be fun to proofread issues and meet people who enjoy writing. Little did I anticipate how I’d be having fun also doing layouts and editing. My husband of 48 years and I enjoy so much of what there is to do through the “magical” doors of the OPC!

**DAVID MACIN**… Born in Maryland I moved to Pontiac, Michigan, where I met my neighborhood sweetheart. She and I raised two daughters in Rochester while I worked as a postal carrier. I play the bug pipes at many an OPC function, including the yearly picnic. As long-time OPC members, my wife and I were humbled to be Honored Seniors in the September 2017 *Vintage Views* newspaper. My articles are musings about my past, life experiences, or hobbies. If you stop in the OPC lapidary room on Thursdays, I’ll be there working away on jewelry or helping out fellow members.

**LYN SIEFFERT**… Although I have lived in Michigan for more than 50 years, I am more of a New Yorker at heart. My education trained me as an artist, while my career inclined toward writing professionally. This came about as a side effect of replying to job postings looking for graphic designers, while in truth these positions were assigning writing projects rather than graphic design. I have been writing and drawing cartoons for the *Vintage Views* since joining in 2017. As an avid reader, my articles focus on book reviews which I hope you have enjoyed reading.

*We also recognize and are grateful to all past and current contributors to the *Vintage Views* who are not individually introduced here to our readers.*
Attack of the Telemarketers!

By Bill Mihalic

To me, there’s not a lot of difference between telemarketers and scammers, so for this discussion let’s refer to all unwanted callers as “telemarketers.” OK, maybe scammers are illegal while telemarketers only should be, but they have a lot in common: they’re annoying; they’re persistent; and they both want our money. The only difference is that telemarketers want to steal it while telemarketers expect us to turn it over willingly. Another common element is they both often target seniors, believing that we are more gullible, vulnerable and defenseless. They may find, however, that we are actually more suspicious, feisty, and cranky—and as retirees we have a lot of time to pursue justice if we’ve been wronged.

Here are some ways to avoid their calls and preserve your sanity:

**Defense Level 1 – The “Do Not Call” Registry:** The first line of defense against telemarketers is to register your land line and cell phone numbers on the government’s D.N.C. (Do Not Call) Registry. It’s easy—just go to www.donotcall.gov and follow the directions. Note, however, that the Registry is only intended to stop sales calls; it does not prohibit calls from charities, political organizations, surveys, or pesky relatives who keep asking for money. (And, by the way, computerized calls—“robocalls”—for sales purposes are always illegal, even if the called number is not on the Registry.)

**Defense Level 2 – Call Blocking:** In addition to callers that are exempt, some businesses simply ignore the D.N.C. Registry. For all those calls, the next line of defense is “call blocking”—electronically stopping calls from specific numbers. Most phones have a call blocking feature, although some may prefer the convenience of a separate “call blocker” that attaches to your phone line. Enter the number to be blocked or use the appropriate buttons to block whatever number that last irritating call came from. You can block numbers on your cell phone by accessing its phone app. If a blocked call tries to come through you’ll hear just one ring—like that Zap! on the patio when another mosquito bites the dust.

Some telemarketers avoid call blocking by changing their numbers—like a virus that mutates into forms that are immune to the latest vaccines. (At least runaway viruses make good science fiction movies; *Attack of the Telemarketers*—not so much.)

**Defense Level 3 – Caller ID:** At Level 3, your phone keeps ringing and you have to pick up or let it go to voice mail. Caller ID (name, number, and/or location) is a wonderful thing, especially if your TV is equipped to display it on the screen while you’re watching your favorite shows from the comfort of your recliner. Yes, it’s never been easier to ignore someone you don’t want to talk to. At our house, the ID leads to conversations like these:

- It’s from Plymouth. Who do we know in Plymouth?
- Nobody. Let it go.
- Or, It’s Sierra Leone. Do we know anyone in Sierra Leone?
- Heck, we don’t even know anyone in Plymouth.

Usually we don’t answer just because we don’t want to put the *Matlock* marathon on pause.

**Defense Level 4 – Quick Screen:** Ah, you’ve picked up in spite of a questionable caller ID. Your goal now is to identify a telemarketer quickly and hang up. Here are three scenarios:

- **Scenario 4a – It’s a computerized message:** There are some legitimate robocalls, such as appointment confirmations, so your challenge is to identify telemarketing spils after one sentence or less and then hang up immediately. Some common telemarketing lines, along with my typical thoughts as I hang up:

  - Congratulations—You’ve won… I’m never that lucky. (Click.)
  - I’m with Medicare and… No you’re not. (Click.)
  - There’s a problem with your credit card… Great! (Click.)
  - Hello! This is Andrea! Again? (Click.)
  - Hello! Please don’t hang… (Click.)

- **Scenario 4b – It’s an actual person:** To treat real people a little better than computers, let them finish one complete sentence before saying, “No thank you, goodbye” (sincerity optional). Then hang up before they can respond with whatever comeback they learned in *Telemarketing 101* and probably have on a nearby Post-It Note; now you can get back to *Matlock*. Sometimes I like to add a snarky, confusing comment.

  - I’m calling about your back pain.
  - …Thanks, but I’m on a really good prayer list. (Click.)
  - I’m calling about your computer problems.
  - …I don’t have any computer problems. But my back is killing me. (Click.)
  - Hello—I’m calling about your student loan.
  - …Thanks, but it’s covered under Medicare. (Click.)

- **Scenario 4c – No one’s there:** If there’s only silence at the other end you might think you’re off the hook, but a computer now knows you’re home and likely to take their next call. Oops.

**Defense Level 5 – Get to the Point:** Sometimes you’ll need a bit more info to make sure you’re not about to hang up on an important caller, like your doctor or your bookie. At this level, just cut to the chase and ask, “What can I do for you?” You’ll notice a pause as they scan their prepared spiel to find the first point with real substance, after which you say, “No thank you,” and hang up.

**Defense Level 6 – Turnabout:** You might choose to let a call continue just to see if you can get the caller so frustrated they hang up first. Your response might be something like one of the following if they ask:

- Could I speak to the lady of the house?
- Sorry, she’s not home. (Even if she is.)
- Oh, are you her husband?
- No, I’m her boyfriend. Her husband is out of town.
- Sorry, she said she had to go out for a minute.
- When will she be home?
- I don’t know. It’s been four weeks now and I’m starting to wonder that myself.

(If you’re in a cranky mood, shout) Dear, it’s for you!

**Defense Level 7 – Just Hang Up!** If the telemarketer has the persistence of a cold sore, just hang up. “No thank you” and “Goodbye” are optional. Don’t wait for a response and don’t let yourself feel guilty (although you may feel bad if you forgot to pause *Matlock* and missed Ben’s entire closing argument).

**And More:** Although I’ve suggested a few verbal responses to unwanted callers, many experts recommend you don’t say anything at all, because a computer may record your voice and use it to create a scam call from “you.” Additionally, everyone agrees with these points:

- Don’t return any calls that stop after one ring.
- Don’t push any buttons on your phone during a call.
- Don’t give any information, especially bank account and Social Security numbers, to unknown callers even if the caller says they are the police. (I’ve watched 400 episodes of *Law & Order* and they never ask for that stuff.)

Oops, gotta run—my phone’s ringing.
Poems and Puzzles

A Happenstance Poem
At the crossroads of happen and circumstance,
one has no more chance of evasion
than I from what appeared to be a beagle puppy
leashed but exiting an office doorway
into a corridor of OPC, the senior citizens’ center.
My quizzical look prompted the owner to say,
It’s a pocket beagle.
Implausible as this meeting place
and the dog’s size, so also was its coloring:
a two toned mottled gray sweater covered
its white vest, rather than the traditional
beagle’s brown and black patched
white sport coat.
Since boyhood, beagles have taken up ventricule
residence in my life. Now, even though leashed,
it did what it was bred to do, sniff out quarry.
Drawn by my spoor trail, its wet nose mopped
floor tiles. Each side of my path dusted
by floppy ears before its head raised
into the hollow of hallway silence,
and in fitful spasms, bawled adult-sized howls
proclaiming my escape impossible. Then it
burrowed past the scratchy twigs of my hands
and invaded a brush-pile of gnarled years,
under which, a hare of happiness
had been hiding.

James Ahearn

Pain Free
I had stiffness, aches and pain,
Sciatica was my bane;
So there’s everything to gain
By doing these exercises.
At early morn roll out of bed,
Hit the floor and clear my head
Before washing up and being fed,
To do these exercises.
First, do pelvic tilts to strive
For waking up my spine. Do five
Repeats to come alive
For doing these exercises.
Next lift a knee with wakened abs,
For waking up my spine. Do five
Repeats to come alive
For doing these exercises.

Sam Seabright

Get Ready
Get the snow shovels and snow blowers ready
For the snow will soon be falling so steady
Get the boots out of the box
Along with those warm winter gloves and socks
Get the gas filled in the generator
In case you need to keep the food cold in the freezer and refrigerator
Get the rock salt ready to be spread
So you don’t slip and fall and hit your head
Get out your warm winter coat
Awaiting your attempt down the ski slope
Get out the snowboard, sled, and toboggan
Ready for that first icy run
Get the firewood stacked outside
Ready for lighting in the fireplace inside
Get the batteries in your lanterns and flashlights checked
So you’re ready for that potential power outage
Get your cars and furnace maintenance
So you are not unexpectedly surprised
Now it’s time to sit back and relax
As you are ready for that cold winter blast

Michael Flannery

WAYS TO STAY WARM IN THE WINTER

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(Answers on page 19)
How to Grow Old: Ancient Wisdom for the Second Half of Life

By Marcus Tullis Cicero
Reviewed by Richard Dengate

In this little gem from the ancient world written in 44 BC, the great Roman orator and statesman discusses how to make the “Golden Years” really golden. You will be surprised at how relevant his lesson is even after 2,063 years.

He is mindful that the aging process has a bad reputation among many people. Our active life diminishes; we experience declining physical and sensual pleasures, and finally death approaches. However he then gives us counsel on how to accommodate the inevitable and stay happy as we complete the cycle of life.

Cicero tells us that: “It’s not by strength or speed or swiftness of body that great deeds are done, but by wisdom, character, and sober judgment.” These qualities are enhanced as time passes, and “wisdom is the fruit of old age.” We need to stay active, “always engaged in something, never stop learning.”

He writes: “Old age is respected only if it defends itself, maintains its rights, submits to no one, and rules over its domain until its last breath.” We who maintain some flavor of our youth may grow old in body but never in spirit. We are advised to “exercise in moderation, eating and drinking just enough, and pay even more attention to our minds and spirits.” Further, he gives us a positive attitude: “How wonderful it is for the soul when—after so many struggles with lust, ambition, strife, quarreling, and other passions—these battles are at last ended and it can return, as they say, to live within itself. There is no greater satisfaction to be had in life than a leisurely old age devoted to knowledge and learning.”

Our Roman teacher concludes his work with speaking to us about the final stage of life’s journey. He cautions us not to be afraid of death… “death either completely destroys the human soul, in which case it is negligible, or takes the soul to a place where it can live forever. There is no third possibility. Why should I be afraid then, since after death I will be either not unhappy or happy?”

Many more ancient wisdoms of Cicero are found in this book on how to live through the last half of life. It is a perfect example that true wisdom transcends the ages. The study of ancient history and philosophy can be a great benefit to all of us in getting the most out of living.

I am reminded of the inspirational television series Life is Worth Living with Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen (1962-1965).▼

Coders: The Making of a New Tribe and the Remaking of the World

By Clive Thompson
Reviewed by Lyn Siefert

If a required reading list for senior citizens was compiled I would insist on including Clive Thompson’s book, Coders: The Making of a New Tribe and the Remaking of the World. Well organized and documented (including 22 pages of notes), Coders is as fascinating to read as any book of popular fiction. I challenge you to ignore the urge to dismiss the background history of how the social media technology, came into being. Don’t let your grandchildren’s casual acceptance of technology intimidate you. Surprise them by using the vocabulary and quoting the details about the history of software designers.

As Clive Thompson interviewed techies for this book, they scoffed that it would be a boring read. I particularly enjoyed his explanation of their typically nerdy, introverted personalities. Successful coding requires sitting alone for hours while obsessing over details. Headphones usually in place, they are deep in silent concentration. Logical thought processes are the key to efficient computer processing. Debugging code is especially taxing because it involves more than staring at a few lines in order to figure out a problem. And spending hour upon hour communicating with a mechanical brain can also affect the personal behavior of programmers who often exhibit impatience when interacting with ordinary humans. Significantly relevant—is the history of how women got shut out of this profession. Notably, during the earliest years of programming, the majority were female. Cultural stereotypes were the key. In the early sixties, men were attracted to working on the hardware, women to the more detailed tasks. After all, a computer couldn’t discern the gender or race of a worker.

The shift occurred in the mid-eighties with ubiquitous availability of personal computers. Because of their numbers, even institutions of higher learning began to be affected. Regardless of grade scores, female applicants were discouraged, even rejected, from pursuing programming. I particularly enjoyed reading the personality profiles describing individual traits and habits of the founders of today’s multi-million dollar computer platforms. They are entrepreneurial types who have created apps that monopolize ordinary lives. Early inventors, from Thomas Edison to Henry Ford and the Wright brothers, showed some of the same personality traits. We experience similar behaviors from today’s inventors. They sell us solutions for needs we didn’t know we had.

For older generations, it may seem as if every adolescent dream of controlling dictatorial adults has come true. Notice the way senators and members of congress are visibly confounded by the runaway quality of machines. How should they legislate control over those who are invading our choices?▼
A trip to the way north
Photos and Story By Bill Kroger

During August we traveled by cruise ship along the coast of Norway. On a prior cruise, we had been in Oslo for a day but we had never seen any other part of Norway. Our current itinerary began in Copenhagen, Denmark, and for the next twelve days we saw eight cities along the coast of Norway. It was a wonderful trip that allowed us to experience incredible scenery, friendly people, and cities so neat and clean they reminded me of 1970s Disney World.

We boarded the seven hundred passenger Regent Explorer in Copenhagen, as did my suitcase; unfortunately neither of Jean’s bags made the ship. This gave us a mission for the first several days of the cruise—shop for clothes. Not an easy task when you do not speak the language nor comprehend metric sizing. However with a few lucky finds, daily clothes washing, and a smile, Jean always looked great. Her clothes caught up with us five days later.

On the first day of our itinerary we were at the southern tip of the country strolling the streets of Kristiansand, the fifth largest city in Norway. On the next day we shopped the rainy streets of Bergen where it rains on average 260 days a year. Here we learned that while babies born in Norway have skis on their feet, babies born in Bergen are born with an umbrella in their hand.

After a sea day we crossed the Arctic Circle to the farthest north port of our voyage, the town of Harstad. This town is a good starting point if you wish to explore the northernmost inhabited archipelago in the world. Then we took a bus tour to a 13th century church erected in Trondenes. Hanging on the outside door of the church was a metal rod about 30 inches in length. This was the official measuring instrument to settle commercial questions in the town.

Being above the Arctic Circle, the sun was up before 5 a.m. and there was a beautiful sunset at 11 p.m. that I photographed. In the winter the sun never gets above the horizon and daylight of four hours or so is a reflection of the sun below the horizon. It sounds like a dark life. On our summer visit the days were bright, warm, and beautiful.

While in Bodø, still north of the circle, we saw more beautiful scenery. All our stops were in coastal towns where life and business seemed to revolve around the sea, fishing, transport, and oil.

While docked in Alesund we viewed the town from a very high hill overlooking the town that sits on a hook-shaped peninsula. Our ship seemed very small viewed from on high. In Alesund we toured a historic park filled with structures showing us how folks lived in earlier times. The building roofs were covered with growing grasses, shrubs, and weeds. My understanding is that the roofs were kept trimmed by goats.

Next we sailed into the fiords to visit Hellesylt and Geiranger. This area provided incredible views of waterfalls along the sides of the fiord and, following a bus ride, a different view: we were at the top of the world with nothing to see but mountains, snow, and clouds beneath us. At our last stop on the west coast, Flam, we rode the Flåm Railway—a 20km, 900m plummet down the Flåmsdal valley. The ride had breathtaking views of valleys and waterfalls…truly a fitting end to our Norway travels. However it was not the end; one more stop remained. We stopped for a day in Haugesund where we toured the area by bus and walked the town being treated to a boat festival.

We finished the cruise with a day in Gothenburg (or Göteborg if you are Swedish) and an overnight sail to the airport in Oslo. Thankfully we made the three flights to get home as did all our bags.▼
It's about time!

By Hans Koseck

Times are good. But times can be tough and times can even get worse.

Albert Einstein established that time is the fourth dimension. That was a long time ago. It was before The Fifth Dimension was discovered during the time of the Age of Aquarius, back in the 1960s in Las Vegas. That was a bit of time back, too.

There is definitely more time than space. If you multiply all the other dimensions, they still fall short of the amount of time. And there is also always more time than money; If you got the money, honey, I got the time.

Counting seconds, just in one day we have a total of 86,400 different times, and racers may have ten or one hundred times that amount, although they are always trying to finish in less time.

If someone asks you for the correct time you have to add three seconds to be correct because it takes two seconds to announce it and takes another second for the asker's brain to process it. That's how critical time is and how fast it is. It is almost as fast as daylight.

But there never seems to be enough time in a day. In New York they even multiply times by themselves, Times².

Nihilists say, "There is no time." And really, quite often, time-out is actually called. Some people claim they have no time. Others even eat it out by having too much time. They can't kill time; they can't even stop it. Some people don't care what time it is.

But if you believe in time, there is such a variety of it. There is half-time and part-time. There is time-and-a-half and overtime and three-quarter time, double-time, and on holidays even triple-time. There was, and still is, past-time. Now is present-time, and future time is on the way.

Sometimes there is a little time and sometimes there is a lot of time, and sometimes it's time-and-again and, if you are lucky, you can take as much time as you want. Sometimes there is no more time and sometimes not enough time. Sometimes it takes too much time. It's best to make good use of time, anytime, and often-times.

We enjoy peace times and we use time pieces to keep track of time.

You can waste somebody's time, and there even is "a time to laugh and a time to cry."

Children learn to tell time, but time also will tell. A mother's question "how many times" never expects nor gets an answer. Something can be in time, on time, within time, out of time, about time, and timeless or at least once-upon-a-time, in due time.

Timekeepers keep time; dreamers lose it.

Time can be shared in condominiums or at other occasions. We have bedtime. We multiply in times (2x2).

We like Christmas time and Easter time, and spring time, summer time, winter time, and harvest time, but nobody cares about fall or autumn time.

People always like to have a good time, but sometimes they have a bad time or even a hard time with it instead.

There are local times like The New York Times, Eastern Daylight Time, Mountain Time, and times between. Time can be different at exactly the same time: if it's 4:30 in Michigan, it's 1:30 in California. There is no use arguing about it.

Time is also of the essence and it flies. Some unfortunate people have to do time at this point in time.

Sometimes when the time has come, you can take your time, and you can run out of it, any time soon.

Father Time is working full time, since back in time and the beginning of time while Mother Nature has been watching him all this time.
By Karen Lemon

Rochester’s Big, Bright Light Show will draw visitors from across the southeast Michigan. This local tradition has been around since 2005, making 2019 the 14th year of lighting up the streets of Rochester, beginning with Lagniappe (November 25) and ending after the Fire and Ice Festival (January 5). Thankfully, to view the over one million lights visitors and locals only need to drive (slowly) down Main Street, a straight shot north on Rochester Road.

Today the spectators, local and visitor alike, will never know that 69 years ago the street names were changed because of duplicates and similarly named streets which were driving our postal workers loopy. Who could blame them with three different Grace streets, one just outside of town and two near Auburn Road. Today Grace Street near town is Utah, while Arthur Avenue and Lewis are the new names for Grace Streets off of Auburn Road.

The Oakland County Road Commission suggested to the townships and cities in the county that they may want to rename streets which were identical in order to help eliminate postal confusion. During the 1950s the names of 80 streets were changed in the Rochester and Rochester Hills vicinity. Some streets changed earlier than the 1950s including Cucumber Street, now South Street, not to be confused with South Boulevard, the border between Rochester Hills and Troy. South Street is under the bridge and was a convenient bypass for vehicles looking to avoid the painful repaving of Main Street. Locals knew of this shortcut, often driving down South Street to the “snakes” over to Avon Road to escape construction. An earlier name change was Dodge Road became Adams Road perhaps after John Dodge passed away in the 1916’s flu epidemic.

Visitors to our fair city may be confused enough when given directions to, let’s say, the lumber yard on Woodward and end up on Ludlow Avenue, as Woodward and Ludlow are two branches of the same street. They will probably never discover that Woodward was the former Sugar Avenue, a road originally built for the employees of the ill-fated sugar factory opposite the lumber yard. Well, if you old timers need reminders, the Rochester Avon Historical Society has a research paper listing all the current and former street names.

▼

Street names only old-timers would remember

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WAYS TO STAY WARM IN THE WINTER Answers

Remember Answers:
A. Gum Wrapper Chain
B. Flash Bulbs
C. TV Test Pattern
D. Color Wheel

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