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INSIGHT

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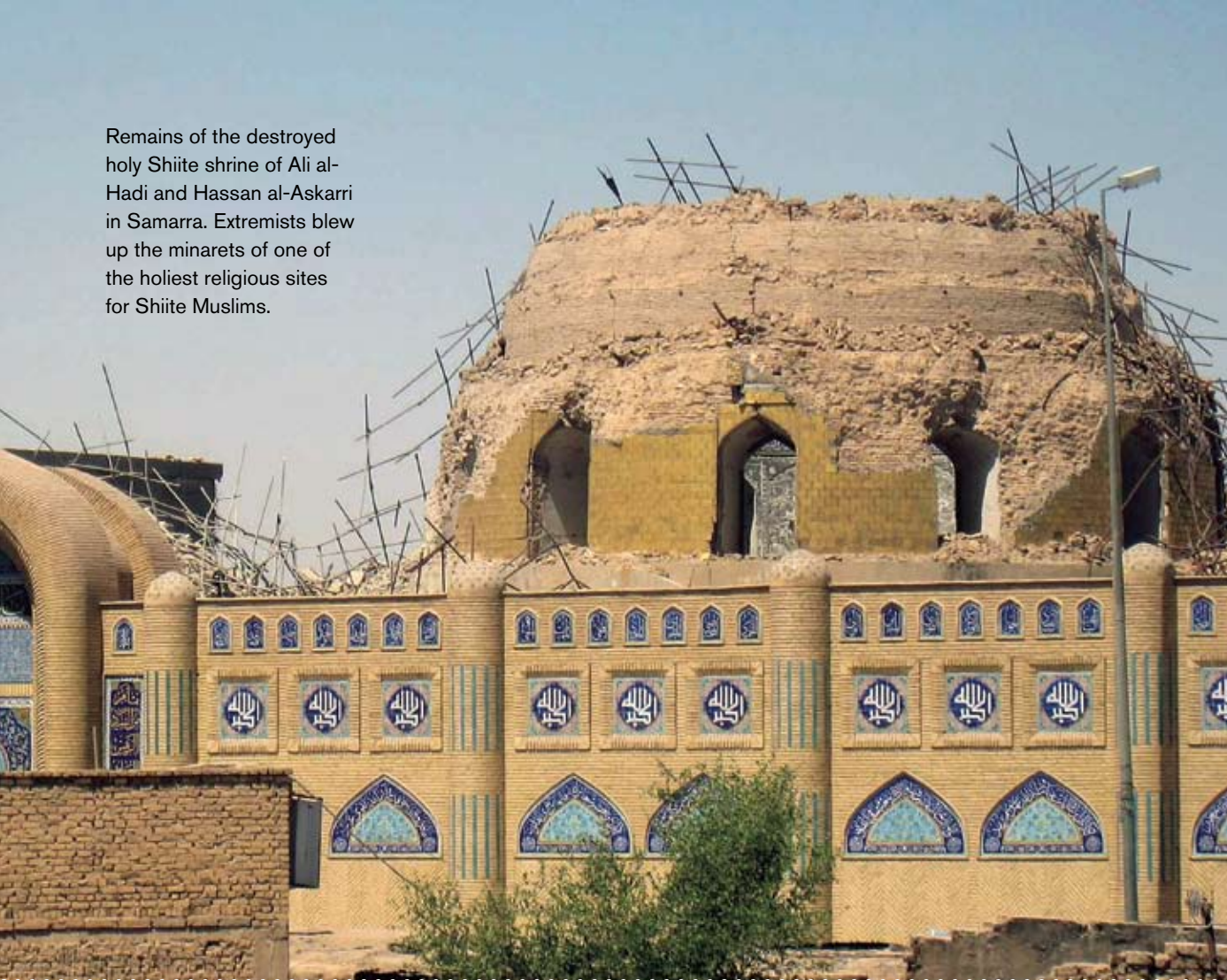
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Was the Iraq war worth it?

THE VIEW FROM SAMARRA



Remains of the destroyed holy Shiite shrine of Ali al-Hadi and Hassan al-Askari in Samarra. Extremists blew up the minarets of one of the holiest religious sites for Shiite Muslims.

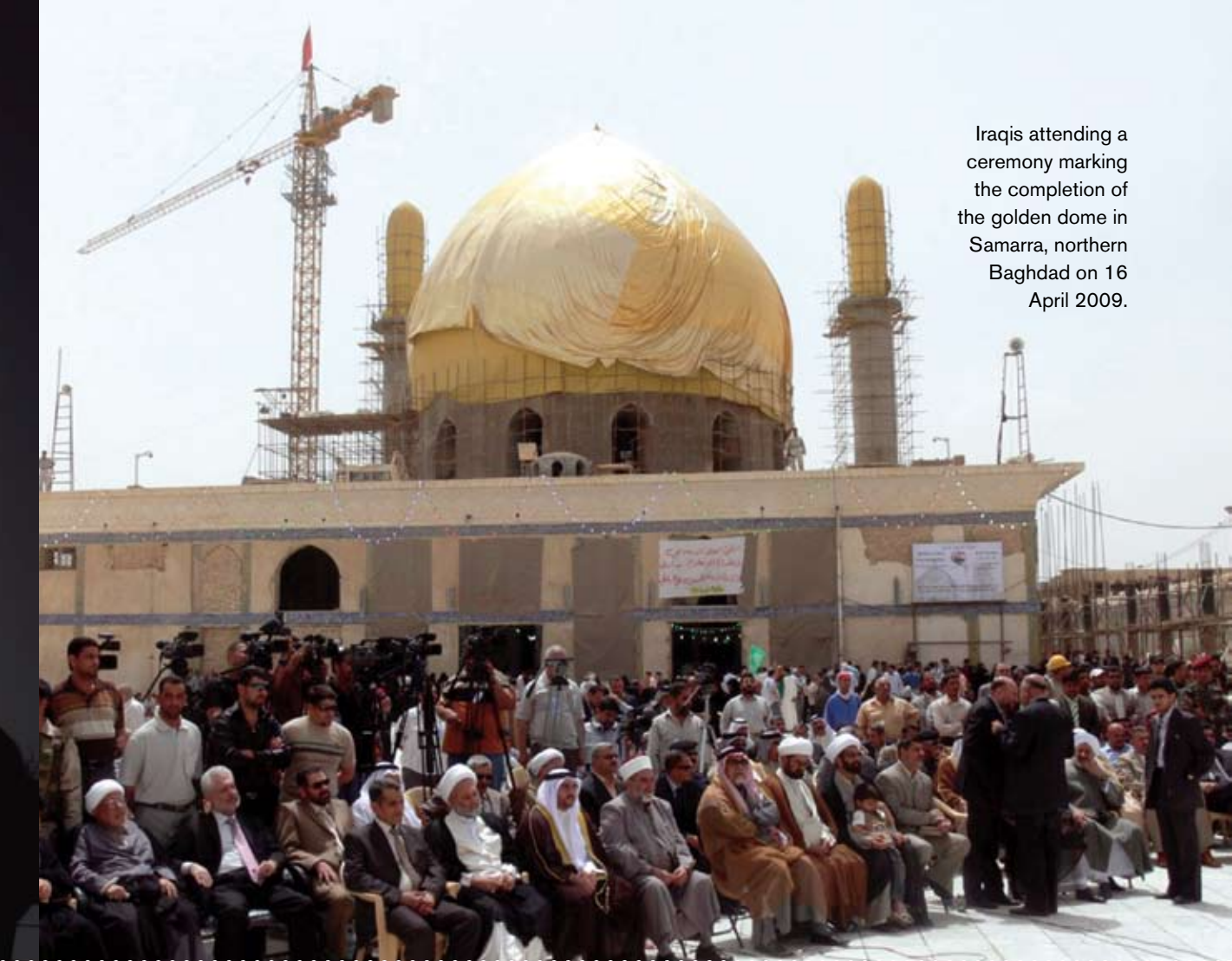


Shiite Muslims shout in protest on Friday 24 February 2006, to condemn the attack's on the Shiite shrine in Samarra.



By Ernesto Londoño, Washington Post, Photos: EPA

Iraqis attending a ceremony marking the completion of the golden dome in Samarra, northern Baghdad on 16 April 2009.



Was the Iraq war worth it?

A divided city tries to answer.

Samarra, Iraq -- The Shiite pilgrims arrive in crowded buses and are dropped off just outside the shrine's gate. They walk down a narrow path patrolled by security guards and lined with tall cement walls to pray at the al-Askari mosque, the resting place of two of the most revered figures in Shiite Islam.

The mosque, which once had a golden dome that sparkled in this city of gray, looks like a construction site, with piles of debris and scaffolding -- remnants of the February 2006 bombing that unleashed a brutal civil war between Sunnis and Shiites.

The thousands of visitors who come each week, mostly Iranians and Iraqis from southern provinces, don't venture from the tear-shaped exclusion zone. Just outside, stores and hotels that once thrived on tourism make up a battle-scarred ghost town.

City leaders, merchants and residents have grown deeply resentful at being cut off from the economic heart of the city. "We feel like we're living in a big prison," said merchant Ghazan Hamid, whose shop lies just beyond the wall protecting the mosque.

Samarra, where the U.S. military closed a key base this fall, in many ways embodies the Iraq that American forces are leaving behind as the troop drawdown begins in earnest.

The fighting here, as in much of the country, has ebbed. Iraqi troops are indisputably in charge. Sectarian and ethnic divisions remain deep, but political feuds and fights for power are, by and large, not being waged on the street.

As the American military footprint thins out in places such as Samarra, many U.S. soldiers are returning home making a strong case that they are leav-

ing behind a country with a fighting chance. Just how good Iraq's odds are remains an open question -- one that haunts departing U.S. troops and the Iraqis who grew to depend heavily on them.

If a somewhat peaceful, albeit deeply divided, country is the best conceivable outcome after more than six years of war, thousands of Americans dead and billions of dollars spent, was it worth it? Nowhere does that question resonate more loudly than in predominantly Sunni cities such as Samarra.

Depending on whom you ask, this phase is the preface of peace -- or a prelude to the fight.

"If it doesn't somehow reach an equilibrium, those who are have-nots could find themselves with no alternative except for violence," said Lt. Col. Samuel Whitehurst, an infantry battalion commander whose unit departed Samarra a month ago. "Some of those we have empowered over time, they understand we're leaving. They're looking for other ways. I do have concerns that there are those out there that don't have that vision."

The Samarra that Whitehurst, 43, and his men left is imperfect and edgy, a place awash in anxiety and conspiracy theories. But it is a remarkable success story compared with what became of it during the war's bloodiest time.

This city, about 60 miles north of Baghdad, was one of the key battlegrounds of the war. As Sunnis were marginalized by the U.S.-led invasion that catapulted the country's Shiite majority to power, a mighty insurgency emerged. What began as a loose coalition of groups motivated to fight U.S. forces became the catalyst for the rise of al-Qaeda in Iraq, an extremist group partly funded and led by non-Iraqi Sunni Arabs.

By 2006, al-Qaeda in Iraq, which sought to create an Islamic state run by dogmatic Sunnis, controlled the eastern part of Samarra. U.S. forces and their poorly equipped and trained Iraqi counterparts were drawn into fierce street battles. The mosque bombing unleashed a wave of sectarian attacks and slayings that left tens of thousands of Iraqis dead, hundreds of thousands displaced and once-diverse cities balkanized.

Whitehurst's unit, the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, was first deployed to Iraq in the summer of 2006. Rising violence, along with a spike in American combat deaths, had led many to believe the war was lost.

U.S. commanders found themselves on the offensive -- not just on battlefields, but also on Capitol Hill, where renewing the lease on the Iraq war seemed like a long shot. In Iraq, U.S. soldiers were widely despised, and they seemed unable to prevent the country from slipping into anarchy.

"We would get a lot of bad looks, rocks thrown," said Staff Sgt. Alex Evans, 26, of Evansville, Ind. "There was definitely hostility in the air."

Instead of retreating, the Bush administration doubled up, sending tens of thousands of additional troops, injecting them deeper into battle and asking them to make the safety of Iraqis their top priority.

In Samarra and across Iraq, the Americans won over erstwhile enemies and crippled cells of extremists they deemed "irreconcilable." They redrew the power structure, injected billions into the economy, and trained and equipped a vast Iraqi security apparatus that, while wobbly and disjointed, has in many ways exceeded expectations.

In crucial cities such as Samarra, the central

government set up security centers that reported to Baghdad.

Provincial and municipal authorities, particularly those in heavily Sunni areas ignored by the Shiited Baghdad government, grew dependent on U.S. funds and expertise. They remain so today, even as the money and manpower start to dwindle.

Samarra's mayor has no public budget, carries a revolver to work and, albeit graciously, punts more questions than he answers when the subject turns to security, politics and life after the American withdrawal. He's happy, though, to talk about how much the Americans have done for his city.

Other leaders are more blunt. "All those top leaders in power now, they each have an army on stand-

by," said Wasim Hamad Hawas, the self-described founder of the first resistance group that fought the Americans in Samarra, only to eventually make amends and get on the U.S. payroll. "They will fight us as soon as the Americans aren't standing in the middle."

As Whitehurst and some of his men walked around the city shortly before leaving, residents flocked over, clamoring for micro grants, bundles of cash the U.S. military has handed out to thousands of Iraqis in recent years to jump-start local economies.

Even though Whitehurst was with one of his Iraqi Army counterparts, residents turned to him and his captains, identifiable by their rank patches, to air grievances.

Iraqi soldiers and police officers are omnipresent in Samarra these days. They respond buoyantly when asked about their readiness to keep things calm after the Americans leave.

"People don't like seeing American soldiers walking in the cities," said Gen. Rashid Muhammed Zahir, head of the Samarra operations command, who has warm relations with the Americans. "They want to see the Americans just stay in one or two bases."

But some U.S. soldiers express skepticism about how well the Iraqis will do when they're on their own. "They have the tools to protect their country. They have the equipment and the training," said 1st Sgt. Jeremiah Conachan, 33, of Milwaukie, Ore. "I just don't know if they have the heart. . . . The sun comes

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U.S. soldiers reduce their national flag during a departure ceremony at Olsen camp in Samarra, southern Iraq on 30 June 2009



up; it's 8 in the morning. You can get an hour of work from these guys, and then they're done -- done for the day."

Was it worth it?

I posed that question to several of Whitehurst's men in August during a visit to their outpost near Samarra, which is now closed. Many said it was. Children no longer throw rocks at Americans. Attacks against U.S. troops are as low as they've ever been. They were leaving behind schools and clinics and small businesses that the soldiers hope years from now will be the cornerstone of the American legacy in Iraq.

There were skeptics in the crowd, too.

"We're sitting here in the middle of a little revolution between Iraqis, and we're sitting here being security guards," said Spec. Lorenzo Sanchez, 34, of West Covina, Calif. "We should let them do their thing and get out of their way."

I ran into Sanchez one night as he was emptying sandbags. He was being punished, he explained, because he tacked additional days to his two-week home leave to spend time with his 2-year-old daughter. Having been deployed three times to Iraq, he said, he was leaving "a lost man," with no hope for the country.

"How do you tell someone's parents that their kids died in Iraq?" he asked. "For what purpose? I mean, at the beginning, when we first invaded Iraq, it was for our freedoms, for our rights. . . . Well, here we are a few years later, and is it really for our freedoms and our rights?"

He continued, thinking of what a fallen soldier's mother might be told: "Your son died for, well we're not sure, but he fought a good fight."

Whitehurst had to answer that question from a father who approached him in March 2008 in Hawaii, minutes before he was to address the parents of 19 men who had returned home in coffins.

"I just want to know one thing," the father asked. "Was it worth it?"

There were fewer reasons to be optimistic then, but the colonel knew his answer. It was worth it, he responded, looking the man squarely in the eyes. He will say so again today, when some of the parents of the four soldiers who didn't make it back from this latest deployment attend a welcome-home ball.

"We have lost a lot of great guys; we have lost so much potential," Whitehurst said. "But this country now has that potential. And there are people in this country that are alive today because of the sacrifices made by those soldiers. I do think it was worth it. I can look back, and I think all of us can hold our heads very high."

Ernesto Londoño has reported from Iraq since 2007. ●

FORT HOOD'S QUESTION

BY JIM HOAGLAND, WASHINGTON POST, PHOTO: EPA



Soldiers salute in front of the fallen soldiers memorial at Fort Hood, TX for the 13 soldiers killed and 30 injured in the November 5th shooting.

America's vast spaces inspire such fear and uncertainty for the country's inhabitants that at times they snap, reach for an ever-present firearm and blaze away at their fellow citizens. This narrative comes from a European friend to explain the Fort Hood massacre, as well as those that preceded it and those yet to come.

Expansive explanations flourish in this morbid interim period, when we know what happened but not exactly why or how. Working backward, we impose our deepest fears, resentments and expectations on a pattern that is suddenly astonishingly clear.

Of course, we exclaim, as we read the comments that reporters gathered from former neighbors, associates and distant nephews who provide the one key fact that explains it all, even if that fact was until now not key enough to pass on to their bosses, wives or golfing partners.

Our minds want desperately for "it" not to have happened. So we focus first on how the mass murder should have been prevented. Why did the FBI not shadow, interrogate and otherwise harass the prime suspect on the basis of the (very little) information that is now blindingly pertinent?

In the next breath we add that those who resemble the suspect in ethnicity or religion must not be profiled or visited with new hatreds or retaliation such as FBI shadowing. We must confine the meaning of this tragedy to this one case, as the law and correct manners require. We repeat reflexively that it is not about anybody's religion.

Which is one way for reporters and citizens alike to rush past the obvious -- to avoid saying that the deaths by gunfire of 12 active-duty soldiers and one civilian at Fort Hood are terrorist acts that, at least indirectly, raise important questions about Islam and U.S. wars abroad today.

Terrorists intend to punish, intimidate and force society to change, whether they operate as networks of multiple suicide bombers (the atrocity of choice in the Middle East and South Asia) or as lone gunmen (*à la Américaine*, as it were).

Their grievances and goals are much larger than their available targets. The degree of calculation and coordination -- the presumed measures of both terrorism and the assassin's sanity -- is less important than the effect of the acts.

And we uneasily rush past the question reportedly raised by Maj. Nidal M. Hasan, who has been charged with the Fort Hood killings, about the relationship of the U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to his religion, Islam.

Hasan told superiors that the Army should realize that a good Muslim would not kill other Muslims for U.S. goals. He demanded reflection, explanations and a pass from being sent to Afghanistan. He got none of the three.

But the war in Afghanistan is inescapably about the struggle within Islam over that religion's direction. The radical version of al-Qaeda, the Taliban and their associates in jihad -- and probably at some point of Hasan -- preaches that it is a good Muslim's duty to kill infidels and Muslims who stray from the

fundamentalist path. That is why *they* are in Afghanistan.

For them, Afghanistan is not about nation-building, counterinsurgency, troop levels or other topics that have dominated the 20 hours of ordeal-by-review that President Obama has put himself and his aides through in their increasingly bitter internal debate over U.S. goals and methods.

One idea that has taken root in the review is that Taliban forces can be "politicized" through de facto local truces and amnesty, and thus split off from al-Qaeda and its jihadist ideology. But this either ignores or discounts the identical religious doctrine of the two groups on what a good Muslim is and does.

Like the George W. Bush administration, this White House is uneasy in describing or planning the war in religious terms. For moral and tactical reasons, U.S. political and military leaders resist even looking at that notion. So the Army had no ready answers for Hasan's initial challenge about his faith and his subsequent hostile attacks on the American military presence in Islamic nations.

The responsibility for Hasan's acts lies solely with himself and no one else. But initially, he was raising the right question. He was asking the national command to look at this war from the point of view of the Muslims who are both its chief protagonists and its chief victims.

Until this happens, we will have a hard time figuring out why we are in Afghanistan and how we get out. ●

Playing chicken with a nightmare flu

BY ALAN SIPRESS, WASHINGTON POST

When swine flu erupted this spring in the southwestern United States and Mexico, it had been 40 years since the last flu pandemic. The outbreak has dispelled any illusion that pandemic influenza belonged to a bygone era, like smallpox, polio or scarlet fever. But we haven't seen how bad things might yet get.

What's the worst-case scenario? It could be a continuing vaccine shortage. It might be a mutation in the swine flu virus that suddenly makes the strain resistant to Tamiflu, as some seasonal flu strains already are. Or it could be that hospital ICUs become so overwhelmed that people who could have been saved die.

These are all unnerving possibilities. Yet many flu specialists say their real nightmare is that swine flu could meet up and swap genetic material -- or reassort, as these scientists say -- with another, deadlier flu strain, breeding a new virus that is as contagious as H1N1 but far more savage.

Such a strain is already circulating in Asia and Africa, and it could be ready for a chance encounter with swine flu. It is called bird flu.

Unlike swine flu, which is no worse than a seasonal flu bug for most people, bird flu kills more than half of those who contract it: While there have

been only 460 confirmed human cases of bird flu, 268 of those people died. And even more than swine flu, bird flu preys on the young and healthy, ravaging their lungs, a modus operandi reminiscent of the 1918 flu that killed as many as 50 million people.

So far, scientists haven't found proof that swine and bird flu are about to merge and spawn a deadlier virus. But the prospect is so chilling that health officials have been warning about it since earlier this year.

Margaret Chan, director general of the World Health Organization, urged public health experts not to take their eyes off H5N1 bird flu even as H1N1 swine flu was sweeping the globe this spring.

"No one can say how this avian virus will behave when pressured by large numbers of people infected with the new H1N1 virus," she told an assembly of the world's top health officials in May. Separately, she appealed to Asian health ministers: "Do not drop the ball on monitoring H5N1."

Influenza is a cruel wonder of nature, one of the most promiscuous microbes. Its viruses have a rare gift for swapping genetic material with each other. This is because the genetic material in a flu virus -- unlike in nearly all other viruses -- is composed of segments that can be individually replaced.

If two different strains invade the same cell, they can trade attributes, then dispatch that prog-

eny back into the world. And so the WHO and other health agencies are watching closely as swine flu spreads to countries where bird flu is well established, in particular Egypt and Vietnam.

As a correspondent, I tracked the bird flu virus for several years starting in early 2004. My travels took me across nine Asian countries, from jungle villages to squalid urban quarters, through run-down hospitals and cutting-edge labs. Along the way, I discovered how economic, political and cultural realities were conspiring to imperil us.

In a single generation, East Asia's surging demand for protein has led to an explosion in poultry farming, and these flocks have become perfect breeding grounds for a pandemic strain. At the same time, age-old customs have facilitated the virus's spread.

In Thailand, I went to cockfights at makeshift arenas to see how fans crowd around birds that may be carrying the disease. I visited breeders of fighting cocks, witnessing how they cradle the birds, wiping down their bloodied feathers and even sucking mucus from their beaks.

At live poultry markets in Indonesia, China and Vietnam, where the air was rank with the odor of chickens and ducks, and the floors slick with their blood, I saw how people and livestock were crammed together, a crucial nexus in the spread of the virus.

Despite the threat to humanity, several Asian countries (notably China, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam) covered up their bird flu outbreaks, in some instances until it was too late to contain the virus's spread. Subsequently, these governments claimed to have cornered the virus.

But it keeps coming back -- fresh reports are circulating about renewed outbreaks among poultry in Indonesia and Thailand -- and each time it does, it gets another chance to reassort with another virus.

And now, along comes swine flu. Although its mortality rate is well below 1 percent, there have already been tens of millions of cases worldwide. Is this more-contagious virus the key that might unlock bird flu's terrible full potential? The swine flu virus is so new that researchers have yet to plumb its secrets. How exactly does it pass from one person to another? How does it attack the human body, and why, in a small percentage of cases, is this assault catastrophic? Could it reassort with another flu strain?

This summer, scientists from the University of Maryland, the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine and the National University of Colombia published the results of their swine flu research on ferrets. (Ferrets are widely used in flu research because they are susceptible to human flu viruses and display some of the same symptoms as people.)

The study suggested that swine flu is unlikely to reassort with ordinary seasonal strains and instead is more apt to crowd them out. We can only hope that it will be equally chaste when it comes to bird flu.

But another study, also published this summer, offers reason to worry about bird flu's potential for a sinister tryst with another virus. The research showed that bird flu has the ability to reassort with at least some other strains of flu.

A team at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta confirmed this by simultaneously infecting ferrets with bird flu and a strain of ordinary seasonal flu. When they later tested secretions from the ferrets' noses, the researchers found that they carried new flu strains that contained genetic material from both of the parent strains.

We cannot confidently predict the twists and turns of the flu virus, which has repeatedly confounded some of the world's brightest scientists.

No one expected that bird flu would leap from birds to humans -- until it did. Its initial, withering attack on a young boy in Hong Kong 12 years ago was like a "visitation from outer space," according to flu specialist Keiji Fukuda, who was dispatched by the CDC to investigate the initial occurrences.

He recalled how the Hong Kong outbreak eluded understanding, even as it spread and

began resembling the 1918 Spanish flu. "You feel like: 'I don't know what is going to happen. I don't know what is going on. But what is going on is not good, and it reminds me of the worst not-good of the century,'" he said. Today, Fukuda is WHO's top flu official and says he remains humbled by flu's stubborn unpredictability.

Already, the swine flu epidemic has chastened us by revealing the sorry state of our antiquated technology for producing vaccines and the limits of our brittle, underfunded system for emergency medical care. But swine flu is not merely a warning shot. The virus itself could be the catalyst for a new flu -- and an even deadlier pandemic. ●

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Dangerous Froth

BY THE ECONOMIST

The post-crisis challenge for central bankers has long seemed easy to describe. They must steer between the shoals of short-term deflation and the longer-term risk of accelerating consumer prices.

But recently a new concern has cropped up: that loose monetary conditions are creating dangerous bubbles in all manner of assets, from oil prices to Asian apartments, that could capsize the global recovery.

Asset prices have certainly risen impressively. The S&P 500 index is up by 62 percent from its low on March 9; the MSCI index of emerging-economy shares has climbed by 114 percent from its nadir of a year ago; the price of oil is 155 percent higher than it was in December 2008.

Gold prices set a new record of more than \$1,120 an ounce on Nov. 12. Chinese house prices rose at their fastest pace in 14 months in October.

However, these rebounds have followed even more dramatic slumps, so asset-price levels are less eye-popping. Gold aside, commodities are still well below the peaks of mid-2008.

The earnings multiple for Shanghai's A-share index is less than half the level it reached during the 2007 bubble. U.S. shares may be richly valued relative to earnings, but they are less unhinged than in earlier booms.

According to Smithers & Co., a research firm, the price-earnings ratio for the U.S.'s S&P 500 on a cyclically adjusted basis is about 40 percent above its long-term average, compared with more than 100 percent in the late 1990s.

There are other reasons for calm. Earlier this year, investors were in panic mode. Much of the rebound since then reflects a return to more normal risk appetites. Nor is today's asset boom fueling the kind of leverage that made the bust so awful. Bank lending is contracting in the U.S. and weak elsewhere in the rich world.

In Asia, property-related borrowing is heavily curtailed compared with the U.S.'s pre-crisis boom. And from Singapore to Seoul, the authorities are demanding higher down payments from borrowers and restricting lending to developers.

Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to be too sanguine. Another violent drop in share prices could have disproportionate effects on confidence and hence demand. Equally important, frothy asset prices could cause damage long before any bubbles burst, by increasing the risk that central bankers make mistakes.

This risk is most obvious in those countries -- mostly emerging markets -- where domestic conditions call for tighter monetary policy. China is Exhibit A. With a vigorous domestic recovery under way, China ought to tighten soon, before asset prices bubble out of control.

But China is loath to allow the yuan to appreciate rapidly. And it will not be pressured by high consumer-price inflation, as it was in 2008. Thanks largely to soaring pork prices, China's annual inflation rate reached almost 9 percent early that year. Today it is negative and few expect consumer prices to rise by much more than 3-4 percent in 2010.

Asset-price rises are also a problem for emerging economies with flexible exchange rates. Many have seen their currencies soar as foreign money pours in. Raising interest rates to tighten domestic monetary conditions can attract even more foreign money.

Increasingly, countries are turning to controls on capital inflows. Brazil has already introduced a 2 percent tax on foreign portfolio investments to stem the rise in the real. On Nov. 10, Taiwan banned foreign investors from putting money into Taiwanese fixed-term deposits. More such measures are likely, increasing the chance of distortions.

In weak, rich economies the danger is not too little too late, but too much too soon. Jumps in asset prices risk causing premature inflation jitters. Oil prices, especially, pose a danger. In recent months year-on-year headline inflation rates in most of the world's big economies have been negative, largely because oil prices have been far below the heights of mid-2008.

That is about to change dramatically, as the slumping oil prices of late 2008 and early 2009 affect the comparisons.

In the U.S., headline consumer prices fell by 1.3 percent in the year to September. By December they could be up by 3 percent.

Even if oil prices stay around \$80 a barrel, these "base effects" could keep the U.S.'s headline inflation above 2 percent for much of the first half of 2010.

Many expect commodity prices to continue rising. Analysts at Goldman Sachs expect a barrel to cost \$95 by the end of next year. Long-dated futures contracts are now flirting with the \$100 mark.

An energy-driven headline inflation rate of 3 percent hardly spells disaster. Core inflation, which strips out jumpy food and fuel prices, is low, at 1.5 percent, and falling, thanks to the huge amount of slack in the economy. With a jobless rate of 10.2 percent and oodles of idle capacity, the U.S. still faces a bigger threat from deflation than from inflation.

The risk is that higher headline inflation is misinterpreted as a sign that policy is too loose. Judged by the "break-even" rate between inflation-protected and other Treasury bonds, financial markets' estimates of long-term inflation have jumped of late, although consumers' expectations have remained stable.

Worries about the size of the U.S.'s budget deficit and fears about the potential politicization of the Federal Reserve are rising. (A proposal released this week by the Senate Banking Committee which strips the Fed of supervisory powers and introduces political appointments to the regional reserve-bank boards hardly helps).

There is a danger that higher headline inflation will be misread, even as rising energy costs sap demand.

Vince Reinhart of the American Enterprise Institute worries about a replay of the summers of 2007 and 2008.

On both occasions a weaker dollar, rising oil prices and a "decoupled" world economy made the U.S.'s central bank more hawkish. Although it did not raise rates, "inflation jitters" were pervasive. The European Central Bank actually raised rates in July 2008.

History will not repeat itself exactly. But bubbly asset prices do risk overreaction from rich-world central bankers.

That may temper worries in the emerging world but at the risk of pushing the global economy back into recession. Central bankers ignore asset prices at their peril. But dealing with them is not easy either. ●

The Fed in the cross hairs

BY DAVID IGNATIUS, WASHINGTON POST, PHOTO: EPA

US Chairman of the Federal Reserve Ben Bernanke testifies before the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee on Capitol Hill in Washington



Among the cherished prerogatives of members of Congress is the right to second-guess. That ritual is playing itself out with a vengeance as the solons of Capitol Hill attack the Federal Reserve for its role in last year's financial crisis.

The Fed made its share of mistakes in creating the bubble economy. But once the crisis hit, it was the Fed's innovative, try-anything response that saved the country from what might have been another Great Depression.

Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke deserves a public "attaboy" for finding ways to pump liquidity into credit markets that were on the verge of freezing up tight. Instead, he's getting a congressional raspberry.

Bernanke's creative policies in 2008 were possible because of the Fed's political independence and its wide-ranging authority. Those broad powers are now under attack: Congress is proposing new limits on the Fed's role as financial supervisor and "lender of last resort" that could prevent it from responding as aggressively to the next crisis as it did to the last one.

The political challenge to the central bank's authority comes at an especially delicate moment -- as the economy begins to rebound and the Fed considers future tightening of monetary policy. It will need public support to combat inflation. But as the New York Times noted last week, the Fed is "under more intense attack than at any time in decades," from both left and right.

Wall Street so far appears unfazed by the criticism of the Fed, perhaps because investors assume that the protests are just political posturing. But this could change. "If Congress even appears to be politicizing the Fed's monetary policy function, rest assured that two market developments are inevitable -- a collapsing dollar and higher long-term interest rates," warns David Smick, a Washington financial consultant.

Fed-bashers have an unlikely new champion in Sen. Chris Dodd, who introduced a bill last week that would strip the central bank of most of its supervisory functions. The Connecticut Democrat said that the Fed had been "an abysmal failure" as a regulator and that its powers should be given to a new supervisory agency that, presumably, would be subject to greater congressional oversight.

How did Dodd, the gentlemanly chairman of the Banking Committee, suddenly become a neopopulist after five terms in the Senate? The answer is that in the era of anti-government indignation, Fed-bashing seems to be good politics. Dodd faces reelection next

year, and he's already being attacked for supporting policies that contributed to financial bailouts.

For a sampling of the overheated attacks on the incumbent, you can visit a Web site called "The Dodd Crisis," organized by Rob Simmons, a former member of Congress and one of his potential challengers. It catalogues Dodd's support for the managements of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and his role in authorizing bonuses for AIG executives. It notes that Dodd was a leading recipient of campaign contributions from all three bailout recipients.

Dodd's newfound skepticism about the Fed is symptomatic of the central bank's larger problem. With unemployment above 10 percent, the public is angry about last year's financial crunch -- and looking for people to blame.

The Fed is just elitist enough, and Bernanke is just enough of a professorial egghead, to make them targets for popular anger.

Bernanke's supporters offer a simple argument for maintaining the Fed's current role in supervising banks. Without it, they say, the Fed would lack the information -- and the "feel" for the markets -- to intervene effectively in a crisis. Countries that tried to separate central banks from financial regulation, such as Britain, are now regretting it, the Bernanke camp argues.

To act effectively as lender of last resort, the Fed's proponents say, it must know its customers -- which will be much harder if it's stripped of its current regulatory role.

Today's critics of

the Fed weren't so vocal a year ago, when the economy was in free-fall.

When Bernanke briefed key members of Congress about his plan to save AIG from a catastrophic meltdown, Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid is said to have offered this waffling response: "I want you to understand that we are not giving you permission, and we're not saying no. We reserve the right to comment later."

Perhaps it's a harbinger of good times that Congress now wants to reassert its authority. But it would be stupid, even by congressional standards, to enfeeble the Fed -- one of the few institutions that actually rose to the challenge in last year's crisis. ●



Mark Schumann
PHOTOGRAPHY

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If we lived in a city like New York, Boston, Chicago or Los Angeles, and a citizen filed suit seeking to disqualify a person elected to the City Council, within 24 hours we would know the who, the what, and the why?

Even in a city as small as Palm Beach, we would be reading details within a day or two of who the person filing suit was, what she was hoping to achieve, why she felt motivated to take action that probably is going to cost some not inconsequential amount of money.

This kind of reporting is what daily newspapers have done for the American citizenry for over a century.

But not here in Vero Beach. Alas, we have no such expectations – so we are rarely disappointed. The daily newspaper here, which brags of its “100 professional, local journalists,” a week ago ran a story saying that a Dian George had filed a lawsuit contending that newly elected City Council member Charlie Wilson wasn’t legally qualified to run for election to the City Council.

Attorney Buck Vocelle, who filed the civil lawsuit on behalf of resident George, said George is declining comment. The only additional information we are given in the story is that George is a retired Marine who was involved in trying to recall former Vero Beach Mayor Mary Beth McDonald in 2005.

And that’s it. No follow-up story in the paper Saturday. No follow-up story Sunday. No follow-up story Monday. Silly us for thinking the “100 professional, lo-

cal journalists” might have taken time out from their coverage of the Chili Cookoff to do a little reporting.

Regrettably, our small staff is hard pressed just to keep up with what’s going on here on our barrier island. But we did give George a call. In what may be a surprise to the daily newspaper, we discovered it is not impossible to reach her.

But the conversation quickly went down hill when it shifted to her suit against Wilson. Here is what she had to say:

32963: *Why did you file a lawsuit to disqualify Charlie Wilson?*

George: *Because of what he did. I voted for him, you know. But then I found out what he did.*

32963: *What did he do?*

George: *Don’t you know what he did? Ask him what he did. He knows what he did. Not just to me, to all of us.*

32963: *Well, could you be a little more specific? We don’t want to put words in your mouth.*

George: *Because of what he did. And now it’s part of a lawsuit.*

32963: *But can’t you just tell me what part of what he did made you upset enough to file a lawsuit?*

George: *No. You know what he did. He knows what he did.*

32963: *How did you choose your attorney?*

George: *(Heavy sigh) I’m dumbfounded by that question.*

32963: *Why?*

George: *You know what he did. You know I voted him. And now it’s part of a lawsuit.*

32963: *Did anyone ask you to file the lawsuit?*

George: *Any effort to tie me to anyone is pointless. I am my own personal being. I am a former Marine and I carry a red flag that says “Don’t tread on me.”*

Alas, that’s as much as we had time for. But generally, people don’t just decide over coffee one morning to file electoral lawsuits. Nobody wakes up and says, “I think I will go hire Buck Vocelle today and go after Charlie Wilson.”

There’s got to be something more to this than that. As for hiring Vocelle, one of the top lawyers in our community, our guess is that he is not doing this for free. What is this going to cost George, or are his fees coming out of some other pocket?

We could go on for the rest of the page with questions, but what we really would like are some answers. Too bad we can’t shame the local daily into trying to get them. ●

Part Two Money as a test of sincerity

In thumbing through our favorite local glossy magazine last week, a curious Question and Answer section in the back caught our eye.

It asked: “Why isn’t Vero Beach Magazine free like other publications?”

That struck us as an excellent question, because we certainly cringe on the occasions when we shell out \$5 plus tax to see what there is to read in this publication.

The “most important of all reasons,” the item goes on to say, is that the publication wants “to make sure that the people who receive our magazine actually want it.”

So if you take them at their word, the \$5 per issue that this magazine charges, or some lesser amount if you sign up for a long-term subscription, is a form of a test of sincerity.

If people shell out money for it, the publisher’s theory goes, the magazine will not “be considered by them to be ‘junk mail’ and discarded.”

Well, we would be willing to sign a sincerity affidavit if the magazine would waive the charge. But one regrettable effect of the sincerity test is that magazine is mailed to fewer than one-third of the homes on the barrier island.

That means, based on the numbers provided in the Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation published alongside this Q and A, that fewer than 3,000 of the barrier island’s 11,000 households regularly receive Vero Beach’s magazine.

In contrast, Vero Beach 32963 is mailed each week to all 11,000 barrier island residential addresses. (Our most recent postal statement, certifying that the magazine was mailed to 11,081 residences in zip code 32963, is always available for your inspection at our office.)

While we suppose we could ask you to pay some nominal amount for Vero Beach 32963 to prove your sincerity, we plan to stick with our advertiser-supported business model that enables us to provide the publication to every home on the barrier island free of charge.

Your amazing cards, letters and emails telling us how much you enjoy the coverage of our community are all the proof we require that most of you receiving Vero Beach 32963 “actually want it.” ●

The story behind no coverage of the Big Brothers, Big Sisters fundraiser

BY MARK SCHUMANN

This past Monday evening, the Indian River County chapter of Big Brothers, Big Sisters held a Chocolate, Campaign and Chefs fundraiser at Quail Valley. If you heard of the event, or happened to be there, and were expecting to see a resulting story and pictures in *Vero Beach 32963*, know that we would have been happy to offer coverage of this event, if only we had been welcome to attend.

Last fall for the first time in several years, I picked up my camera, joined the staff of *Vero Beach 32963*, and began again taking people pictures. One of my interests in pursuing this work was to reconnect with my passion for photography, a hobby which has inspired me since I first began taking pictures for the *Press-Journal* as a young teenager in the early 1970s.

Of equal importance to me was the opportunity to help in the effort to offer local readers a serious,

genuine community newspaper, one willing to ask challenging questions of local government, and at the same time eager to invest the resources necessary to cover social and lifestyle news in more than a cursory way. Stories about people and what they are up to are at the heart of what makes for a good community newspaper.

One of the first events I covered last fall for *Vero Beach 32963* was a community fundraiser held by Big Brothers, Big Sisters at the Mulligan’s restaurant.

So needless to say, almost exactly one year later, I was quite surprised to learn last week that David Walley, the publisher of the Beachside News, asked for and had been granted the exclusive right to cover the Big Brothers, Big Sisters “Chocolate, Campaign and Chefs” event.

For some time now, we have been listing this event in our Calendar. And customarily, we cover events like these in our People section. This is one of many causes worthy of your support.

And we believe that by making readers aware in our news pages of the many influential people in our community supporting these organizations, it aids their membership recruitment and fundraising efforts.

Just when it seemed all the media in Vero Beach understood the importance of helping maximize publicity for the area’s non-profits, up steps the Beachside News seeking to put its own selfish interest above the needs of an organization it allegedly supports.

Frankly, I was more than a bit surprised last fall, astonished really, to discover that other media were seeking the exclusive right to cover community fundraising events held by local non-profits, all of which can benefit from the broadest publicity possible.

If the purpose of writing stories about these events, and of taking and publishing pictures of attendees, is truly to benefit these organizations, then why, I wondered, would any media seek to put its one self interest above that of the non-profit organizations it professes to support?

A few weeks ago I called another non-profit offering a free ad to help promote their fundraising efforts.

To my surprise, I was told that because they had already accepted free ads from Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers, they were precluded from also receiving support from *Vero Beach 32963*.

If true, this sure seems to me like selfish behavior on the part of Scripps. In contrast, I can’t imagine one of our community’s many generous

philanthropists offering a contribution to a local non-profit with the stipulation that the recipient organization not accept gifts from other willing donors.

A gift that comes with such a condition is anything but a genuine gift. I am reminded of the words of Kahlil Gibran’s main character in his 1923 classic “The Profit.” Gibran has the profit offer this advice, “When you give someone a gift, lay it on them gently.”

For a newspaper or magazine to tell a non-profit they will only offer publicity if given the right to do so exclusively is something short of generosity, and is certainly an example of anything but community mindedness.

Vero Beach 32963 took the position a year ago that efforts to exclude any media from coverage of community fundraisers was a practice we would not pursue. We strongly believe coverage of every event should be open to any media organization. And happily, Vero Beach Magazine appears to have embraced this stand.

Upon hearing that Big Brothers, Big Sisters was feeling pressured by the Beachside News to exclude other media from covering Monday’s event, we urged them to reconsider. I spoke personally with two local committee members, and with the organization’s chief executive. Their response was that after much “heartfelt” consideration, they felt they should “throw their support behind the Beachside News.”

While I appreciate the fine work of Big Brothers, Big Sisters, and have much respect for the volunteers who give of their time and energy to mentor young boys and girls, I am still left thinking this isn’t about the Beachside News, or *Vero Beach 32963*.

It’s about the boys and girls who are served by this excellent organization. More broadly, this issue is about arriving at a more reasoned understanding of what it means for a publication to be of service to its community.

We assumed that as a real friend of the boys and girls, Walley was oblivious to the decision Big Brothers, Big Sisters faced, and would want as much coverage of this fundraiser as possible. So we called David to better understand his position. We never got a response.

In the People pages of this issue, you will learn about fundraisers held this past week for the Indian River Land Trust, the Homeless Family Center, and the Riverside Theatre. It was our pleasure to cover these events, and I hope you will enjoy reading about them. ●

VERO BEACH
32963

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Invite us to cover social and charitable events or Talk to us about news stories by calling 226-7924 or E-Mail us at editor@verobeach32963.com.

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If you or someone you know living on the barrier island is not receiving Vero Beach 32963 by mail, please contact us so that we can immediately make arrangements for you to enjoy what has fast become the most widely read newspaper serving the barrier island.

While Vero Beach 32963 is increasingly widely available in the clubhouses of Grand Harbor, Oak Harbor, Regency Park and other communities on the mainland, a growing number of readers who do not live in zip

code 32963 have asked if it can be mailed to their homes. We will be happy to mail each issue of Vero Beach 32963 to you anywhere in Florida for a one-time payment of \$59.95 (which doesn’t even cover our postage and handling).

You can subscribe by either (1) mailing the address you would like the paper to be mailed to and your full credit card information (including three-digit access code and zip code to subscribe@verobeach32963.com, or stopping by our office at 4855 North A1A. Your copies of Vero Beach 32963 will come every week until May 13th 2010, when we resume publishing bi-weekly. For more information, please call us.

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251 John's Island Drive	\$1,725,000
310 Sabal Palm Lane	\$1,725,000
70 Paget Court	\$1,750,000
306 Island Creek Drive	\$1,995,000
460 Indian Harbor Road	\$2,100,000
221 Clarkson Lane	\$2,200,000
751 Shady Lake Lane	\$2,300,000
290 John's Island Drive	\$2,300,000
20 Dove Shell Lane	\$2,300,000
561 Sea Oak Drive	\$2,450,000
90 Dove Plum Road	\$2,600,000
71 Cowry Lane	\$2,700,000
120 Sago Palm Road	\$2,750,000
601 Sea Oak Drive	\$2,800,000
400 Indian Harbor Road	\$2,850,000
180 Orchid Way	\$2,950,000
580 Indian Harbor Road	\$2,950,000
311 Llwyd's Lane	\$2,995,000

351 Indian Harbor Road	\$3,375,000
140 North Shore Point	\$3,400,000
370 Indian Harbor Road	\$3,650,000
241 Sea Oak Drive	\$3,690,000
360 Palmetto Point	\$3,850,000
310 Island Creek Drive	\$3,995,000
228 Island Creek Drive	\$4,050,000
380 Island Creek Drive	\$4,100,000
640 Indian Harbor Road	\$4,450,000
330 Palmetto Point	\$4,650,000
664 Ocean Road	\$5,750,000
71 Dove Plum Road	\$6,895,000
255 Island Creek Drive	\$6,950,000
646 Ocean Road	\$7,500,000
801 Shady Lake Lane	\$7,500,000
141 Gem Island Drive	\$8,900,000
Homesites	
280 Sea Oak Drive	\$1,450,000
225 Coconut Palm Road	\$1,750,000
270 John's Island Drive	\$2,300,000
80 Stingaree Point	\$2,300,000

100 Stingaree Point	\$2,600,000
13 Sea Court	\$3,775,000
60 Gem Island Drive	\$4,150,000
1 Sea Court	\$4,350,000
662 Ocean Road	\$4,900,000
810 Manatee Inlet	\$5,300,000
Townhouses, Cottages and Island House	
431 Silver Moss Drive, #105	\$350,000
777 Sea Oak Drive #720, 2BR/2BA	\$400,000
777 Sea Oak Drive #714, 2BR/2BA	\$450,000
777 Sea Oak Drive #717, 2BR/2BA	\$450,000
431 Silver Moss Drive, #104	\$485,000
777 Sea Oak Drive #710, 3BR/3BA	\$525,000
231 Silver Moss Drive	\$579,000
111 John's Island Drive, #17	\$675,000
223 Silver Moss Drive	\$685,000
777 Sea Oak Drive #725, 3BR/3BA	\$685,000
777 Sea Oak Drive #707, 3BR/3BA	\$695,000
401 Silver Moss Drive	\$695,000
777 Sea Oak Drive #701, 3BR/3BA	\$710,000
233 Silver Moss Drive	\$850,000

111 John's Island Drive, #4	(NEW) \$975,000
111 John's Island Drive, #5	(NEW) \$975,000
111 John's Island Drive, #19	\$1,775,000
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#230	\$275,000
#121	\$277,500
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#144	\$346,795
#224	\$395,000
#237	\$395,000
#235	\$445,000
#243	\$450,000
Condominiums	
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700 Beach Road #355, 2BR/2BA	\$725,000
750 Beach Road #304, 2BR/2BA	\$749,000
100 Ocean Road #104, 2BR/2BA	\$750,000
550 Beach Road #221, 2BR/2BA	\$775,000

600 Beach Road #331, 2BR/2BA	\$775,000
450 Beach Road #322, 2BR/2BA	\$795,000
500 Beach Road #210, 2BR/2BA	\$795,000
100 Ocean Road #111, 2BR/2BA	\$825,000
850 Beach Road #178, 2BR/2BA	\$935,000
700 Beach Road #158, 3BR/2BA	\$975,000
950 Beach Road #193, 3BR/2BA	\$1,000,000
850 Beach Road #277, 2BR/2BA	\$1,200,000
100 Ocean Road #112, 3BR/2BA	\$1,275,000
500 Beach Road #203, 3BR/2BA	\$1,275,000
500 Beach Road #104, 3BR/2BA	\$1,300,000

800 Beach Road #172, 3BR/3BA	\$1,350,000
300 Ocean Road #1E, 3BR/3BA	\$1,400,000
700 Beach Road #148, 3BR/2BA	\$1,400,000
700 Beach Road #149, 3BR/2BA	\$1,400,000
500 Beach Road #211, 3BR/2BA	\$1,550,000
500 Beach Road #311, 3BR/3BA	\$1,600,000
250 Ocean Road #3C, 3BR/3BA	\$1,600,000
1050 Beach Road #3H, 3BR/4BA	\$2,400,000
1150 Beach Road #3L, 3BR/3.5BA	\$2,475,000
400 Ocean Road #184, 3BR/4.5BA	\$2,950,000

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900 Beach Road #181	700 Beach Road #250	650 Indian Harbor Road	1000 Beach Road #295	321 Island Creek Drive
100 Ocean Road #212	311 Indian Harbor Road	401 Indian Harbor Road	850 Beach Road #375	400 Ocean Road #183
800 Beach Road #169 & #371	110 Coconut Palm Road	511 Sea Oak Drive	381 Sea Oak Drive	
600 Beach Road #135 & #330	241 Sundial Court	103 Island Creek Drive	430 Coconut Palm Road	
111 John's Island Drive #3, #4 & #5	750 Beach Road #303	130 Sago Palm Road	291 Sabal Palm Lane	
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Stylist Cirino Bosco gives Rosanne Fagan a trim at Blessings Day Spa. Bosco says he prays each morning so he can give his best to clients.



BY ALINA LAMBIET, STAFF WRITER
PHOTOS BY TOM MCCARTHY JR.



Blessings' team: (left to right) Andy Kotanjan, Svetlana Brankovic, Cirino Bosco and owner Brenda Joffe. "It's not always popular to be Christian," says Joffe. "But money is not our overriding reward."

Gaining strength: The Vero Beach Christian Business Association

If she had wanted to keep her religious beliefs a secret, then Brenda Joffe would not have named her salon and day spa "Blessings."

"It was a business decision, of course," says Joffe, whose small but growing business has been in Royal Palm Pointe for the past four years. "I prayed about this, I wanted to be a blessing to my clients and, in turn, they are a blessing to me. So it seemed right to me."

Joffe is not alone as a business wearing its religion — in this case conservative Christianity — outwardly, for all to see. In the past decade alone, Christian-affiliated businesses have been growing nationally, most notably after the Sept. 11 attacks and more recently following the meltdown of Wall Street's top banks, as consumers seek more ethical practices in business.

In Indian River County, the small Vero Beach Christian Business Association once struggled in their annual membership drive to reach the magic number of 100 members, says President Maureen Nicolace, who owns Nicolace Marketing Inc. Being a business that works under Christian principles is not just a niche, or a marketing tool she says.

"Suddenly, just in the past four years, we are seeing more members and we're maintaining about 120 easily," she said. "We're seeing brand new busi-

nesses who want to be a part of the organization from the very beginning. And that's interesting. It tells us businesses want to follow our tenets from the very start and let their clients know that too."

More established business owners are having epiphanies of sorts. They seem more committed than ever, says Nicolace.

"The longer you are in the business, the more you realize that business and money is not everything," Nicolace says. "You're not just a business person, you're a person too. Who you are as a Christian and how you relate to other people has more value and is more lasting than just making money."

Members of the association follow a value system — believing in the Christian faith, working within the framework of values taught by Christ, and working in the spirit of cooperation that ultimately benefits the whole community.

Working together to improve the community goes a long way, says Nicolace. A majority of the association's dues are dispersed to charitable groups that work with the needy, women in distress, and at risk children.

Where it was once taboo to be anything other than a secular business professional in the United States, changing values and demographics are making it more common to see religion blending in business, particularly as the federal government opened

up funds for faith-based organizations to do work once left exclusively to the state.

It's not surprising that conservative Christians are blending their professional lives with their religious ones here in Indian River County. If Florida has a Bible belt, Indian River is at the southern edges of it. Here, people are more likely to talk about going to church on Sundays, a restaurant server is more likely to bid you goodbye with a 'God bless you', and if you're looking to make plans on Sunday — better work them around church services.

Joffe and the Blessings staff pray together before opening their doors each morning, and although they don't talk religion with customers — unless the client initiates it — they try to practice their work under Christian principles. In essence, Joffe has found a niche that binds her personal life to her professional life.

Her clients include barrier island residents, and many members of her church, Calvary Chapel of Vero Beach.

"We're service providers but we are Christians and so we treat our customers with love, kindness compassion," says Joffe. "We don't push our faith on anyone. By our actions we speak to our beliefs. Believe me, it is not always popular to be Christian and stand for that. But money is not our overriding reward."

Indeed it isn't easy for Joffe, who at one time struggled in her faith. "I had none. I had faith in me," she says. Now, her strength is her religion. Her business is important, but her faith more so.

Even now, Svetlana Brankovic, who does skin care and spa treatments in the shop, looks worried as Joffe speaks. She's a Christian — Russian Orthodox—and the practical one in the bunch. She's more guarded

about her religion. Times are tough these days, she says, and she doesn't want to offend any client.

"No one is going to come to us after this article," she quips.

But Cirino Bosco, an Italian-born central beach resident who once owned the Beachland Boulevard hair design shop Domani, is now based in Joffe's spa. He's more pragmatic, and spiritual about the

business, having spent 25 years working on clients' hair. When he speaks, he's a calming force to Joffe's drive and determination.

"Our pride and glory is our work, we love what we do," he says. "He gives us these gifts, to truly be available to share with others in simple ways. If a client needs us, we're here. And if not, that's okay too."

Although he is a strong Christian, Mark Hern-

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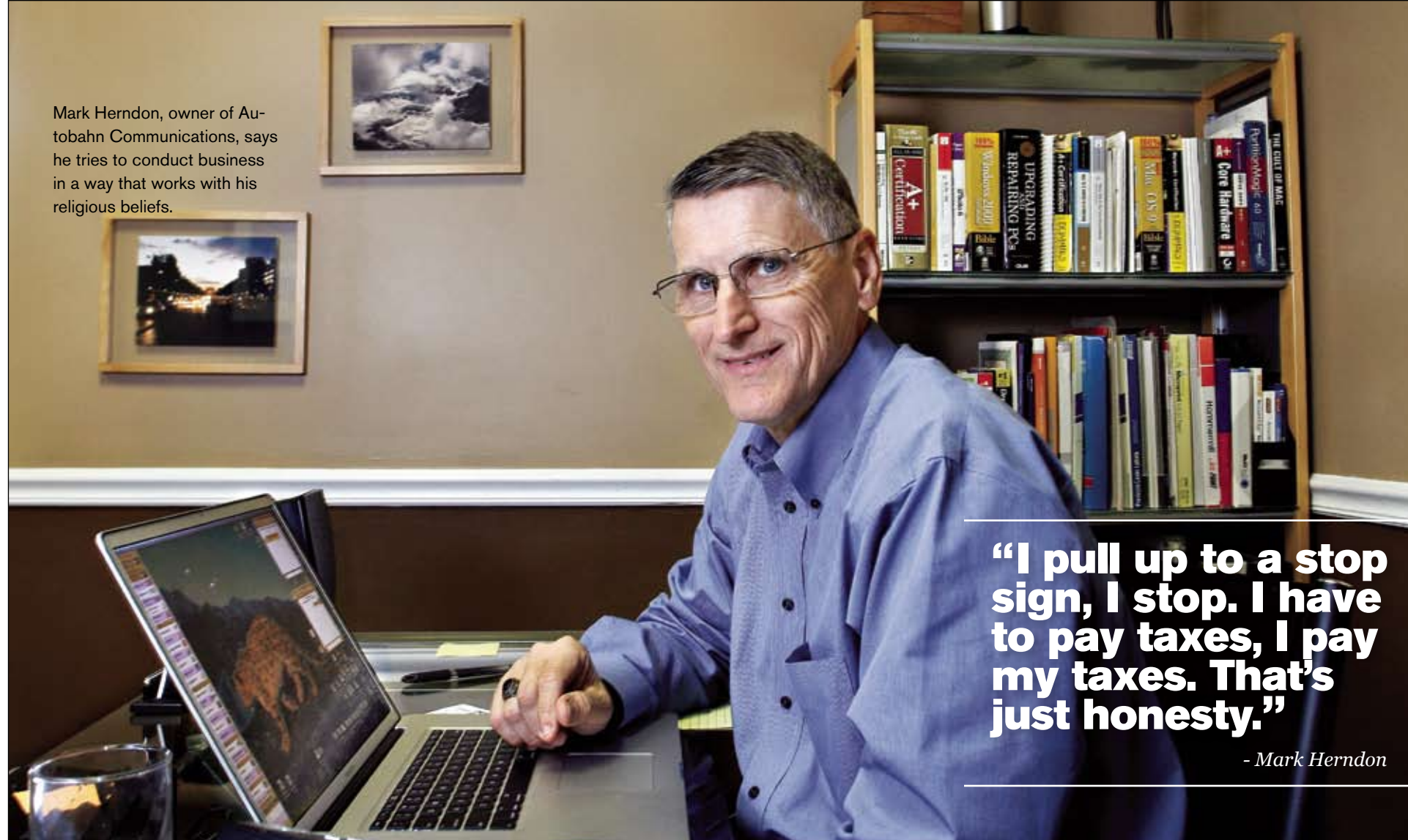
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Mark Herndon, owner of Autobahn Communications, says he tries to conduct business in a way that works with his religious beliefs.



"I pull up to a stop sign, I stop. I have to pay taxes, I pay my taxes. That's just honesty."

- Mark Herndon

don's computer sales and services store along State Road A1A is more subtle than Joffe's day spa. Enter into Autobahn Communications, Inc., in the Pelican Plaza, and there are few outward signs that its owner is a long-time member of the Christian business association who at one time sat on its board. Yet, Herndon keeps a Bible next to his desk. He

makes an effort, he says, to work with businesses that are part of the organization ("when it makes financial sense"). He carries his business honestly and with integrity. It's not that other businesses aren't honest, he jokes "No, it's not that we've got the secret handshake cornered;" it's that "we carry ourselves in Jesus' image."

He won't cut corners on a project to save money. He won't take cash so he doesn't have to declare it. "I pull up to a stop sign, I stop," he says. "I have to pay taxes, I pay my taxes. That's just honesty." He believes in hard work ("it's good for us") and muses about how Jesus, the son of a carpenter, lived into his 30s, and clearly had to work just like the rest of us. He talks decidedly about making mistakes, and doing his best to own up to them. He says he's flawed - he claims to have a temper -- but he tries every single day to do what's right. He's taken less money on a job if he makes a mistake. "We honestly try to be people of integrity."

"But that doesn't mean we let people walk all over us, either," he says.

He doesn't always agree with his clients' lifestyles or beliefs, but "I'm not smart enough to sit in judgment" of anyone, he says. He sees his customers as human beings first, and as such treats them with respect. But he knows some customers see him as different.

He doubts he has lost business, but if he has, it doesn't matter to him at this point. He's committed to keeping his business in the tenets of his faith.

Nicolace is open about her faith (she puts her membership in the association as part of her email signature) and it hasn't always been easy.

"I've had to turn down business," she says, "because I could not market a company that did not fall into my personal beliefs. So I turned down the business with respect, not judging, not condemning. It just was not right for me."

She sees tough economic times as an opportunity. Maybe, as a speaker at one of the association's meetings said, it's a good time to bond with other people, since there is more time. She believes that.

"I know some people have their religion and their business and the two shall never meet - they compartmentalize. It's just not what I do." ●

Is a flawed health-care bill better than no bill?

BY EZRA KLEIN, WASHINGTON POST



vate insurance plans into a market that's structured and regulated by the government, and closed off to most Americans.

Failure does not breed success. Obama's defeat will not mean that more ambitious reforms have "a better chance of trying again." It will mean that less ambitious reformers have a better chance of trying next time.

Conversely, success does breed success. Medicare and Medicaid began as fairly limited programs. Medicaid was pretty much limited to extremely poor children and their caregivers. Medicare didn't cover prescription drugs, or individuals with disabilities, or home health services.

But once the programs were passed into law, they were slowly and continually improved. They became more expansive, with Medicaid growing to cover not only poor families but also poor adults, and the federal government giving states the option, and matching dollars, to include more people under the program's umbrella.

Medicare was charged with covering people with long-term disabilities, and it was eventually strengthened with a drug benefit, more preventive coverage, the option of supplementary plans and much more.

It is not hard to imagine health-care reform following a similar path. But all that is predicated on the creation of this new, flawed, insufficient system.

As any scientist will tell you, it's much easier to encourage something to evolve in a certain direction than it is to create it anew. The idea that a high-profile failure in a moment where a liberal Democrat occupies the White House and Democrats hold 60 seats in the Senate for the first time since the 1970s will encourage a more ambitious success later does not track with the history of this issue, nor with the political incentives that future actors are likely to face.

If even Obama's modest effort proves too ambitious for the political system, the result is likely to be a retreat towards even more modest efforts in the future, as has happened in the past. ●

Klein, former associate editor at the American Prospect, reports on domestic and economic policy for The Washington Post.

Marcia Angell, former editor of the New England Journal of Medicine, says she doesn't believe the House health-care reform bill is better than nothing.

Instead, she writes in the Huffington Post, it "throws more money into a dysfunctional and unsustainable system, with only a few improvements at the edges, and it augments the central role of the investor-owned insurance industry."

The fact that we need to do something does not mean we need to do this. "I would rather see us do nothing now," Angell concludes, "and have a better chance of trying again later and then doing it right."

This is, I think, a misreading of not only the politics of this issue going forward but also the history of health-care reform going backward. Failure does not bring with it a better chance for future success. It brings a trimming of future ambitions.

Harry Truman sought single payer. His failure led to John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, who confined their ambitions to poor families and the elderly.

Then came Richard Nixon, whose reform plan was entirely based around private insurers and government regulation. He was followed by Jimmy Carter, who favored an incremental, and private, approach, and Bill Clinton, who again sought to reform the system by putting private insurers into a market that would be structured and regulated by the government.

Clinton's failure birthed President Obama's much less ambitious proposal, which attempts to reform not the health-care system, but the small group and nongroup portions of the health-care system by putting a small minority of pri-

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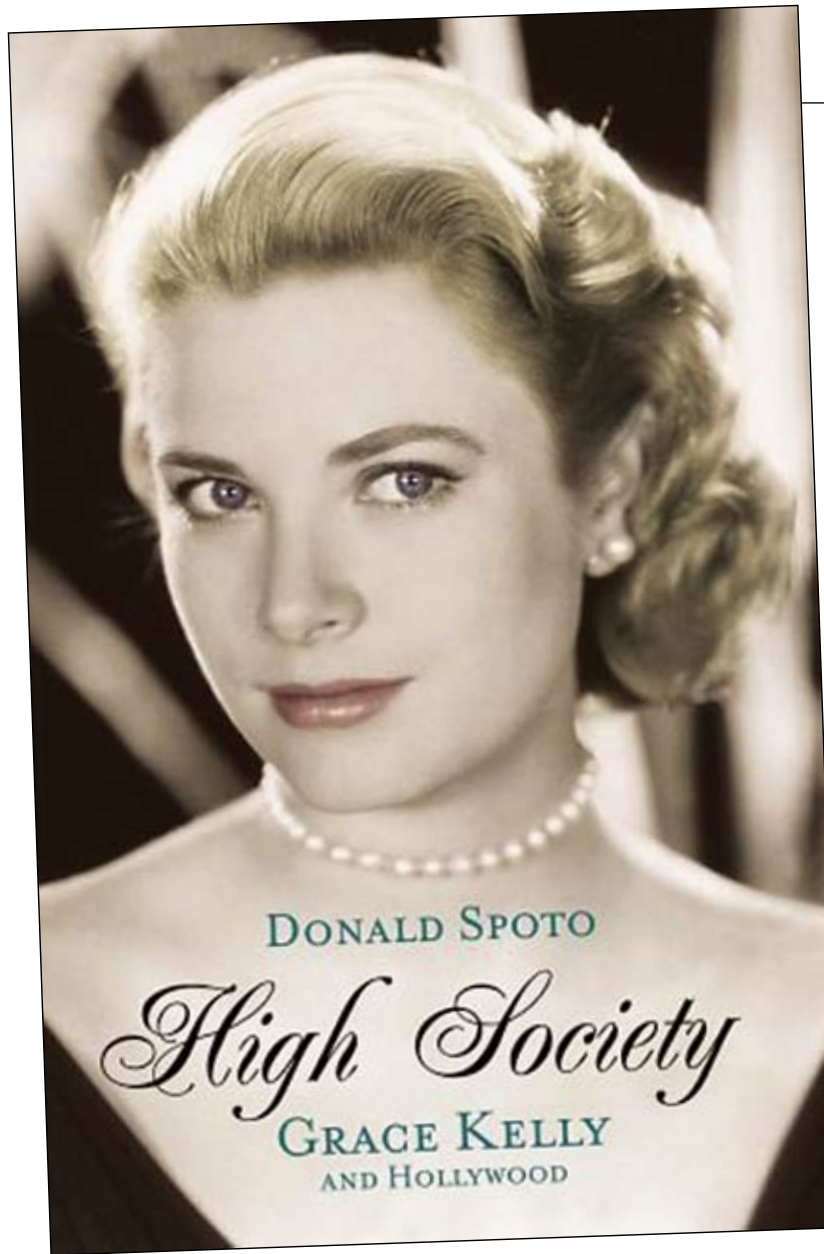
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Three days ago, were it not for the unhappy intervention of a fatal automobile accident in September 1982, Princess Grace of Monaco would have celebrated her 80th birthday.

If it is as hard for you as it is for me to imagine her at 80 years of age, on the other hand, it is not at all difficult to imagine that she would have been as beautiful and regal at 80 as she was at 52 (when she died), or for that matter at 21 (when she made "High Noon") or at 23 (when she made "Rear Window") or at 24 (when she made "To Catch a Thief") or at 26 (when she made her last film, "High Society").

Grace Kelly -- as of course the world will always know her -- was one of the most skilled, admired and beloved actresses of her time, which turned out to be remarkably brief. She made her professional stage debut in the summer of 1949 and retired from motion pictures after the filming of "High Society" in 1956.

She was a hard worker and packed a lot into that brief time. As Donald Spoto points out in this workmanlike biography, "Over the course of fourteen months -- from July 1953 through August 1954 -- Grace Kelly completed six of the eleven films that constitute the sum of her movie career."

But it has been more than a half-century since she left show business in order to marry Prince Rainier of Monaco, and to what extent she is still remembered and revered by anyone under the age of 60 is a question I am ill-equipped to answer.

Her time was my time, though, and I remember her today as vividly as if I were 11 years old watch-

ing "High Noon" at a matinee showing in the Chatham Theater in Southside Virginia.

Over the next four years I saw almost all of her movies, and though she wasn't the movie actress on whom my fantasies focused -- that dubious honor went to Jean Simmons -- she was for me, as for so many others of that day, the epitome of feminine loveliness and class. She remains that for me to this day, as a recent viewing of "To Catch a Thief," to my mind the best of her movies, makes gratifyingly clear.

Back in the day, everybody knew her story. She was born in 1929 to one of the richest families in Philadelphia, but scarcely "Old" Philadelphia. Her father, John Kelly, was an Irish American who made his money in the construction business and his reputation in sculling -- he was "the first rower to win three Olympic gold medals" -- but who was scorned by the snotty WASPs of Philadelphia's Main Line and East Falls neighborhoods.

He carried an enormous chip on his shoulder but declined to curry the favor of those who looked down on him, preferring instead to live with his wife and four children in splendid isolation not unlike that maintained by the Kennedys a few hundred miles to the northeast.

"The family sailed through the Depression enjoying a genteel, privileged life," Spoto writes. "The Kelly children attended private academies; there were household servants and workers to tend the grounds and gardens; and the children wore only the finest new seasonal wardrobes."

Jack Kelly wanted his children to be as athletic as he was, but Grace confounded him. She was "thin and withdrawn" and "largely indifferent to physical activity." A friend said: "Jack never paid much attention to Grace -- he accepted her but he never understood her. But she adored him and always sought his approval."

She had a "longing for physical tokens of affection" that neither he nor her aloof, proper mother gave her, and that doubtless had much to do with her desire to be touched and loved by men.

How many of these there were and precisely how far her relations with them went is difficult to say, though Spoto -- the author of numerous biographies of stars of stage and screen, some of whom were decidedly promiscuous -- is disinclined to believe some of the rumors put forth by previous biographers.

He doubts that she had affairs with Gary Cooper during the filming of "High Noon" and with Ray Milland during the filming of "Dial 'M' for Murder," but he confirms her long relationship with the clothes designer Oleg Cassini and concedes that "it is nevertheless true that in her twenties Grace was a healthy, popular young woman who enjoyed intimacies with a few men to whom she was seriously (if only temporarily) attached."

She went into acting over the strenuous objections of her parents, who never really reconciled themselves to her career, even after her great success

BOOK REVIEWS

in "The Country Girl" (1954) as "a once vibrant and attractive woman who has become weary and cheerless in support of her irresponsible, alcoholic husband," a performance for which she won an Academy Award.

Her close friend the actress Rita Gam said: "She admired her father, though she thought he was too tough on her and she knew that he didn't approve of her acting. . . . And her mother wasn't a warm person at all. But Grace wouldn't hear a word against them. She was a good-hearted gal. She had an understanding about people, and compassion -- she didn't talk about it, but you heard how she spoke and saw how she behaved."

These sentiments seem to have been shared by almost everyone who crossed her path, certainly by Spoto, who interviewed her at length in Monaco and holds her in the highest regard.

Cary Grant, who so memorably co-starred with her in "To Catch a Thief," said: "In two senses, she didn't have a bad side -- you could film her from any angle, and she was one of the most untemperamental, cooperative people in the business," a business that, it goes without saying, has too few such people.

She was "color-blind" and "completely indifferent to the sexual orientation of friends and colleagues," at a time when such tolerance of difference was exceedingly rare among American whites. Some thought her aloof, but to her close friends "she was warm, demonstrative and full of fun," though with "a constant, if mostly hidden, undercurrent of melancholy."

Probably it is an exaggeration to say that she hated Hollywood, as she had friends there and made some fine pictures, but she wasn't happy there.

"Working with [Alfred Hitchcock] was wonderful for me," she said, "but there was very little about Hollywood that I liked. The only value out there seemed to be money, and it seemed to me that many friendships and even marriages were often based on wealth and how relationships could benefit someone's career. . . ."

"In addition, I didn't like the eternal sunshine of Los Angeles and being dependent on a car to go all those long distances from one part of town to another. I preferred to live in New York, where it rained sometimes, and where you could take a walk down the street without being stopped by the police or being thought dangerous or crazy not to be in a car."

Her great desire was "for a husband and children," yet at the height of her career in 1954 she was distressed that "I was the only unmarried woman I could name!" She fixed that in the spring of 1956 with her celebrated wedding to Rainier. "My real life began with my marriage," she said, and she meant it.

Adjustment to the royal life was difficult and took time, but she pulled it off with quiet determination. She took immense pride in her three children. According to a friend she was "the pivot and center of that family, and no one realized how much she had given all of them until she was gone," which happened when she lost control of her car on "a hairpin curve on the roadway."

She was universally mourned not merely as a gifted and beautiful woman, but as a good one. ●

Graceful in all that she did
Donald Spoto, *Harmon*, 303 pp., \$25.99
Reviewed by Jonathan Yardley
Book World

BOOK REVIEWS

Miles Davis made more money. Duke Ellington was more prolific. Charlie Parker was more revered. But no one had a more profound impact on modern jazz than Thelonious Monk.

The legendary pianist/composer with the strange hats and even stranger moniker (his given name) has finally become the subject of the kind of meticulously researched biography that lesser lights were afforded long ago. The enigmatic Monk is a tough nut to crack, to be sure, but what fascinating and delicious rewards await inside **Thelonious Monk: The Life and Times of an American Original**, Robin D.G. Kelley's illuminating biography.

Who knew, for instance, that the godfather of bebop, was a devoted family man, loving husband, and diaper-changing, doting father who lived in the same modest Manhattan apartment for a half century? Or that the pianist whose playing style was ravaged by critics for being "dissonant, unschooled, and primitive," was in fact well-schooled in classical music at a young age and could play many difficult pieces from memory?

But his real passion was kindled by the kind of jazz he heard as a teen, wafting through the halls and open windows of his San Juan Hill neighborhood, a densely populated melting pot of black and Caribbean transplants.

A few decades later, as both unique piano stylist and composer, Monk would influence and inspire not only his contemporaries but generations of musicians to come. Kelley, a professor of American studies and ethnicity at the University of Southern California, reminds us that "Monk's compositions constitute the core of jazz repertory and are performed by artists from many different genres."

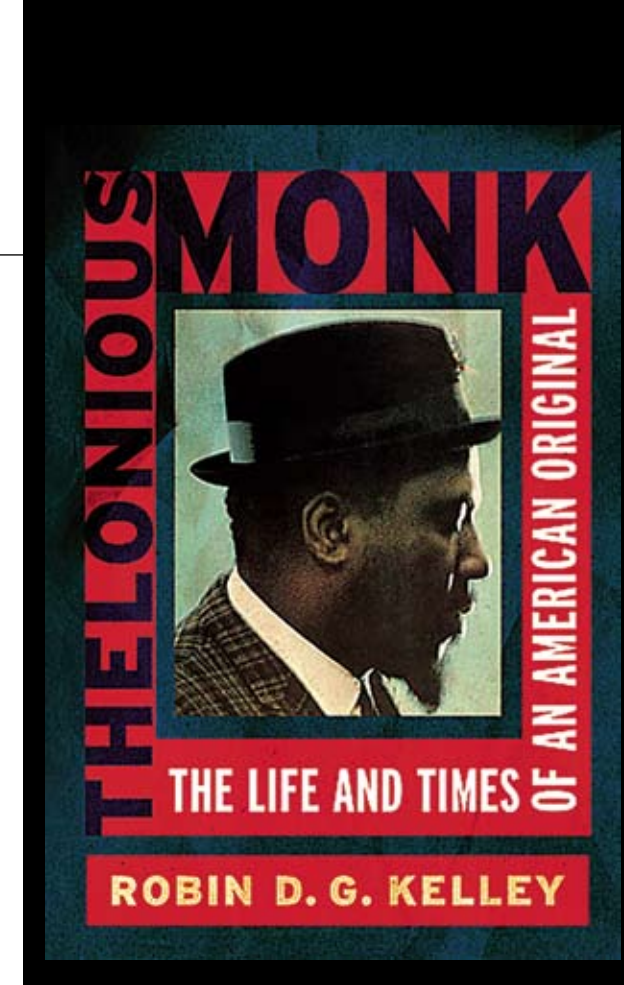
'Round Midnight,' 'Straight, No Chaser,' 'Well, You Needn't,' and 'Ruby My Dear,' among others, have become bona-fide jazz standards; no self-respecting jazz musician today can get a job or participate in a jam session without knowing these tunes." Today, the most prestigious award in jazz goes to the winner of the annual Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition.

'Nuff said -- the man's a giant. But how did this eccentric genius, who was more renowned in his lifetime for his goofy name and nutty on-stage antics than his music, become central figure on the Mt. Rushmore of jazz?

It wasn't easy being Monk. His unorthodox approach to piano and challenging compositions was ridiculed for decades, while others garnered praise for the barriers he crashed. Chronic tardiness and erratic stage behavior (attributed, at least in part, to an undiagnosed mental illness that would prematurely rob him of his career) cost him many a prize gig, as well as the desperately-needed income it might have brought him and his young family.

Monk's "weirdness," personified by the hipster goatee he sported and the collection of French berets, Chinese skullcaps, and small "pork pie" fedoras he pioneered, sadly received more press than his breakthrough music throughout most of his career.

Audiences used to more mainstream jazz pianists like Dave Brubeck or Earl Hines would sometimes literally laugh out loud when Monk struck his trademark dissonant chords, playing "between" the notes, his splayed fingers stabbing adjacent keys simultaneously.



-- to somehow keep the flame burning for 30 years. Kelley also paints a vivid portrait of a happy and much-loved child who was encouraged to speak his mind and be himself, a rather unorthodox approach to child-raising in dirt-poor North Carolina in the 1920s.

Indeed, if there is a single word that would most aptly define Monk's music, it's freedom.

Late in his performing life, Monk's profound contributions to music finally began to be appreciated. Several sold-out tours through Europe in the 1960s buoyed his spirits and reputation -- but not his bank account or his disintegrating mental health. The very jazz critics who were hostile to the same artist and repertoire years before had finally caught up to his innovations.

But the joy and spirit of this man who lived to play was less and less in evidence on the bandstand and home front as the decades progressed. His indefatigable wife Nellie did all she could to keep him going, but Monk was on a downhill slide physically and mentally.

This affectionate biography fills in the fascinating and heart-wrenching backstory of an artist the world has always longed to know better. ●

Thelonious Monk: The life and times of an American original
Robin D.G. Kelley, *Free Press*, 608 pp., \$30
By John Kehe
Christian Science Monitor

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Googled

The End of the World as We Know It

Ken Auletta

for the *The New Yorker*, documents the meteoric rise of Google from its humble beginnings through its multibillion-dollar profits in his latest book, **Googled: The End of the World as We Know It**.

As the latter half of the title suggests, Auletta's work is more than just a history of Google and a biography of its principals. It is rather a tripartite inspection of modern technological innovation, the decline of traditional media (print journalism, music CDs, etc.) and its revenue stream (advertising sales), and the ways in which Google serves as a flash point for many of the successes and controversies surrounding the Digital Age.

Google's uncommon rise is perhaps fitting for the most uncommon of companies. The free amenities offered to Google employees are certainly unorthodox. Gourmet meals, massages, dry cleaning, and all-day transportation to and from work are provided to Googlers at no cost.

Volleyball courts, expansive grass fields, and employees pedaling around on company bicycles make the Googleplex in Mountain View, Calif., look more like a college campus than the headquarters of a firm that boasted 2008 revenues of \$21.796 billion.

Google even allocates 20 percent of employees' time for projects and activities of their own choosing. Google News, the popular news aggregator, is the product of one software engineer's mandated free time. Incessant innovation has made Google the best search engine in the world and is a product of the company's unofficial ethos "to shoot for the moon, not the tops of trees."

Auletta regularly diverges from the history of Google to frame the company's rise in the context of an environment in which traditional media firms, by resisting innovation time after time, have begun penning their own eulogies. Auletta's treatment of the newspaper, magazine, and music giants of the world is far from harsh, however.

Edgar Bronfman, Warner Music Group's CEO, summarizes the author's take, "The record business is in trouble. The music business is not." It is clear that there is still a market for information and for

journalism. It is less clear how media companies will engineer a means of distribution for their content that not only caters to the changing habits of its users, but also can be properly monetized to make their operations profitable.

Google's casual workplace culture and free services (GMail, Google Earth, etc.) have created a public brand that meshes neatly with Brin and Page's "Don't be evil" corporate slogan. Hundreds of millions of users trust the Google logo and many of its accompanying products. The founding duo dismisses the prospect that Google would ever betray user privacy for strictly commercial, and presumably selfish, ends.

Nevertheless, Google archives significant stores of data on its users' online behaviors to better target advertising with the ultimate goal of increasing revenues. Auletta keenly observes that the "do first, ask questions later" mentality of Google's founders is bound to create significant obstacles to growth. Copyright concerns and privacy rights are just two of the controversies surrounding Google's use of online content and users' information.

Auletta neatly inspects the threats, both internal and external, that will challenge Google's founders, executives, shareholders, users, and competitors in the future. His thorough reporting and declarative writing provide a crisp, informative read. A seasoned observer of the boom-bust cycles emanating from California's Silicon Valley, Auletta displays the skill of a responsible journalist in both researching and crafting this snapshot of today's technological landscape.

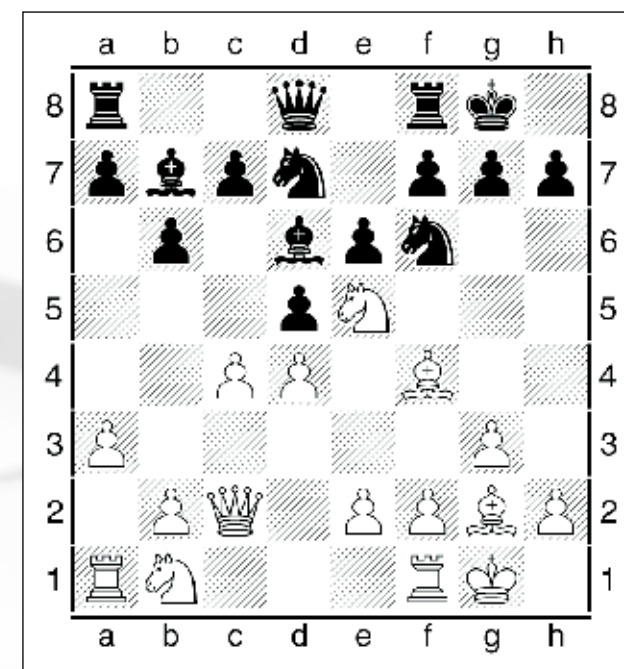
Having witnessed the rise and decline of countless Internet and software start-ups, Auletta proceeds with an analyst's discretion when determining the effects of Google as a product, a publicly traded company, and a corporate brand. Although Auletta acknowledges the robust success of Google, he is quick to point out that the company is far from invincible. It only takes a few geniuses in a garage to prove that. ●

Googled: The end of the world as we know it
Ken Auletta, Penguin Press, 400 pp., \$27.95
Reviewed by Jackson Holohan
Christian Science Monitor

Games

FOR THE LOVE OF CHESS

BY HUMBERTO CRUZ - CHESS COLUMNIST



How many ways can White give check or make a capture?

Before moving, always ask yourself this

From what I hear chess teachers say and what I've always observed, the most common mistake beginners make is making a move – even formulating a plan –without at all considering the opponent's reply.

It goes something like this: First I am going to my move my Knight there, then I am going to get out by Queen and in my next move I am going to give checkmate!

Problem is, you and your opponent take turns making moves. He is not going to just sit there and allow himself to get mated. If you don't pay attention, he may even checkmate you first.

For this reason, a habit I always try to teach my students – a habit emphasized by popular chess master and Internet teacher Dan Heisman – is to never make a move without first considering both their opponent's reply and their own answer to it.

Before making a move, also ask yourself whether you can put your opponent in check (perhaps even give checkmate) or capture material. Giving check or making a capture is not always a good move, but should always be considered. In today's diagram, can you name all the moves White can make to give check or make a capture? Answer on page 50.

Humberto Cruz is a United States Chess Federation correspondence chess master and certified tournament director. He can be reached at askhumberto@aol.com.

THE BRIDGE COLUMN

BY PIETER VANBENNEKOM - BRIDGE COLUMNIST

Flustered Flo, like most regular bridge players, gets the chance to bid and play a Grand Slam on only very rare occasions. So when it happens, she hates to squander the opportunity.

But that's exactly what happened to her in a recent pairs tournament, when she and her partner, Loyal Larry, couldn't agree on the right suit to play the Grand Slam in and went down. The disastrous result on that one hand knocked Flo and her partner out of the top four spots in the tournament.

Here is the diagrammed deal that gave Flo indigestion for a few days. She held the South hand; her partner Loyal Larry was North, and Smug Sam sat West – no one vulnerable; South Dealer.

Here's how the actual bidding went:

South	West	North	East
2 Clubs	Pass	2 Spades	Pass
4 No-Trump	Pass	5 Hearts	Pass
7 Hearts	Pass	7 Spades	All pass

If Smug Sam with the West hand had only doubled, South would have jumped to 7 NT, but alas, West was too smart to give South another chance and he passed.

The opening 2 Clubs bid was artificial, indicating 22 or more points. North's 2 Spade reply was also artificial, meaning 10 or more points (0 to 4 points would be 2 Diamonds, and 5 to 9 points would have been 2 Hearts).

Before bidding 7 Spades, North thought for a long time, and he soon regretted his decision to take the bid away from his partner as he went Down 2. He also saw that the 7 Hearts Grand Slam was cold.

"Sorry partner," Loyal Larry said afterward. "I see now you had the Hearts Slam cold, but I didn't want to leave you there with just a singleton. Shouldn't we have established a suit first before we started asking for Aces?"

"I had already established the suit in my mind," South replied. "When I started asking for Aces, I'd already decided in my mind it was going to be in Hearts.

"Even if you have none in a worst-case scenario, I expect the missing trumps to split 4-3 and I can get them all out with my four Honors. You've got to trust your partner," Flo added.

And that's when Smug Sam butted in: "I don't think you can blame your partner, Flo. You should have bid 7 NT over his 7 Spades. You also make 7 NT cold." What hurt the most was Sam was right.

TRUST YOUR PARTNER?

WEST		NORTH		EAST	
♠ K 7 5	♠ A Q J 9 8 3	♠ 10 4 2	♠ 3	♠ 10 4 2	♠ 10 4 2
♥ 10 4	♥ 3	♥ J 9 7 5	♥ 3 2	♥ J 9 7 5	♥ J 9 7 5
♦ 8 7 6	♦ A J 9 7	♦ Q 4	♦ A J 9 7	♦ Q 4	♦ Q 4
♣ Q 10 8 6 5	♣ 6	♣ K 4 3 2	♣ 6	♣ K 4 3 2	♣ K 4 3 2
	♣ A K J 10 9 3		♣ none		♣ none

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Crossword

SOLUTIONS TO LAST ISSUE ON PAGE 75

CINEMA



The Christian Science Monitor | By Polly Wright | Edited by Charles Preston

ACROSS

- 1 Concord is one
- 6 Ooze
- 10 Armadillo
- 14 Was rampant
- 15 Ancient language
- 16 Skid
- 17 Hebrew month
- 18 Kind of lens
- 19 Dispatch
- 20 Family nickname
- 21 Blessing
- 22 Picks up the tab
- 24 Accompaniment at 9 Down
- 26 Songs for two
- 27 Unit
- 28 Civil wrong
- 29 Our country
- 32 Avocation
- 35 Martinique volcano
- 36 West Indian drink
- 37 Ages
- 38 A queen made some
- 39 Leander's love
- 40 Bad, in Bordeaux
- 41 Dilutes
- 42 Powerful beam
- 43 Under the weather
- 44 Fish
- 45 Patriotic org.

- 46 Fetes
- 48 Popular stage offering
- 52 Tie
- 54 Elan
- 55 Corrida cheer
- 56 It wasn't built in a day
- 57 Expunge
- 59 Heard at the Metropolitan
- 60 Mimic
- 61 City with many entertainment spots
- 62 Across: prefix
- 63 With 9 Down, Oscars for these
- 64 Bridge
- 65 Type of parking
- 13 Scarlet, and others
- 18 Rushed
- 21 Thin and angular
- 23 Nerve network
- 25 Male swans
- 26 Oafs
- 28 Sea birds
- 30 Convinced
- 31 God of love
- 32 Half: prefix
- 33 Kind of examination
- 34 Seasonal attraction
- 35 Seashore sights
- 38 Showplaces
- 39 Hindu divine presence
- 41 Tissue: anat.
- 42 Cilium
- 45 Eleanora, of stage fame
- 47 Prevent
- 48 Washington was one
- 49 Kind of island
- 50 Form into a row
- 51 Minimum
- 52 Disagreeable person
- 53 Hawser
- 54 "Two Years Before the Mast" author
- 58 Ribbed fabric
- 59 Constellation
- 62 Home entertainment, for short

DOWN

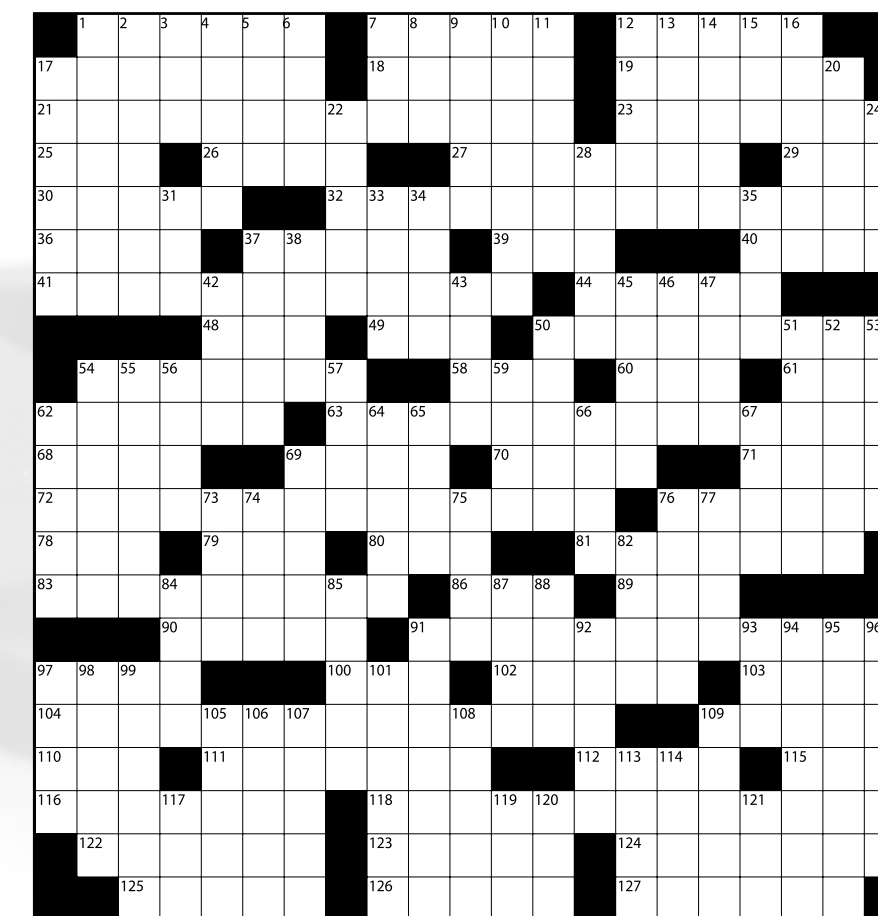
- 1 Understand
- 2 Entertainment medium
- 3 Panting
- 4 Each
- 5 Newspaper VIP
- 6 Golf club
- 7 Merit
- 8 Peyton's brother
- 9 The cinema
- 10 Valuable possession
- 11 Enjoyments
- 12 Broadway's Mame

ACROSS

- 1 Imagined
- 7 Iraq's second largest city
- 12 Cousin of a clog
- 17 More like fresh cake
- 18 Elroy's dog
- 19 See 12 Down
- 21 Category the Pentagon uses instead of "other"?
- 23 Separates
- 25 Old electrical unit that's 31 Down backward
- 26 Tributes in verse
- 27 Self-serving aims, often
- 29 Test, as patience
- 30 Back, as a horse
- 32 Process of growing grass for cows?
- 36 Inauguration recital
- 37 Padre's compadre, e.g.
- 39 Grate stuff
- 40 Actress Hathaway
- 41 Habit of never keeping your word to anybody?
- 44 Performs deep-tissue manipulation on
- 48 Subj. with projects
- 49 "Livin' Thing" band
- 50 Social system under which nothing ever gets better?
- 54 NASCAR city, ___ Beach
- 58 Knife for Nanook
- 60 Shoe part
- 61 Intro to "you're swell"
- 62 Best
- 63 The fan mail that backup singers get?
- 68 Erstwhile GM brand
- 69 Sow chow
- 70 Some with controversial salaries
- 71 Tawdry gossip
- 72 Organically grown herbal medicines?
- 76 Subsidies
- 78 Beehive State athlete
- 79 Clinger to a hiker's sock
- 80 This may shock you
- 81 Peppid rival
- 83 Of an age when pork and mutton were pretty much all you ate?
- 86 The Braves, on scoreboards
- 89 Cigarette hazard
- 90 Odometer button
- 91 Having a sweet taste that kind of sneaks up on you?
- 97 Away from the wind
- 100 Carrere of "True Lies"
- 102 It has a wet floor
- 103 Word after glom
- 104 Contemptuous of rubdowns done by women?
- 109 Slow critter
- 110 Band buy
- 111 Thrusting move, in fencing
- 112 Ludacris song, "___ Fool"
- 115 Radical '70s grp.
- 116 Some perfect throws
- 118 Pertaining to puzzle events that benefit charities?
- 122 NutraSweet's developer
- 123 Skunk's defence
- 124 Fully grasp
- 125 Type of rehab
- 126 Percussion instruments
- 127 Group with a whip

DOWN

- 1 Auctioneer's query
- 2 Pasta alternative
- 3 Priest's ending
- 4 Plant's ending
- 5 Rummy laydown
- 6 "Eater" of Charlie Brown's kite
- 7 Intro to "is it hot!"
- 8 Sugar suffix
- 9 Summer ermine
- 10 "Well, you go ___ and I'll go mine" (Groucho)
- 11 Perennial failures
- 12 With 19 Across, an oil-rich nation
- 13 Ball's guy
- 14 Model airplane wood
- 15 Samurai's sash
- 16 Hergé's popular comic book character
- 17 Hanson's smash single of 1997
- 20 Rubber hub
- 22 Molded jelly
- 24 Lang follower
- 28 P.M. whose jacket caught on
- 31 Resistance unit
- 33 Malaria symptom
- 34 Potting need
- 35 Hit with a stun gun
- 37 Tie type
- 38 Words after count or let
- 42 Cult followers?
- 43 Military stint
- 45 Von Bismarck et al.
- 46 Safari sighting
- 47 Skipped town
- 50 Fermentation product, ___ oil
- 51 Put a match to
- 52 Undercover
- 53 Has a powwow (with)
- 54 Make wider
- 55 TV journalist Mitchell
- 56 Tom Sawyer affirmative
- 57 Rights defender
- 59 Vito's ill-fated thug
- 62 "Fa fi" followers
- 64 Place to stay
- 65 Small town boy
- 66 Sentry's place
- 67 Dutch cheese
- 74 Acting signals
- 73 "Rock-___ Baby"
- 74 Rocket from Roddick
- 75 Ali, before
- 76 One more time
- 77 Mrs. Krabappel's nemesis
- 82 "___ boy!"
- 84 Very, to Veronique
- 85 Lawyers: abbr.
- 87 Brisk pace
- 88 Presidential daughter, ___ Baines Johnson
- 91 Tied the knot
- 92 Pie nut
- 93 It's not free of charge
- 94 Ready for roasting, rotisserie-style
- 95 Use
- 96 Comfort
- 97 Latin 101 word
- 98 Table pieces
- 99 Spotted
- 101 Out of it
- 105 To smitherenees
- 106 Mondavi rival
- 107 Elizabeth I's love
- 108 Athenian lawgiver
- 109 It's a wrap
- 113 Community bldgs.
- 114 Pilgrim's pronoun
- 117 "Norma ___"
- 119 Haul
- 120 Treasury Dept. arm
- 121 Pay or Cray ending



HOMOPHONE SYLLABLES

By Merl Reagle

Sudoku

4			7	5	1			
		8				3	5	4
5	2							
			4			6		
9	6	3	2					8
					8		1	
		5	8	6				3
	8							7
			1					6

★★★★☆

How to do Sudoku:

Fill in the grid so the numbers 1 through 9 appear just once in every column, row and three-by-three square. See example (right).

Solution to chess question: White can give check (and make a capture) with Qxh7, but that's a terrible move because he would lose the Queen. White can also make a capture with Nxd7, cxd5, Nxf7 or Bxd5. The first two moves would result in even material exchanges. The last two are bad because White would lose a piece for a pawn.

		6				9		4
9		7	8			2		
1	8							3
			7	2				1
			6		4			
8					9			
2							7	6
		9			7	5		8
3		8			4			

★★★★☆

4	3	2	8	1	6	7	5	9
5	6	9	3	7	4	8	1	2
1	7	8	9	5	2	4	6	3
3	4	7	2	8	5	6	9	1
2	1	6	7	4	9	3	8	5
9	8	5	1	6	3	2	7	4
7	9	1	4	3	8	5	2	6
8	5	3	6	2	1	9	4	7
6	2	4	5	9	7	1	3	8

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Happy Thanksgiving by Jay McNamara

The other day a friend was lamenting the fact that she and her husband were traveling back north for the holidays. She was not looking forward to the weather, which would be cold, or to some of the relatives who would be even chillier. Another friend remarked that being with relatives during the holidays was a trial of one's nerves. She added, "At least at Christmas you get some presents."

I detected a pattern. Scientists and sociologists have noted that anxiety levels peak during the holidays. It's not enough that one has to endure the horrors of travel, but forced reunions of extended families have an exponential effect upon stress. Being set in the context of that "wonderful time" of the year adds to the unhappiness. It culminates with the forced joviality of New Year's Eve.

There were many Thanksgivings in my own family history that did not meet the standards of a Norman Rockwell painting. One I recall occurred when I was in my early teens. As usual, Thanksgiving was at our house and included a large number of relatives, young and old.

It was the day of the annual high school rivalry football game, which was played at 11:00 in the morning. It was the custom of the house to have an all-day open bar beginning an hour before the game. Since our house was near the high school where the game was played, it became a watering hole for all sorts of characters in addition to the relatives.

This one particular event stands out because it was the first to be attended by my cousin's new bride. This particular cousin was the oldest of our generation and a star in many respects. He was a graduate of West Point among other successes. He was held up as a high standard for my brothers and me to meet.

Many inspirational talks began with "Your cousin Jack." I was especially fond of him, since he knew the famous Army Heisman Trophy winners Glenn Davis and Doc Blanchard. I had personalized, autographed pictures from the two.

However, and this is the key to this particular Thanksgiving, Cousin Jack had erased all his splendid achievements through his marriage. He had married a Protestant! This was a sin too grievous to consider. He had created a crisis within the family. Now, he would be bringing his wife for Thanksgiving. May the Lord help us all.

In Navy wardrooms, it is forbidden to speak of matters related to government, religion and sex. Unfortunately, at our house, while any reference to sex was taboo, there was ample religious and political discussion. This had never been a problem, however, since each and every family member was of a similar religious and political bent.

And so it was on Thanksgiving afternoon, after an extended cocktail session, that dinner was served. The caliber of the family members' drinking expertise ran from several of the aunts for whom one drink was the limit even on the most important of holidays all the way up to several of the men about whom one might say there was a "problem with the drink."

Well into the chaos of the dinner, the proceeding reached a sudden and final crescendo when Jack's bride stood up and declared that she was "sick of all you bead rattlers." She stalked off. You would have thought a grenade had exploded, as family members split from the table. My oldest aunt fled with her usual excuse, a migraine, and was not seen again until the next morning.

Others were aghast and inconsolable over the outburst. There was, as the bible states, much weeping and gnashing of teeth.

I followed the young lady into the yard as she headed for the car. She was vivacious and very pretty and a definite addition to the family in my view. I wanted to offer an olive branch in order to restore detente. But, my cousin Jack appeared and demonstrated the brilliance for which he was known. He took his wife to their car, which soon disappeared up the road.

And so, on this Thanksgiving, as you look around the dining table, there may be some folks that are not on your all-time favorites list. But, be thankful anyway. Count your blessings. Remember, it wasn't any easier at the first Thanksgiving. After all, the Indians and Pilgrims weren't that fond of each other either.