

Reader's digest

**MOST
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— & —
MOST
READ**

How to Get the **SLEEP** *You Need*

PAGE 26

**LOL Dumb
Criminals**

PAGE 74

**“I Survived
a Stroke”**

PAGE 110

7 *Diabetes Symptoms Men Need to Know*

PAGE 18

**Why it
Pays to Be
Happy**

PAGE 58

**Taming
the Racist
Within**

PAGE 38



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Contents

JULY 2018

- Health**
- 26 SLEEP BETTER EVERY NIGHT**
Top secrets and new research behind a superior slumber. SAMANTHA RIDEOUT

- Everyday Heroes**
- 34 WILLING HEARTS**
Binding a community starts with a nourishing meal. LAM LYE CHING

- Wellbeing**
- 38 BATTLING BIAS**
According to psychologists, we are all prejudiced. So what can we do about it?
KATHERINE LAIDLAW

- First Person**
- 45 ROCK 'N ROLL ISLAND**
What do you do when your life is turned upside down by Mother Nature's forces?
ROSEMARY FRANCIS, FIELD EDITOR

- Drama In Real Life**
- 50 RACING THE STORM**
These sailors thought they could make it home before the storm hit.
MATTHEW TEAGUE *FROM SMITHSONIAN MAGAZINE*

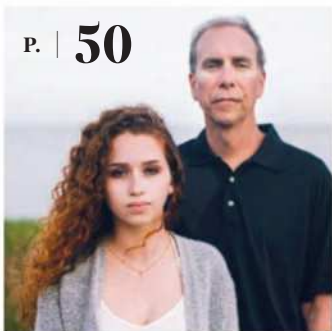
- Psychology**
- 58 WHY IT PAYS TO BE HAPPY**
You'll get more out of life if you go through it with a smile.
LISA FIELDS



P. | **26** ▲



P. | **38**



P. | **50**



Contents

JULY 2018

P. | 80



P. | 86 ▼



Adventure

66 SWIMMING WITH SHARKS

A novice diver swims with some of the ocean's most feared predators.

GLENN HODGES FROM NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Humour

74 WORLD'S DUMBEST CRIMINALS

Criminal masterminds they are not.

Photo Feature

80 BALCONY SCENES

Iconic personalities and places up high.

CORNELIA KUMFERT

True Crime

86 THE ART DETECTIVE

Art forgers make millions with fake paintings. PETER WOOLRICH

13 Things

100 WHAT ALL-INCLUSIVE RESORTS WON'T TELL YOU

Beyond the promises. ANNA-KAISA WALKER

Travel

102 BORDEAUX RISING

France's sleeping beauty. PAUL ROBERT

Bonus Read

110 I SURVIVED A STROKE

In a matter of hours anyone could be laid low. RON SMITH FROM THE BOOK *THE*

DEFIANT MIND: LIVING INSIDE A STROKE

Health

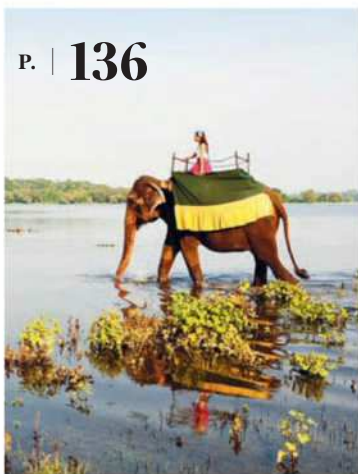
124 WHAT'S THAT RASH?

It's red, uncomfortable and a mystery.

VANESSA MILNE

THE DIGEST

- 18 Health
- 22 Travel
- 24 Home
- 25 Pets
- 129 RD Recommends
- 136 My Discoveries
- 138 News Worth Sharing



REGULARS

- 6 Letters
- 10 My Story
- 14 Kindness of Strangers
- 16 Smart Animals
- 94 Look Twice
- 98 Quotable Quotes
- 140 Puzzles, Trivia & Word Power

CONTESTS

- 7 Caption and Letter Competition
- 8 Submit Your Jokes and Stories

HUMOUR

- 43 Life's Like That
- 64 Laughter, the Best Medicine
- 72 All in a Day's Work



SEE
PAGE 8





Editor's Note

Savouring Slumber

SLEEP. IF ONLY WE COULD GET ENOUGH. Most nights I drift off to sleep without any problems, then wake around 3am. My sleep cycle is committed to this routine, which then sees me lie awake for around 40 minutes before it almost magically turns into the start of the day. It's not an uncommon problem. This month's cover feature, 'Sleep Better Every Night' (page 34), offers some great ideas on how to train yourself to sleep better for a peaceful night's rest.

For those of us who haven't experienced a debilitating illness, it's tricky to imagine how vulnerable it can make a person feel. This month's Bonus Read, 'I Survived a Stroke' (page 124) is a very personal and revealing first-person story of one man's rehabilitation back to recovery following a sudden stroke. What stands out most is the commitment Ron Smith witnesses among the team of medical and rehabilitation staff who refuse any suggestions of him quitting – "What I heard was a chorus of voices raised in a song of healing," he says. According to the World Health Organization, stroke is the leading cause of disability worldwide. For Ron, a successful recovery involved a journey of repairing and rebuilding but also establishing a new approach to thinking about himself.

We hope you enjoy the selection of stories in this month's issue,



LOUISE WATERSON
Group Editor



Reader's digest

Vol. 195
No. 1158
July 2018

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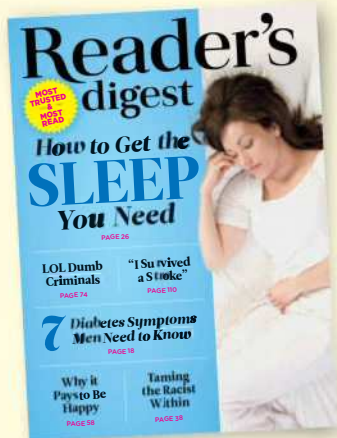
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Letters

READERS' COMMENTS AND OPINIONS

The Right Stuff

The article in April's issue 'The Prisoner and The Guard' is an amazing and inspiring story. It proves that a little push in the right direction and support from the right people can help to change the course of life for hardened criminals.

I think this story should be shared with all inmates to encourage them, if they so wish, to turn around their lives.

N. KHAN



Eye Opener

The article 'Long-term Vision' (April) was particularly useful and important to me because I recently faced serious issues with my eyes and am now under regular review with my ophthalmologist.

You presented some common eye diseases and useful tips on how to reduce risks as one gets older and avoid them in an easy-to-understand way. I urge all your readers to develop and practise good eye care habits.

JUN JIE NG

All-round Good Read

I have been subscribing to Reader's Digest for 20 years, and the April issue was extraordinary. I felt the tension described by Howard Bull in 'Minutes from Disaster' (My Story) and admire Darren Davis for his life-changing care of John McAvoy in 'The Prisoner and the Guard'. 'Can't Anyone Hear Me?' brought attention to the medical condition referred to as 'locked-in syndrome' and 'Partisan Promise' teaches us to care for things that seem unimportant.

ANDRAS SETYORINI

LET US KNOW If you are moved – or provoked – by any item in the magazine, share your thoughts. See page 8 for how to join the discussion.

Don't Get Me Wrong

'Famous Quotes That Everyone Gets Wrong' (April) reminded me of the phrase "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing". We pseudo-intellectuals have been using these famous quotes wrongly to add weight to our logic. It's better to learn these quotes correctly, and win arguments in a true learned way.

AHMED MUMTAZ

New Rules

Having not read Reader's Digest for a while, I picked it up again this month and after reading 'A Lifetime of Tales' by Fiona Hicks (May), I was hooked! It's helped me get my life back on track. As famous writer Jeffery Archer says, "There are a hundred reasons not to get up at six and write. I have to be disciplined." This is a rule I will live by.

AIMEN SHAHID

WIN A PILOT CAPLESS FOUNTAIN PEN

The best letter published each month will win a Pilot Capless fountain pen, valued at over \$200. The Capless is the perfect combination of luxury and ingenious technology, featuring a one-of-a-kind retractable fountain pen nib, durable metal body, beautiful rhodium accents and a 14K gold nib. Congratulations to this month's winner, T. Pillai.



Bona-Fido News

We asked you to think up a funny caption for this photo.

"Ooh, I qualify for this one".

Positions Vacant: Lab technician.

CHRISTINA TREGEA

Man's Best Friend Are Now Cats?
This Is So Fake News!

PHILLIP KENNEDY

Read or Digest?

ZORAYDA LAUSAN

This human language is too 'ruff'
for me to decipher.

ALLISON LEE

Congratulations to this month's winner, Christina Tregea.



CAPTION CONTEST

Come up with the funniest caption for the above photo and you could win \$100. To enter, see the details on page 8.

Satisfaction Guaranteed

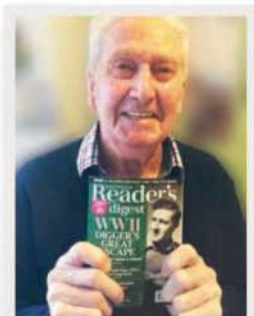
I am one for my own company and 'A Year in the Book Room' (May) really moved me. Books have become my great companions over the years. Lately, I have indulged in covering my books and found it to have therapeutic effects. Nothing pleases me more than seeing my books protected.

THYAGHESAN PILLAI

Finger-Licking Good

I found your recent article 'Watch Your Table Manners' (May) on table etiquette from around the world really interesting. I'm from Pakistan and licking one's fingers after a meal shows that the food was delicious, however it's considered bad manners to leave unfinished food on the plate.

KANITA SHAH



Ernest 'Ern' Brough with the April issue in which he appears on the cover. Ern is one of Australia's last remaining WWII veterans, and his story of escaping a German POW camp moved many readers.

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FOR DIGITAL EXTRAS AND SOCIAL MEDIA INFO, SEE PAGE 13

Anecdotes and jokes

Send in your real-life laugh for Life's Like That or All in a Day's Work. Got a joke? Send it in for Laughter Is the Best Medicine!

Smart Animals

Share antics of unique pets or wildlife in up to 300 words.

Kindness of Strangers/Reminiscence

Share tales of generosity or an event from your past that made a huge impact in 100-500 words.

My Story

Do you have an inspiring or life-changing tale to tell? Submissions must be true, unpublished, original and 800-1000 words - see website for more information.

Letters to the editor, caption competitions and other reader submissions

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7

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Insomnia has no blanket solution

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Leaving Home

Sometimes, life as a big sister just doesn't seem fair

BY TERRY WOLFISCH COLE

Terry Wolfisch Cole, 52, is a mother, writer and story teller. She enjoys baking, yoga and playing mahjong.

ONE HOT DAY I WAS PLAYING with the kids next door, and I found out that in other people's houses, the older kids had later bedtimes. I was five years old, and my sister Lisa was two years younger.

I go to my mother with my new-found information, and I advocate for policy change. I am denied.

This big-sister thing is not what it's cracked up to be. Every time we do something that we're not supposed to

PHOTO: ISTOCK

do, I get into more trouble. It seems everybody's always paying attention to her – she's little, she's cute. And we have to go to bed at the same time, I've had it!

So, I go to my room, and I take my white vinyl Partridge Family sleepover suitcase, and I put it on the bed, and I start to pack. Into the suitcase go Nancy Drew and Amelia Bedelia – I was an early reader – and some Barbies, and by the time I'm done, there is no room left for clothes.

But I'm leaving forever, so I know I'm going to need a wardrobe. And I put on two pairs of underwear first, because you've got to change, right? A pair of pants, a pair of shorts, a T-shirt, a hoodie, a raincoat, and over it all a crocheted poncho with fringes. And I go downstairs. My mother is in the kitchen. She looks up and asks if I'm running away. I told her yes.

She's not nearly as upset by this as I feel she should be.

She looks at me and says, "Are you going to Grandma Sylvia's?" which is the only other place I know. It's not even two kilometres away. I can't believe she can figure this out. She's like some kind of witch!

I don't answer her. I go out the front door and down the driveway. Now,

remember, it's the 1970s and they have not yet invented suitcases with wheels, and mine is full of books.

So, with every step, I'm dragging my suitcase. I go down the driveway, with every step, I'm sweating and dragging and sweating and dragging. I'm so intent on my mission that I don't realise that my mother is about 20 metres behind me, following and waving concerned citizens away.

Finally, I get to number 73, Grandma's apartment building. I go up the stairs, and before I even knock, the door opens.

My grandma tells me she's very happy to see me, but I'm certainly not living there forever. And I realise my mother has called ahead and I have been betrayed.

My grandma says, "Do you want a drink as long as you're here?"

She goes to get me some juice, and I'm standing in her living

room taking off my layers, and my mother comes sweeping in. And she sits down in my grandfather's wingback chair, and she pats her lap. She says, "Come here." I don't want to because I am righteously peeved, but I'm hot and I'm five, and I get on my mother's lap. She pushes my hair back behind my ear, and she says, "Sweetheart, what is it? Why have you left? Why have you run away?"

“
**Every time we do
something we
are not supposed
to do, I get into
more trouble ...
she's little,
she's cute**

And it all comes tumbling out: “It’s not fair and all the time with Lisa, I get into trouble and she doesn’t ... and we should not have the same bedtime!”

And my mother, who has always known me better than I know myself, takes my hot, red little face in her hands, and she says to me, “Sweetheart, I don’t want you to be so miserable.” She says, “You came first. If it’s that hard for you living with Lisa, tomorrow morning I will call the orphanage and we’ll send her away.”

I can read. I know what an orphanage is. I start to cry, and I beg her, “Don’t send my sister away to an orphanage!” My mother reluctantly agrees that we’ll all go home and give it another try.



***I can read.
I know what an
orphanage is.
I start to cry and
I beg her,
“Don’t send my
sister away”***

That night, my mother feeds us scrambled eggs for dinner, and she gives us a bath and puts us both to bed at the same time, as she will for many years to come.

And in those years to come, Lisa and I will grow to be two halves of the same whole, through adventures

and concerts and boyfriends and divorces and death and everything. But once in a while, we’ll have a fight. And to this day, if I turn over my shoulder and say, “Mum, Lisa’s being mean to me!” my mother always answers in the same way. She says, “You had your chance.”

Do you have a tale to tell? We'll pay cash for any original and unpublished story we print. See page 8 for details on how to contribute.



PRICKLES WITH A PAUNCH

Ten overweight hedgehogs have had to go on strict diet and exercise regimes. After too much snacking on food left out for pets, the prickly creatures struggled to curl up into a ball to fend off predators. Animal-lovers who found them waddling around the streets of Tel Aviv, Israel, brought them into Ramat Gan Zoo. One adult male was almost double the average weight for a hedgehog his age. He has since lost 120 grams after staff monitored his diet and left him to run around an enclosure. **REUTERS**

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We give great advice

Get regular home, health and food tips from The Digest



Friends and good manners will carry you where money won't go.

MARGARET WALKER



We help you get motivated

#QuotableQuotes and #PointstoPonder to get you through the day



One Mother to Another

Empty rooms are even more keenly felt when a phone goes missing

EMMA MONTGOMERY

Emma Montgomery lives five hours south-west of Brisbane on the family beef and grain property. Originally from Somerset, England, she met her husband Bill in the UK and made her way to the 'land of plenty' for an adventure.

STRESS LEVELS WERE RIDING HIGH in our house during the last week of January this year. But above all, a sadness enveloped the empty rooms of our farm house west of Goondiwindi, Queensland, and I physically ached to have my daughters in its fold again. But our hand was forced by the distance of this vast land, as four days earlier we had left our two eldest girls, Georgie, 13, and Annabel, 11, at a boarding school over 500 kilometres away. Thank goodness we still had our youngest, nine-year-old Lily, at home for a couple more years.

It was Australia Day and we had spent the afternoon celebrating with friends. When we arrived home, the message bank on my mobile phone was flashing. Annabel's concerned voice greeted us: "Hi Mum and Dad, you'll never guess what - I've lost my phone!" After just four days at school her main means of communication between us - a very 'old' phone - had been lost 'while doing cartwheels' at an Australia Day



ILLUSTRATION: GETTY IMAGES



celebration. We kicked ourselves for not having installed the Find My Phone app and realised the chances of finding the phone were slim.

At six the next morning, my mobile beeped loudly. When I replayed the message a kind voice announced that she thought she had something that belonged to my daughter and could I please call her back.

Annabel had written my number on the inside of her phone's case – good thinking! Sure enough, this wonderful angel, Joy, had been manning a charity stand at the Australia Day celebrations and, when packing up, had found a little pink case under the table. “I’ll take it to

work while you see if anyone can pop in and pick it up,” she kindly offered after I explained that my daughter was at boarding school and I lived a six-hour drive away.

After contacting the school and people I know who live near it, I was out of luck – no one was able to go and pick up the phone, not surprisingly as it was nearly an hour away.

Later that day I decided to ask our angel to post the phone to my daughter. But when I sent her a text to ask if this would be OK, she replied: “We will take it tonight as we’re going to drive down there.” To my utter surprise, this wonderful couple, who had already spent a busy day at work and a late night manning their charity stand, were making a two-hour round trip on a Saturday night, especially to return a phone to a complete stranger.

I gave them directions and they delivered the phone into the hands of my daughter at her boarding house. The only word of an explanation was: “I’ve got four children of my own, I know how a mother worries.”

After what had been such a distressing week, it was a wonderful reminder of the good in the world and how the actions of one person can mean the world to another.

Share your story about a small act of kindness that made a huge impact. Turn to page 8 for details on how to contribute and earn cash.

Smart Animals

Animals touch our hearts and warm our souls



CAT BURGLAR

AVRILL DOVER

When I was a child in the late 1940s, we had a much-loved but eccentric ginger cat called Freckles. Freckles was an enthusiastic hunter, but he did not hunt for rats, mice or birds like other cats. His quarry was entirely different – and perhaps he considered it more useful to humans.

After a successful hunt, our young cat would arrive home uttering that distinctive hunting cry that cats give voice to when they are bringing home a trophy. He would enter triumphantly, bearing in his mouth a rolled-up pair of socks, which he would proudly lay at our feet. Sometimes he would bring home other things – a pullover, a child's shorts or singlet, and once, with

difficulty, dragging it by one sleeve, a grey woollen jumper.

We decided he must be jumping through people's open laundry windows and raiding their laundry baskets. I was given the embarrassing job of going from house to house asking, "Does this belong to you? Our cat brought it home."

Freckles gained quite a reputation in the neighbourhood, and children would sometimes come to our door enquiring about mislaid articles: "I can't find my hat/swimsuit/schoolbag. Has your cat taken it?"

I couldn't help wondering if some

You could earn cash by telling us about the antics of unique pets or wildlife. Turn to page 8 for details on how to contribute.

enterprising child ever used Freckles as an excuse for undone homework, telling the teacher, "The neighbour's cat stole it!"

A few years later, we moved to another suburb. Perhaps the people there were more security conscious and there was a shortage of open windows, but whatever the reason, Freckles grew to a contented old age without ever again indulging in his strange pastime.

BEST FRIENDS FOREVER

LYNETTE TURNER

In March 2009, my husband, Eddie, and I went to the RSPCA in Lonsdale, South Australia, to look for a suitable dog to adopt. We stopped at one kennel and a gorgeous red dog came up to the door and stared at us with the most beautiful intelligent eyes.

She picked us.

Cody is a Staffordshire-Labrador cross with a gentle soul and was 14 months old when we adopted her. She adored our elderly British Shorthair cat, Cougar, and it took no time for them to become best friends.

At mealtimes Cody would always leave a small amount of food in her bowl for Cougar and Cougar would always leave some for Cody. When Cougar developed kidney disease, Cody looked after her.

Just before Cougar passed away, she curled up on her favourite blanket with Cody next to her, paws placed gently on Cougar, never leaving her

side. Cody would try to encourage Cougar to stand by lifting her head up with her nose. Sadly, Cougar passed away later that night.

The next morning, I went out to the backyard to dig a grave and Cody helped me dig it with her paws. After I laid Cougar in the grave the house phone rang and I ran inside to answer to it. Returning to the grave, I discovered that Cody had completely buried Cougar. She sat by the graveside and howled and cried for several minutes before I walked her back inside the house. Cody was devastated and missed her best friend for a very long time.

Cody still loves cats and has since helped to raise three orphaned kittens.



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THE DIGEST

7 Diabetes Symptoms Every Man Must Know

Warning signs men should not ignore

BY JESSICA MIGALA AND KATHY BUCHANAN

YOU'RE SO THIRSTY Excessive thirst is common with type 2 diabetes – in fact, you may feel that no amount of water can quench your thirst. That's due to rising blood glucose levels: excess sugar builds up in your bloodstream forcing your kidneys to work harder to filter and absorb it; if they can't keep up, they ramp up urine production. You'll pass urine more, which can potentially lead to dehydration, so you'll want to drink more.

If you notice that you're running to the bathroom all day or are excessively thirsty (or dealing with a dry mouth), talk to your doctor.

SHAVING NICKS DON'T HEAL QUICKLY
A tiny cut may seem to

linger forever. "When your sugars are on their way up, it may take longer for a cut to heal," says Sydney endocrinologist Jane Holmes-Walker. "You may also notice more shaving bumps and white heads in the hair follicles in your beard. The sebaceous oil glands in your face are also vulnerable to low-grade infections when you have type 2 diabetes."

YOUR HANDS AND FEET ARE NUMB AND TINGLY A more

advanced complication is nerve damage, a condition called peripheral diabetic neuropathy. You may feel tingling or pins and needles in your feet, pain or numbness, or a sensation that feels like you are walking on cotton wool for some or

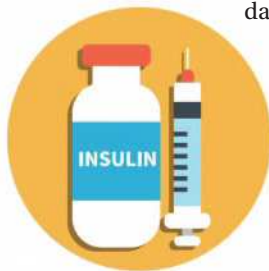


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