

# Planet Vember

"It seems to me that I will always be happy in the place where I am not" ~ Charles Baudelaire

## *Not fair!*

**W**hy is it called NO-vember? It's a month like any other. I mean, "May" isn't May-BE. So in hopes of reducing even a little of the negativity that benights us, I'm calling it **'Vember**, and if anyone has a problem with that, I'll make a NO-te of it.

And I'm not the only one cutting back, because in accordance with economic logic, our present inflation leads to a reduction of everything we need!

So, this **Thanksgiving**, be prepared for a feast of Furkey, or Lawn squirrel stuffed with nuts, served with a cranberry, an eye of potato, and a drip of gravy, because "a little dab'll do ya."

And for dessert: **Strawberry shortcut**. Let's Eat!

**A 'VEMBER TO REMEMBER**  
Share the times ... and the goods!

"Don't worry about the world coming to an end today. It's already tomorrow in Australia!" ~ Phil's Phunny Phacts

## It's about time

**A**FTER HIS EXAM, THE DOCTOR SAID TO HIS elderly patient, "You appear to be in good health, but do you have any medical concerns you would like to ask me about?"

"In fact, I do," said the old man. "After I make love to my wife the first time, I'm usually hot and sweaty, and then after we make love the second time, I am usually cold and chilly."

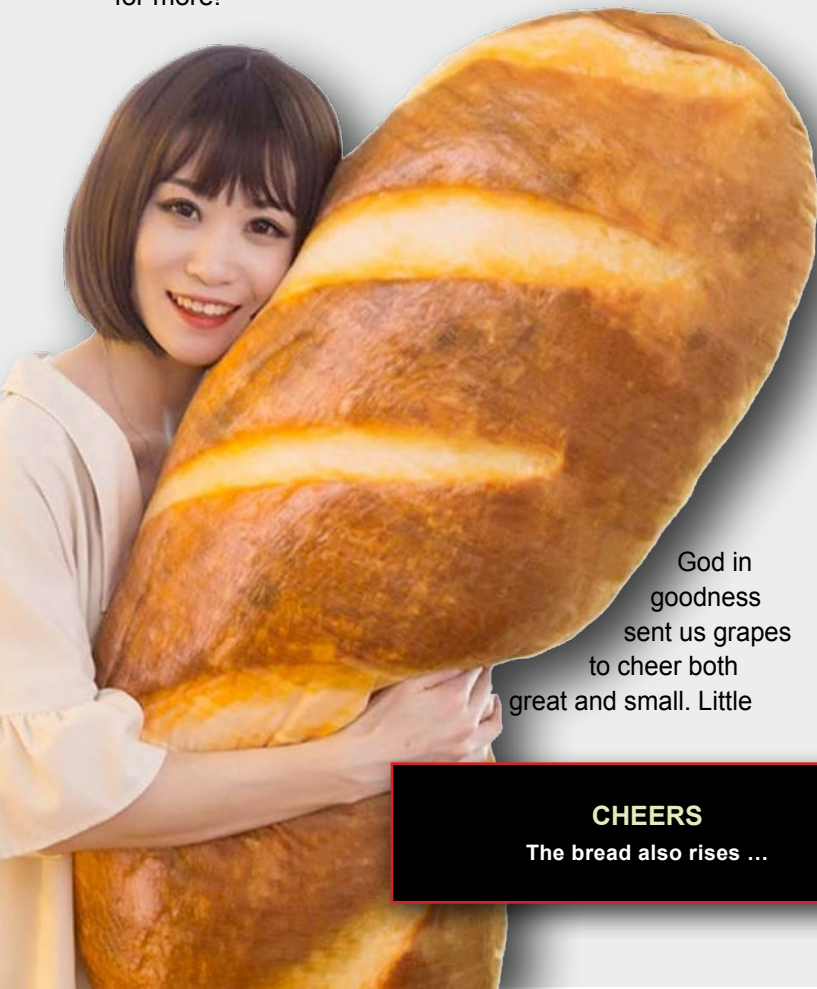
Well, after examining his elderly wife, the doctor said, "Your husband had an unusual concern. He claims that he is usually hot and sweaty after making love with you the first time, and then cold and chilly after the second time. Do you know why?"

"Oh, that crazy old fart..." she replied. "That's because the first time is usually in August, and the second time is in January!"

*"Happiness is having a loving, caring, close-knit family - in another city." ~ George Burns*

## Pocula elevate

**L**ET US DRINK TO BREAD, FOR WITHOUT BREAD there would be no toast. It matters not if the wine glass is half empty or half full, clearly there's room for more!



God in goodness  
sent us grapes  
to cheer both  
great and small. Little

**CHEERS**

The bread also rises ...

fools drink too much, and great fools not at all! If the ocean was beer and I was a duck, I'd swim to the bottom and drink my way up. But the ocean's not beer, and I'm not a duck. So raise up your glasses and shut the fuck up.

May we never go to hell but always be on our way. Here's to Dame Fortune – may she smile upon you. May you never meet her daughter, Miss Fortune.

Health to those I love, wealth to those who love me. May all your ups and downs be under the covers! Here's to those that love us; and for those that do *not* love us, may God turn their hearts. And if he cannot turn their hearts, may he turn their ankles; so that we may know them by their limping.

You're born in pain, you live in fear, you die alone, Merry Christmas!

*"If you don't know where you're going, you might just end up somewhere else." ~ Yogi Berra*



## Old rules

**I** CHANGED MY CAR HORN TO GUNSHOT SOUNDS. People get out of the way much faster now. Gone are the days when girls used to cook like their mothers. Now they drink like their fathers. I didn't make it to the gym today. That makes five years in a row. I decided to stop calling the bathroom the 'John' and renamed it the 'Jim.' I feel so much better saying "I went to the Jim this morning."

Old age is coming at a really bad time. When I was a child, I thought "Nap Time" was a punishment. Now, as a grownup, it feels like a small vacation. The biggest lie I tell myself is..."I don't need to write that down, I'll remember it." At my age "Getting lucky" means walking into a room and remembering what I came in there for.

I don't have grey hair; I have "wisdom highlights." I'm just very wise. Don't ever ask me to bend down and touch my toes. If God wanted me to touch my toes, He would have put them on my knees.

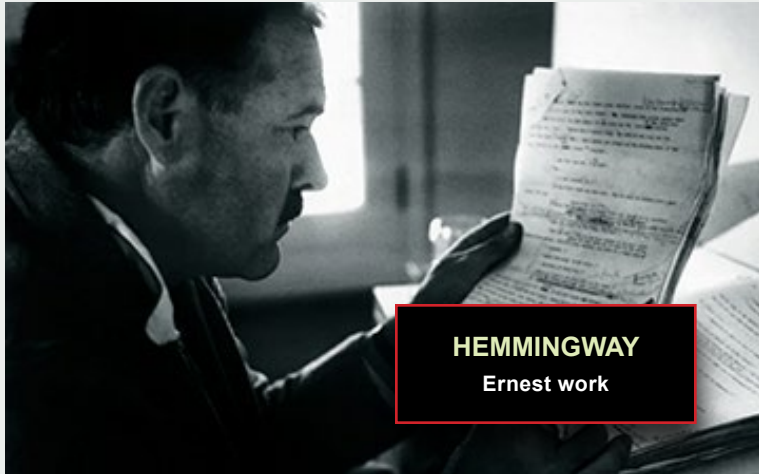
Last year I joined a support group for procrastinators. We haven't met yet. Of course, I talk to myself; sometimes when I need expert advice. Actually, I'm not complaining, because I

■ **CONTINUED**



am a Senager (Senior teenager). I have everything that I wanted as a teenager, only 60 years later. I don't have to go to school or work. I have a driver's license and my own car. I get an allowance every month. I have my own ipad (although I can't recall where I kept it). I don't have a curfew. Life is great. As long as it lasts, that is....

*"The supreme accomplishment is to blur the line between work and play." ~ Arnold Toynbee*



**HEMINGWAY**  
Ernest work

## The sun also sets

**I**N 1926 ERNEST HEMMINGWAY PUBLISHED HIS novel *The Sun Also Rises*, which has this extraordinary bit of dialogue about how change happens in most aspects of life – and how governments rise and fall.

*"How did you go bankrupt?" Bill asked.  
"Two ways," Mike said. "Gradually and then suddenly."*

*"What brought it on?"  
"Friends," said Mike. "I had a lot of friends. False friends."*

For some unfathomable reason, Democrats insist on calling their Republican colleagues their "friends." They are not friends. They are systematically destroying American democracy with the clear objective of replacing it with strongman authoritarianism, a new and American version of what **Benito Mussolini** called fascism. Visit **THE HARTMANN REPORT**.

*"Fight Truth Decay!" ~ Funny Times*

## One for all, and all for me

**A**N ANTHROPOLOGIST SHOWED A GAME TO THE children of an African tribe ... He placed a basket of delicious fruits near a tree trunk and told them: "The first child to reach the tree will get the basket."

When he gave them the start signal, he was surprised that they walked together, holding hands until they reached the tree and shared the fruit! When he asked them why they did that when any one of them could have had the basket only for themselves, they answered "Ubuntu!"

That is, how can one of us be happy while the rest are miserable? "Ubuntu" in their language means: "I am because we are." The tribe knows that is the secret of happiness, long lost to "civilized" societies.

*"Be Yourself. Everyone Else Is Taken!"  
~ Phil's Phunny Phacts*



**PERFECT CIRCLE**  
African children symbolize 'Ubuntu'

## Senior perks

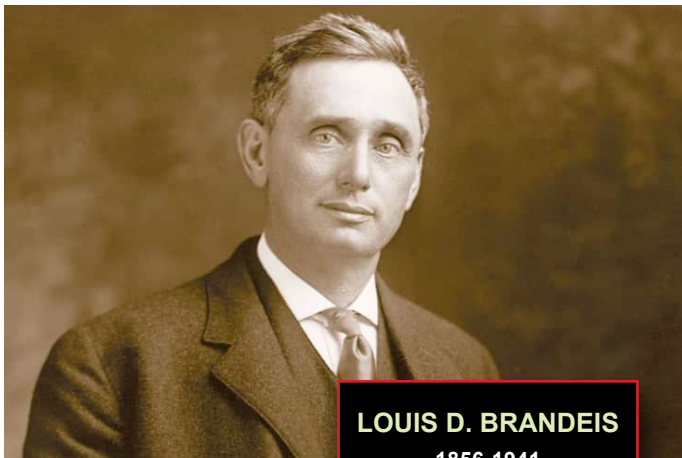
**K** IDNAPPERS ARE NOT VERY INTERESTED IN you, and in a hostage situation you are likely to be released first. No one expects you to run – anywhere. There is nothing left to learn the hard way.

Your supply of brain cells is finally down to manageable size, and the ones that died are only the bad ones. Things you buy now won't wear out, and you can live without sex but not without your glasses.

People no longer view you as a hypochondriac, and friends call at 8 p.m. and ask, "Did I wake you?" You can eat supper at 5 p.m.

You can't remember who sent you this list. And you don't care.

"There's nothing better than a tired actor."  
~ Cinematographer **Giuseppe Lanci**



**LOUIS D. BRANDEIS**  
1856-1941

## Justice Rules

**S**UPREME COURT JUSTICE LOUIS BRANDEIS graduated from the Harvard Law School at 20 with the highest grade-point average in that school's history, a record that stood for decades. While studying law at Harvard, an anti-semitic professor by the name of Peters always displayed animosity towards him.

One day Prof. Peters was having lunch at the University dining room when Brandeis came along with his tray and sat next to him. The professor said, "Mr. Brandeis, you do not understand. A pig and a bird do not sit together to eat." Brandeis looked at him and calmly replied, "Don't worry, professor. I'll fly away," and he went and sat at another table.

Peters, decided to take revenge on the next test paper, but Brandeis responded brilliantly to all questions. Unhappy and frustrated, Peters asked him the following question, "Mr Brandeis, if you were walking down the street and found a package, a bag of wisdom and another bag with a lot of money, which one would you take?"

Without hesitating, Brandeis responded, "The one with the money, of course."

Peters, smiling sarcastically, said, "Just like a Jew. Unlike you I would have taken the wisdom." Brandeis shrugged indifferently and responded, "Each one takes what he doesn't have."

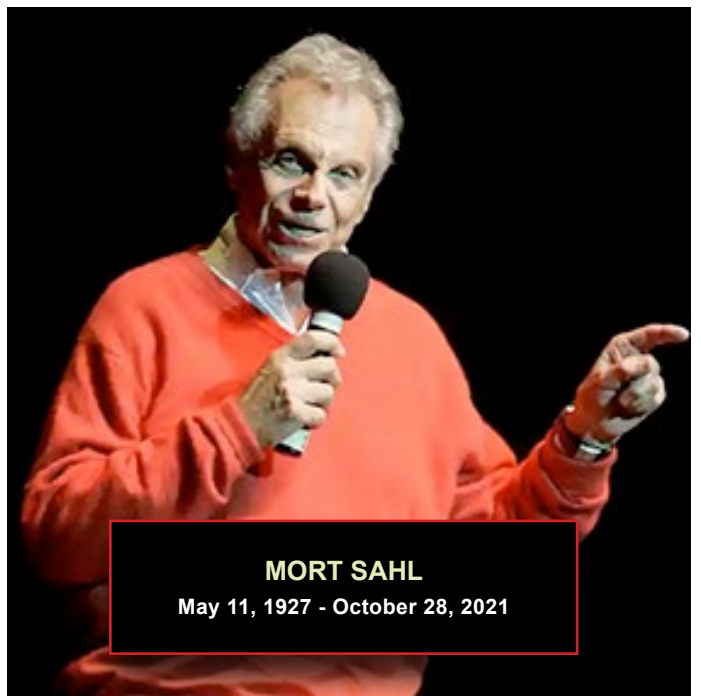
Prof. Peters hate for the Jewish student came to a finale when he scribbled on his student's final exam the word "idiot" and handed it back to him. A few minutes later, Louis Brandeis got up, went to the professor and said to him in a dignified but sarcastically polite tone, "Prof. Peters, you autographed the exam sheet, but you did not give me a grade." – *Allan Tractenberg*

"Americans are like a rich father who wishes he knew how to give his [child] the hardships that made him rich." ~ **Robert Frost**

## Another great one gone

**C**OMIC CAL SOUTHERN HAS DIED AT 94, ALONG with the guy who introduced himself as such in his first stand-up appearance in strip clubs, legendary comedian **Mort Sahl**, who punctuated his punch lines with a dry, staccato laugh and was referred to by **Bob Hope** as "the favorite comedian of nuclear physicists everywhere."

He agreed by saying, "I don't tell jokes, I give little lectures," and he often asked his audiences, "Are there any groups I haven't offended?" **Gerald Nachman** wrote in his book *Seriously Funny: The Rebel Comedians of the 1950s and 1960s* that before Sahl, "it was heretical, even career suicide, for a comedian to discuss politics, much less to cut up a sitting president onstage" And an early



**MORT SAHL**  
May 11, 1927 - October 28, 2021



fan, **Woody Allen**, adds, "He was like **Charlie Parker** in jazz. Everybody was ready for the revolution. He totally restructured comedy."

Sahl ingested numerous periodicals daily and affirmed that he was "an independent, populist radical." But in 1966, while hosting a TV talk show, he repeated a news report that New Orleans Dist. Atty. **Jim Garrison** had claimed that Kennedy's assassination was a conspiracy, contrary to the Warren Commission's conclusion that **Lee Harvey Oswald** was the lone assassin – and this assertion so damaged Sahl's reputation that his gross income went from \$1 million a year to \$13,000. An unlucky number, indeed.

When he did perform, Sahl sometimes brought all 26 volumes of the Commission report onstage, eliciting laughter by reading excerpts of its "more ludicrous aspects." When

**Proctor & Bergman** followed his show once in the midwest, we found those very volumes, and I still have one today. He said, "I had them on the stage so people could see the physical size of the deception. A lot of people did not want to hear it. But I thought it was the end of the country."

And when **George W. Bush** became President, he commented, "He's born again, you know. Which

would raise the inevitable question: If you were given the unusual opportunity to be born again, why would you come back as George Bush?"

Later, Pete and I had the privilege of working with Mort on "Then and Now," a TV special we wrote, and he was a wonderful collaborator. "But you know," he commented, "This country never ends. It's like a bad television show that they keep picking up for the next season." STAY TUNED

"Liberals feel unworthy of their possessions. Conservatives feel they deserve everything they've stolen." ~ **Mort Sahl**

"Good taste is the worst vice ever invented."

~ **Edith Sitwell**



"A sense of humor is just common sense, dancing."

~ **Clive James**

## Contributions

**M**itch Levine, Paul Willson, Kent McCaman, Jim Meskimen, Joan Allemand, Maryann Thomas, Ted Bonnitt, Kenneth Wilhite, Jr., The Week for quotes, **Baba-Mail** for jokes, **Samuel Joseph** for inspiration, and my darling wife, **Melinda**, for her indefatigable patience.

"Damaged people are dangerous.

They know they can survive." ~ **Josephine Hart**

## Order the duck

**O**N THE EARLY MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 4, 1977, as I relate in *Where's my Fortune Cookie*, my autobiography co-authored by **Brad Schreiber**, **Peter Bergman** and I were among the victims of a bloody massacre, and the "**GOLDEN DRAGON**" link in this orbit will provide you with the most extensive and detailed reenactment of that terrible event I've read so far.

But of course, there are still errors. Fact is, although I was interviewed by the police the next morning at our hotel, it was Peter who actually testified at the trial, since he had gotten a better look at the gang members as they fled the restaurant.

Nevertheless, it's nice to be able to look back on it at the age of 81, and I'll always be glad I didn't order "TO GO..."

"Given a different overlook, you can define a problem from a different perspective."

~ **Rev. David Wilkinson**

"Think before you speak. Read before you think." ~**Fran Lebowitz**

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