

"Never forget that only dead fish swim with the stream."
~ Malcolm Muggeridge

PLANET

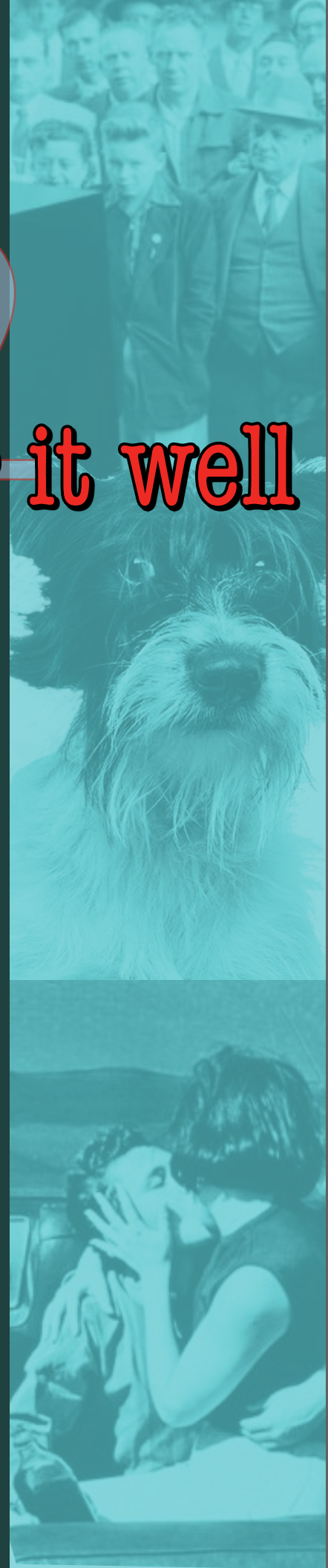
28182

Ah yes, I remember it well

ATTENTION PLANETEERS! I know it seems impossible, but I'll turn 82 years old on the 28th of this month – and this ol' Leo is still roaring! And I can still remember ... when it took three minutes for our black and white TV to warm up, and after adjusting the picture with "rabbit ears" we would change the channels by hand to watch almost every show LIVE! And in fact, in the early 50s I too was on TV, making jokes with with Elliot Gould on "Uncle Danny Reads the Funnies" on WPIX. Nobody owned a purebred dog. A quarter was a decent allowance and made with real silver, and you could cover it with liquid mercury from your dentist to make it slippery, and he knocked you out with ether. You'd even reach into a muddy gutter for a penny made with real copper, and you'd look to see if it was stamped 1943!

You got your windshield cleaned, oil checked, and gas pumped, without asking, all for free, every time, and you got trading stamps to boot. Laundry detergent had free glasses, dishes or towels hidden inside the box. Not to mention Cracker Jacks! It was considered a great privilege to be taken out to dinner at a real restaurant with your parents. They threatened to keep kids back a grade if they failed...and they did it!

When a '57 Chevy was everyone's dream car for cruising, laying rubber, peeling out or making out! No one ever asked where the car keys were because they were always in the car, in the ignition, and the doors were never locked. Vroom vroom.





"Never let anyone tell you the sky is a ceiling."
~ Arson Pickett

"There are no small parts, only small dressing rooms."
~ William Shakespeare

Two sides now

REMEMBER LYING ON YOUR BACK ON A sweet-smelling new-cut lawn with a friend saying things like, 'That cloud looks like a...'? Playing baseball with no adults to help kids with the rules of the game. Stuff from the store came without safety caps and hermetic seals because no one had yet tried to poison a perfect stranger.

And with all our progress, don't you wish, just once, you could slip back in time and savor the slower pace, and share it with the children of today. When being sent to the principal's office was nothing

THROUGHOUT
THE 'PLANET,' CLICKING
DARK RED TYPE
OPENS A RELATED
INTERNET LINK.

compared to the fate that awaited the student at home.

Basically we were in fear for our lives, but it wasn't because of drive-by shootings, drugs, gangs, etc. Our parents and grandparents were a much bigger threat! But we survived because their love was greater than their threats.



War of the old

GUTTED LIKE SO MANY ITALIAN TOWNS BY THE loss of jobs, low birthrates and the fleeing of young people, **Perdasdefogu** is seizing on its recognition from **Guinness World Records** as the municipality with "the largest concentration of centenarians" – currently seven of them in a population of about 1,780 – to spur an economic rejuvenation.

Deep in the Sardinian mountains, a sign on a winding road opposite an abandoned playground welcomes visitors to Perdasdefogu, home of the "World Record of Family Longevity." Black-and-

white portraits of the wizened locals who reached age 100 look out onto a sleepy main street near "Longevity

LONGEVITY SQUARE

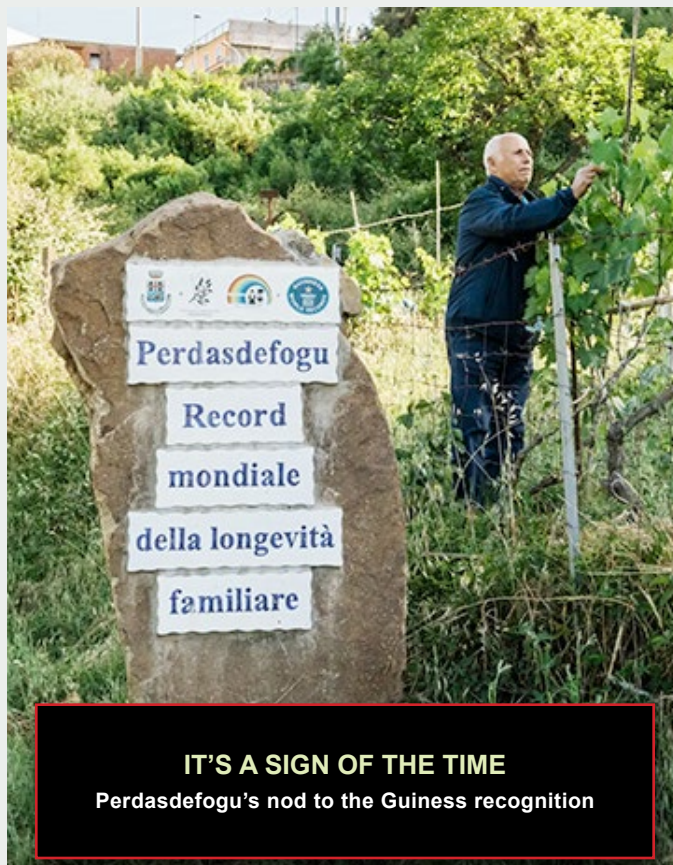
No long lines in Perdasdefogu's public plaza for celebrating life.

Square." Campaign posters promise the town's rebirth through "DNA" and "Longevity."

The isolated town, once best known for a military base that for decades was a launching pad for economic opportunity and long-range missiles, is trying to position itself as a

Gianni Cipriano for The New York Times

■ CONTINUED



global capital of long-range living.

The hope is that mortality-adverse foreigners desperate to learn the secrets of perpetually sticking around will fuel a tourism boom, or that genetic researchers eager to study the residents' raw materials will invest in state-of-the-art facilities, and maybe even improve the spotty phone service by laying down fiber optic cables.

Residents offered all sorts of explanations for the longevity of the townspeople. They pointed at the many vegetable gardens with their oversized zucchinis; talked up the local potato bread that they suggested was studied by geneticists; and exalted the natural digestive aids, including an acidic cheese that jiggled like a chalky cube of Jell-O. "This," they asserted, "is natural Maalox." Then one old fellow boasted that as recently as two years ago he renewed his driver's license.

"It must have been an English license," said another, "He drove on the wrong side of the road."

— by **Jason Horowitz**

"Eventually you reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it."
~ **Will Rogers**

"It's not our differences that divide us; it is our inability to recognize, accept and celebrate those differences." ~ **Audre Lord**

Double dog dare ya

I AM SHARING THIS WITH YOU TODAY BECAUSE it ended with a Double Dog Dare to pass it on. To recall what a Double Dog Dare is, read on, and I'd like to propose that the perfect age is somewhere between old enough to know better and too young to care, as we grew up in summers filled with bikes, Hula hoops, visits to the pool, and gorging on Kool-Aid powder with sugar.

Howdy Doody and The Peanut Gallery, the Lone Ranger, "The Shadow Knows", Nellie Bell, Roy and Dale, Trigger and Buttermilk. Candy cigarettes. Wax Coke-shaped bottles with colored sugar water inside.

Soda pop machines that dispensed glass bottles. Turkish Taffy. Blackjack, Clove and Teaberry chewing gum, Smith Brothers licorice-flavored cough drops (made me high) and Heide candies like Jujubes and Chocolate Babies. (PS: I went to Allen-Stevenson school with Philip Heide and his brother Peter, and we even got a tour of the factory!)

Home milk delivery in glass bottles with cardboard stoppers. Newsreels before the movie. Rotary telephones

and numbers with a word prefix, like Lehigh 4-2081 (our old NY number). And some of us remember when there were just 4 numbers, and back then nearly everyone had a party line.

S&H Green Stamps. mimeograph paper. The Fort

Apache play set. Peashooters. 78s and 45s and Hi-Fi record players! Cassettes, 8-tracks, the Walkman, and remember CDs? The times they are a changing...

"Old age is when the liver spots show through your gloves." ~ **Phyllis Diller**

■ **CONTINUED**



You still turn me on

THE HUSBAND LEANS OVER AND ASKS HIS WIFE, "Do you remember the first time we had sex together over 50 years ago? We went behind the village tavern where you leaned against the back fence and I made love to you."

"Yes", she says, "I remember it well." "OK," he says. "How about taking a stroll around there again and we can do it for old time's sake?" "Oh Jim, you old devil, that sounds like a crazy, but good idea!"

A police officer sitting in the next booth heard their conversation and, having a chuckle, he thinks to himself, 'I've got to see these two old-timers having sex against a fence. I'll just keep an eye on them so there's no trouble.' So he follows them.

The elderly couple walks haltingly along, leaning on each other for support aided by walking sticks. Finally, they get to the back of the tavern and make their way to the fence. The old lady lifts her skirt, and the old man drops his trousers. As she leans against the fence, the old man moves in... They erupt into the most furious sex that the policeman has ever seen. This goes on for about ten minutes while both are making loud noises and moaning and screaming.

Finally, they both collapse, panting on the ground. The policeman is amazed. He thinks he has learned something about life and old age that he didn't know. After about half an hour of lying on the ground recovering, the old couple struggle to their feet and put their clothes back on.

The policeman is still watching and thinks to himself, 'This is truly amazing, I've got to ask them what their secret is.' So, as the couple passes, he says to them, "Excuse me, but that was something else. You must've had a fantastic sex life together. Is there some sort of secret to this?"

Shaking, the old man is barely able to reply, "Fifty years ago, that wasn't an electric fence!"

*"Those who love deeply never grow old;
they may die of old age, but they die young."*

~ Dorothy Canfield Fisher

Eenee Meeny-Minee-Moe

CATCH A N-WORD BY THE TOE! 'RACE ISSUE' meant arguing about who ran the fastest. The worst embarrassment was being picked last for a team. 'Oly-oly-oxen-free' made perfect sense after a



game of Capture the Flag!

Catching Fireflies could happily occupy an entire evening in your or a neighbor's backyard. On a hot day, a romp in the sprinkler was a treat, and after a big summer afternoon thunderstorm, riding our bikes through the flooded streets in our bathing suits was an expected treat! It wasn't odd to have two or three 'Best Friends.'

Having a weapon in school meant being caught with a slingshot or a cap gun. (I once had one go off in grade school when I was playing with it in my pocket!)

Saturday morning cartoons weren't 30-minute commercials for action figures.

Spinning around, getting dizzy, and falling down was cause for giggles. ("She's no fun; she fell right over!")

War was a card game. Water balloons were the ultimate weapon. Trading cards in the spokes transformed any bike into a motorcycle. You helped to build a treehouse! You scavenged the alleys for packing crates and built tanks and rocketships from them! (Anyway, my pals Dayton Dallas and Queen Robinson and I did during my summers in Goshen, Indiana.)

Taking drugs meant orange-flavored chewable aspirin.

■ **CONTINUED**

"We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful what we pretend to be." ~ Kurt Vonnegut

What big eyes you have

A 5-YEAR-OLD GIRL WENT TO VISIT HER grandmother. She played with her dolls as grandma dusted the furniture, and at one point, she looked up and asked: "Grandma, how come you don't have a boyfriend?" Grandma replied: "Honey, my TV is my boyfriend. I can sit in my bedroom and watch it all day long. The TV evangelists keep me company and make me feel so good. The comedies make me laugh. I'm so happy with my TV as my boyfriend."

Grandma turned on the TV and the reception was horrible! She started adjusting the rabbit ears and knobs trying to get the picture in focus. Frustrated, she started hitting the back of the TV hoping to fix the problem. But then, the little girl heard the doorbell ring, so she hurried to open the front door, and there stood Grandma's minister! "Hello young lady. Is your grandma home?" he asked, and the little girl replied: "Yeah, she's in the bedroom, bangin' her boyfriend."

"Life without passion is like music without sound."
~ Phil's Phunny Phacts

Blow out the candles

Alexander Ziperovich sent me a cheery birthday greeting I must share:

"AT THE HEART OF AMERICA'S SIMMERING dysfunction is the **Republican Party**, radicalized, violent, and unyielding. It's led by a charismatic psychopath, **Donald Trump**, who believes in nothing but his own power. He's supported by a slew of committed ideologues, silver-tongued propagandists, and well-armed militants, who want nothing more than to obliterate our democracy. Indeed, America's perennially ugly politics have metastasized into something that threatens to unravel the nation, as the GOP embraces violent authoritarianism, religious extremism, and a blatantly neofascist ideology. It's suffering from a disease that's hard to shake, fueled by constant rightwing propaganda, and energized by hate, racism, and fear. And it's only getting worse."

And have a Happy Birthday, Phil!

"First say to yourself what you would be;
and then do what you have to do." ~ Epictetus



Talk to the hand

I HEARD ON THE THOM HARTMANN SHOW THAT Methodist Minister **Dave Barnhart** said, "The unborn are a convenient group of people to advocate for.

"They never make demands of you; they are morally uncomplicated, unlike the incarcerated, addicted, or the chronically poor; they don't resent your condescension or complain that you are not politically correct; unlike widows, they don't ask you to question patriarchy; unlike orphans, they don't need money, education, or childcare; unlike aliens, they don't bring all that racial, cultural, and religious baggage that you dislike; they allow you to feel good about yourself without any work at creating or maintaining relationships; and when they are born, you can forget about them, because they cease to be unborn. It's almost as if, by being born, they have died to you.

"You can love the unborn and advocate for them without



Dave Barnhart

■ CONTINUED

substantially challenging your own wealth, power, or privilege, without re-imagining social structures, apologizing, or making reparations to anyone.

"They are, in short, the perfect people to love if you want to claim you love Jesus but actually dislike people who breathe.

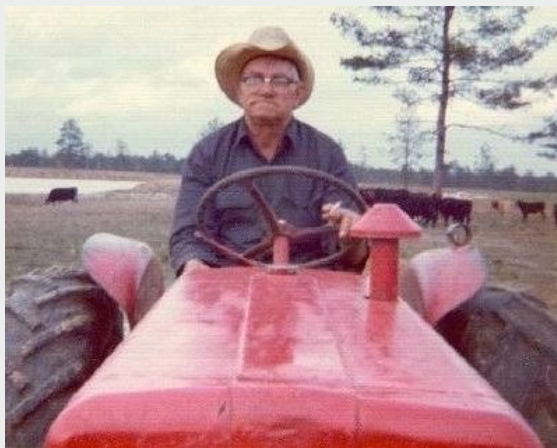
"Prisoners? Immigrants? The sick? The poor? Widows? Orphans? All the groups that are specifically mentioned in the Bible – they all get thrown under the bus for the unborn."

CLICK TO READ MORE

"We have the choice to use the gift of our life to make our world a better place - or not to bother."
~ Jane Goodall

You first

A BIG CITY LAWYER WENT DUCK HUNTING IN rural Alabama. He shot and dropped a bird, but it fell into a farmer's field on the other side of a fence. As the lawyer climbed over the fence, an elderly farmer drove up on his tractor and asked him what he was doing. The litigator responded, "I shot a duck and it fell in this field, and now I'm going to retrieve it."



The old farmer replied, "This is my property, and you are not coming over here." The indignant lawyer said, "I am one of the best trial lawyers in the U.S.

and, if you don't let me get that duck, I'll sue you and take everything you own." The old farmer smiled and said, "Apparently, you don't know how we settle disputes in Alabama. We settle small disagreements like this with the

PLANETCLICK

**ALL FAIL
MUPPETS
BYE BORIS
PIE
HELP
THE GRADUATE
ALL'S FAIR
RANDY**

"Three Kick Rule."

The lawyer asked, "What is the 'Three Kick Rule'?" The farmer replied, Well, because the dispute occurs on my land, I get to go first. I kick you three times and then you kick me three times and so on back and forth until someone gives up."

The lawyer thought about the proposed contest and decided that he could easily take the old codger. He agreed to abide by the local custom. The old farmer slowly climbed down from the tractor and walked up to the attorney.

His first kick planted the toe of his heavy steel-toed work boot into the lawyer's groin and dropped him to his knees! His second kick to the midriff sent the lawyer's last meal gushing from his mouth. The lawyer was on all fours when the farmer's third kick to his rear end sent him face-first into a fresh cow pie.

Summoning every bit of his will and remaining strength the lawyer very slowly managed to get to his feet. Wiping his face with the arm of his jacket, he said, "Okay, you old fart, now it's my turn."

The old farmer smiled and said, "You can have the duck."

"Old age and treachery will always beat youth and exuberance." ~ David Mamet

All hail

Dana A. Snow, Bill Bowles, Susan Metcalf, David Honneus, Thom Hartmann, Lance Rucker, Richard Fish, Allison Barenbrug, Joan Allemand, Bill Kates, and Baba-Mail and The Week for jokes and quotes. And special thanks to Dan Duling and Dee Challis for allowing me to replace Richard Doyle for five wonderful nights narrating the Pageant of the Masters live in Laguna Beach, as he recovered from Covid.

"Life isn't about finding yourself or finding anything. Life is about creating yourself and creating things."

~ Bob Dylan

"Don't cry because it's over. Cry because it happened." ~ Dr. Seuss

Visit the new **FIRESITE** and the old **BOOMERS**

HOME • FORTUNE COOKIE • RIGHT WING UNCLE • MERCH

To join the Planet Proctor mailing list **CLICK HERE.**

PLANET PROCTOR © Phil Proctor 2022 • layout and production Cristofer Gross / **Theatertimes.org**