

"Time is free, but it's priceless." ~ Harvey MacKay

PLANET PROCTOR ■ DECEMBER 2023

Planet Redford

RIP Redford

I can hardly bring myself to write these words, but our beloved, brave, headstrong, funny fuzzy companion for the last three years, **Redford the American Lion**, the acknowledged "Mayor of Wanda Park," known and admired by all the neighbors, was killed in the early hours of December 12 by a ferocious Raccoon mother, apparently, defending her new litter, just up the street from our canyon home.



Our Maine coon killed by a coon, in a vicious ambush. And so I lost an amazing companion who had once jumped on the back of a small coyote and ridden him up the road before the cowed critter shook him off and ran away.

He was rescued by my darling Melinda when she fell in love with him from a picture posted by our good friend, Anna Mathius, on the Antaeus website, and during my beloved wife's convalescence, he was ever by her side, comforting and loving her.

It is another unsufferable loss, and although our pretty little Ms. Pepper is all over me with love, I am determined to foster another Lion of America in the new year as an homage to the most unique, loving, smart and brave animal I have ever known. He was like a little dog to me, and I will sorely miss his big, furry body warming my lap me downstairs and running up to the front door with me every day.

"This kindness, this stupid kindness, is what is most truly human in a human being." ~ Vasily Grossman

A Happy Christmas Tail

SANTA WAS VERY CROSS. IT WAS CHRISTMAS Eve and NOTHING was going right. Mrs. Claus had burned all the cookies.

The elves were complaining about not getting paid for the overtime they had accrued while making the toys. The reindeer had been drinking all afternoon and were dead drunk. To make matters worse, they had taken the sleigh out for a spin earlier in the day and had crashed it into a tree.

Santa was furious. "I can't believe it! I've got to deliver millions of presents all over the world in just a few hours, but all of my reindeer are drunk, the elves are on strike, and I don't even have a Christmas tree! I sent that stupid Little Angel out HOURS ago to find a tree, and he isn't even back yet! What am I going to do?"

Just then, the Little Angel opened the front door and stepped in from the snowy night, dragging a Christmas tree. He says, "Yo, fat man! Where do you want me to stick the tree this year?"

And thus, the tradition of angel atop the Christmas trees came to pass.

*"I am always ready to learn, although
I do not like being taught." ~ Winston Churchill*



Tally Ho!

*I'm now of the age
when my body's a cage,
and I'm forced to take stock of amounts.
Like cholesterol rates
and the beats my heart makes,
not to mention my current sperm count.*

*And I wonder sometimes
about those whose sad lives
depend on the salaries earned
from my medical plan:
(calculators in hand)
the technicians that tally my sperm.*

*With intense concentration
and strong magnification
these accountants count heads, undeterred.
why, the patience it takes
fairly makes my heart break
for these workers that tally my sperm.*

*Though their labor's made easier
by the digital tweezer
and techniques they've undoubtedly learned,
gathering accurate quotes o'
each spermatozoa
must exhaust those who tally the sperm.*

*And to not miss a ONE?
When all's said and done,
a steep goal like a tall pachyderm!
My eternal thanks goes
to those steely-eyed souls –
the bean-counters that tally my sperm.*

~ Jim Meskimen

"Good taste is death." ~ Mary Quant

Back from the shadows again

MANAGED TO TAKE A SHORT TRIP BACK EAST with my great friend and *Sexy Boomer* partner, **Ted Bonnitt**, at the end of November and saw three plays:

a revival of the **Stephen Sondheim** musical *Merrily We Roll Along*, starring **Daniel Radcliff** and **Jonathan Groff**. It was absurdly expensive, but I'm still glad I attended a matinee with **Elaine Louie**, and **Charles Moed** and his sister, **Helen**.

On the other hand, Ted and I enjoyed a matinee of *Harmony* for \$18 by going directly to the Box Office at 10 a.m.! It's the amazing story of the German singing group, **The Comedian Harmonists**, who became an international sensation until the Nazis came into power.

With musical arrangements by **Barry Manilow**, it's performed by the best singing ensemble I've ever heard, and the story is both hilarious and tragic – like my life!

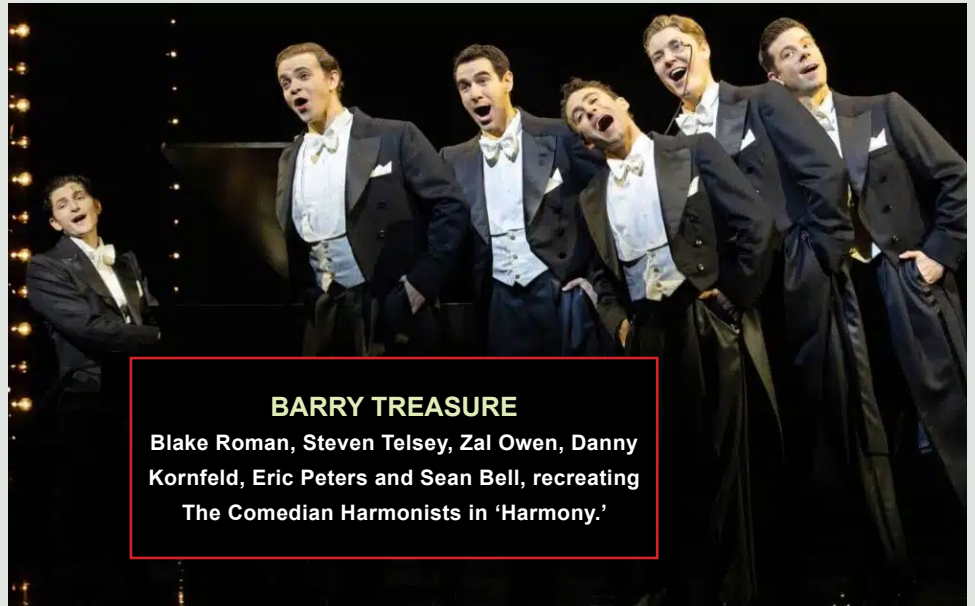
And finally, Ted and I wisely choose to experience a madcap evening of muddled mind-reading and magic with fun-filled audience participation called *The Mind Mangler*, starring the portly, bearded hilariously arrogant **Henry Lewis** – one of the creators of *The Play That Goes Wrong*. You have been warned.

We also interviewed two longtime friends for *Phil & Ted's Sexy Boomer Show* – first, **Tulis McCall**, a talented writer/actor, monologist and designer of the "Front Row Center" website, offering timely reviews of everything on stage in NY, from Broadway to cabaret! She was a hoot!

And next, we talked with the producer, writer, historian and teacher **Sue Zizza**, who shared amazing tales of her adventures in audio, recorded at her and her hubby **David Shinn's** Radio Waves studio in the building of the same name, where the mysterious genius, **Nikola Tesla**, was experimenting with radio broadcasting.

I've worked with Dave and Sue for decades at workshops and at their

HearNow Festivals, in person and online, and you can hear their creativity as producers of my own audiobook, *Where's My Fortune Cookie?* available at SueMedia.com. Thanks for giving us a place to play!



BARRY TREASURE

Blake Roman, Steven Telsey, Zal Owen, Danny Kornfeld, Eric Peters and Sean Bell, recreating The Comedian Harmonists in 'Harmony.'

"In individuals, insanity is rare, but in groups, parties, nations and epochs, it is the rule."
~ Friedrich Nietzsche

And there's no place like home

LEFT SOME OF MELINDA'S ASHES FOR CHARLIE to sprinkle on his penthouse garden where she loved to work, and then we trained to Connecticut to attend

a pizza party at Pepe's in New Haven with Ted's colorful friends from his early radio days. And, I spent some happy time in West Hartford with Melinda's big brother, **Art**, and **Linda** and **Luke** (clowning at left) and had a chat with sister **Marjorie** and **Harald** before flying back home.

"The most exciting phrase to hear in science, the one that heralds new discoveries, is not 'Eureka!' but 'That's funny.'"
~ Isaac Asimov



■ CONTINUED

A fan-tasy

MANY OF MY ANIMATED pals, like me, often receive lovely autograph requests.

I recently got one from China. in a hand-written letter that said:

"Hello, I am your fan of Uncle Phil, I am 22 years this year. I will have the most important of my exams in my life – the Graduate Entrance examination. So I chose to write to Uncle Phil to relieve the pressure...

"Your extremely pursuit of details and indomitable spirit also affect whether I should be afraid of my studies and never give up easily... So Uncle Proctor, now to put a good mind, healthy is the most important, those fans and money, Uncle Phil, don't take too seriously. Exercise more, watch your diet, keep a good attitude and stay healthy. This what your fans around the world wishes you."

Thank you, Li, and good luck with your exams!

And then, I received another hand-scribed message that read:

"We, as in myself, want to know you as you live so rich in Beverly Hills, CA. Me, I live here in Fargo, ND. I'm sure I don't know your life because I'm living without a job... I've goggled the cost to go to college and I want help paying

for my cost to living in residence of the area.

"I need \$28,000 for one year. If you can assist me to get my graduate degree – from Sarah." And a great gift to Sarah would be a National Healthcare system, no?

"Democracy is the theory that common people know what they want and deserve to get it, good and hard." ~ **H. Mencken**

PLANETCLICK GOOD JOKES

**ROBIN
KORMAN
GODOT
RADIO SEX
HOT STUFF**

Good folks

Thanks to **Jim Meskimen**, **Jokes.com**, **The Week**, and to good friends **Paul & Pat Willson**, **Jaimie Alcroft**, **Rob Lewine** and **Larry Kubik** and **Leslie**, and **Ted Bonnitt** for their constant support and kindness.

And farewell to **Ruth Seymour**, who put KCRW in our ears and on the map; and to **Norman Lear**, who created socially conscious comedy for all his long life. I had the great honor of knowing and working with them both.

Long Live their Memories and Accomplishments!

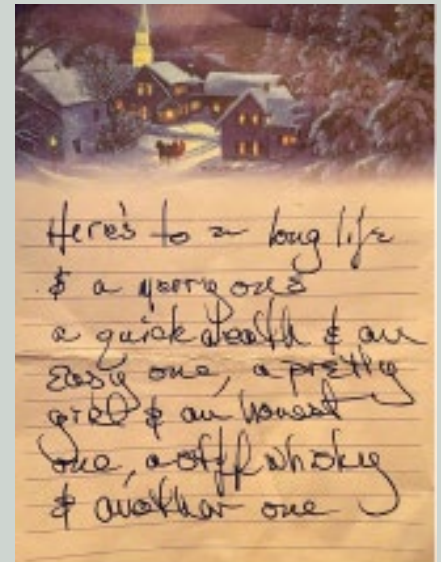
"If we can find money to kill people,
we can find the money to help people."
~ **Tony Benn**, British lawmaker



A parting toast

I found this written in Melinda's hand on a sheet of paper with a Christmas scene, and it's a fitting farewell to a terrible year...

*"Here's to a Long Life,
and a Merry one, A quick
death, and an easy one, a
pretty girl and an honest
one, a stiff whiskey – and
another one!"*



"The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the one's who do." ~ Steve Jobs

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