**How's That Again?**

**Nearly 6 million paper ballots cast by Florida voters in the disputed 2000 presidential election are still preserved in a climate-controlled room in Tallahassee, at the cost of $43,000 a year. *(Palm Beach, Florida, Post, as it appeared in The Week magazine, November 19, 2010)***

**For-sale ad in the Auburn, New York, Citizen: “Bicycle parts and pieces. Approximately six bikes.” *(Reader's Digest)***

**Grandpa: “What are you making?” Grandma: “Cat cookies. I make them for Muffin every year for the holidays. She loves them, don't you, Muffy? Actually, they're not bad. Have you ever tried a cat cookie?” Grandpa: “No, but once I stepped in a cow pie.” *(Brian Crane, in Pickles comic strip)***

**We just sold our house. After moving out, we went back to our old house and thoroughly cleaned it for the new owners. We spent hours scrubbing. The place was never that clean when we lived there. “Why are we doing all this work,” I asked my wife. “If we don’t leave this place immaculate,” she explained. “These people will never buy another house from us.” *(K. L. Jones, in Catholic Digest)***

**From the Newburg Scroll, a bulletin of the Livonia, Michigan, Newburg United Methodist Church: “Newburg Church tries to assist in serving a luncheon for the families of church members who have died immediately following the funeral.” *(Reader's Digest)***

**A government worker in Binghamton, N.Y., who had to stay at his desk during the recent massacre wants compensation for missing his lunch hour. Binghamton’s Department of Social Services building was locked down during the spree that left 14 dead, and employee James Kauchis has since demanded pay for his lost lunch hour. County Executive Barbara Fiala was flabbergasted. “A lot of people lost a lot more that day than just one hour,” she said. *(The Week magazine, April 24, 2009)***

**In a letter to the editor of a South Carolina newspaper, a reader wrote: “I am in favor of daylight saving time. I have planted a vegetable garden for many years and find it does much better with the extra hour of sunlight every day!” *(Reader's Digest)*   
An exchange student from Africa, dressed in colorful native robes, entered a bank in a Maine coastal town. He stepped up to the teller's window and told the man in charge that he would like to cash a check. The teller scrutinized the student, then remarked, “You're from outta town, ain't cha?” *(Paul Greeley, in Down East)***

**Two farmers were sitting at the local diner one morning discussing the latest news. “Did you hear that a bridge collapsed in Franklin County last night? one asked. “No,” the other replied. “Was anyone on the bridge when it happened?” “Yep, three fellas in a pickup truck. Luckily the driver rolled his window down, squeezed through and swam to shore,” the first farmer said. “What about the other two?” The man shook his head sadly and said, “Nope, they both drowned. They were riding in the back and couldn’t get the tailgate open.” *(Elana Briggs, in Country magazine)*  
In a television routine, Gracie Allen, in the role of the scatterbrained wife of George Burns, calls a repairman to fix her electric clock. After carefully examining the clock, the repairman tells her, “There is nothing wrong with it. It simply needs to be plugged in.” Smiling at him, Gracie responds, “But I don’t want to waste electricity, so I only plug it in when I want to know what time it is.” *(Jan Brunette, in Portals of Prayer)*  
Daughter: “Dad! What on earth do you think you're doing? If you climb up there to put those storm windows up, you're going to fall and kill yourself!” Dad: “Well, then we won't have to pay for hip replacement surgery!” *(Tom Batiuk & Chuck Ayers, in Crankshaft comic strip)***

**A Houston couple was told to stop feeding the homeless because they don’t have a permit. Bobby and Amanda Herring had been feeding up to 120 people nightly, using donated food prepared by volunteers. But city officials shut down the program because the kitchen isn’t inspected and certified. “Poor people are the most vulnerable to food-borne illness,” an official explained. *(The Week magazine, January 28, 2011)***

**In the city records of Danville, Pennsylvania, is this directive: “Fire hydrants must be checked one hour before all fires.” *(L. M. Boyd)***

**A couple of friends were flying to Reno for a long weekend. An hour into the trip, the flight attendant came on the intercom and said, “The pilot has just informed me that we’ve lost an engine. There’s no need for alarm, though. We have three engines left, and we’ll just be an hour late.” About another hour into the flight she made another announcement. “We’ve lost another engine. Don’t worry. We still have two more, but we’ll be another hour late.” One guy turned to his friend and said, “Man, if we lose the other two engines, we’ll be up here all day.” *(Chris Lochte, in Reader’s Digest)*  
In the Minnesota Tradin' Times: “Wanted: ‘76 Cadillac hearse for body parts.” *(Reader's Digest)***

**Headline from the Battle Creek, Michigan, Enquirer: INCLUDE YOUR CHILDREN WHEN BAKING COOKIES. *(Reader's Digest)***

**Numerous rioters who infiltrated the Capitol on Jan. 6 called Nancy Pelosi’s office the next day trying to recover items they’d lost during the insurrection. The rioters were “asking whether there was a lost and found because they forgot their phone there, or they left their purse,” said Rep. Jamie Raskin (D-Md.). He said the callers were put through to police officers who took down their names and addresses. *(Business Insider, as it appeared in The Week magazine, January 28, 2022)***

**A habitually late worker reformed, and one day he was the first to arrive at work. His boss commented, “You are early of late, you always were behind and now you are first, at last.” *(Henry Towne, in Reminisce Extra magazine)***

**When I was in the sixth grade, I lost the sight in my right eye during a playground mishap. Fortunately, the accident had little effect on my life. When I reached my 40s, however, I needed to get glasses. At the optometrist's office, the doctor's young assistant pointed to an eye chart. “Cover your right eye and read line three,” she said. “I'm blind in my right eye,” I told her. “It's a glass eye.” “Okay,” she responded. “In that case, cover your left eye.” *(Bill Slack, in Reader's Digest)***

**Seen in the Redding, California, Record Searchlight: “Special Holiday Times Tonight -- all movies starting after 7 p.m. will not be shown.” *(Reader's Digest)***

**After the birth of her baby boy, my friend Ellen got the name of a pediatrician from her mother. “This is the doctor who took care of you when you were a baby,” her mother said. “And I think he’s still in practice.” My friend contacted the doctor and during his examination of the baby, Ellen remarked, “You were my pediatrician when I was a newborn.” Replied the doctor, “I thought you looked familiar!” *(Joan Hafner, in Reader’s Digest)***

**It was in the wee small hours, and the phone was ringing persistently. Finally, the elderly man roused himself and staggered sleepily to answer it. It turned out to be a wrong number, and the caller was duly apologetic. “Think nothing of it,” said the man, scratching his head. “I had to get up to answer the phone anyway.” *(Reminisce magazine)***

**A guy orders a pizza. When it’s ready, the counterman asks, “Shall I cut it into four or eight pieces?” “Better make it four. I don’t think I can eat eight.” *(Harold Goldwasser, in The Saturday Evening Post)***

**Escondido attorney Ben Echeverria filed a $2 million lawsuit in August against Texaco Inc. and a local gas station manager because station attendants were pumping gas for women at self-service prices, but not for men. The station almost immediately stopped its practice and forced women to start pumping for themselves. *(Chuck Shepherd, Universal Press Syndicate, 1993)***

**My aunt and uncle were shopping for a simple push lawn mower. A salesperson approached them and asked if a 19-inch mower would suit their needs. “Oh, no,” my aunt quickly replied. “Our grass never gets that high!” *(Christine Fitzpatrick, in Reader's Digest)***

**Only in America: Shoppers have filed a lawsuit against the “99 Cents Only Store” chain for raising the price of items to $0.9999. Eric Schiffer, the chain’s CEO, says the $0.0099 increase is a “very tiny amount,” but concedes that prices are rounded up to a dollar at the cash register, producing $12 million annually. “If they call themselves ‘99 Cents Only,’” said a lawyer for the plaintiffs, “it should be 99 cents.” *(The Week magazine, August 6, 2010)***

**A certain businessman had a reputation of never throwing anything away, especially correspondence dating back years. His secretary, cramped for filing space, one day asked if she might dispose of some of the older, less useful material. The man was reluctant but finally said, “Well, all right, but be sure you make a copy of everything before you throw it away.” *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Two restaurants in a Rhode Island mall food court are in the fifth year of a legal battle over the right to sell rice. David Chu, owner of Cathay Cathay, says he pays extra rent to be the mall’s sole provider of white rice, which he calls “the backbone” of Chinese food. But Yogi Sood of Gourmet India says his lease allows him to sell basmati rice – a long-grained strain of white rice – which he calls the “must ingredient” of Indian cuisine. Legal fees so far have totaled $250,000. *(The Week magazine, March 13, 2009)***

**Restaurant advertisement in the Butler, Pennsylvania, Eagle: “Saturday's special -- Roast leg of shrimp.” *(Reader's Digest)***

**My wife and I were in a small glass-bottom boat looking down at the multicolored coral reef and its various marine inhabitants in the waters off San Juan, Puerto Rico. The boat owner asked us if we would like to rent scuba-diving equipment and explore the reefs. “What about those sharks?” my wife asked. “They look dangerous.” “Oh, no, senora. Do not worry about them,” he replied. “They never bother Americans.”  
*(Arthur Halla, in Reader's Digest)***

**Item on a Chinese-restaurant menu in Palm Harbor, Florida: “Jumbo shrimp sauteed with ginger and onions in Szechuan sauce. Hardly recommended.” *(Reader's Digest)***

**The man says to his wife: “I can't believe you're going to sleep through this meteor shower! They won't be this bright again for 200 years!” Wife: “I can wait.” *(Chris Browne, in Raising Duncan comic strip)***

**A friend of mine waited impatiently for a new sofa to be delivered to her home. When at last it arrived, she was horrified at its condition. She complained to a customer service representative on the phone: “The front is streaked, two pillows are missing and there's a small rip on one arm.” After listening to this report, the rep asked, “Well, other than that -- are you pleased with the sofa?” *(Kathryn M. Murray, in Reader's Digest)***

**Only in America: Ventura County, California, officials have ordered a hardware store to stop offering free coffee and doughnuts. Randy Collins, 42, who runs the B&B Do It Center, says health inspectors told him he cannot serve food unless he builds a “prep kitchen” and gets a permit. “They were putting this stuff out there out of the kindness of their hearts,” says customer Ty Brann. “I thought it had to be a joke.” *(The Week magazine, March 12, 2010)***

**Only in America: A California woman is suing Google after she was hit by a car while walking on a route suggested by Google Maps. Lauren Rosenberg claims Google had a duty to warn her that the street it recommended in Park City, Utah, had no sidewalks. Though she chose to walk down the street anyway, she says Google implies that users can “rely on the accuracy of the walking directions given.” *(The Week magazine, June 11, 2010)***

**A Virginia middle schooler has been suspended after opening a door for a female visitor whose arms were full. Students are banned from opening exterior doors, and school superintendent Charles Turner said that gallantry is no excuse. “You have to have a system and that system has to be consistent,” Turner said. *(The Week magazine, March 11, 2011)***

**Only in America: A Florida man is suing a restaurant for not teaching him how to eat an artichoke. Arturo Carvagal claims he suffered “severe abdominal pain and discomfort” after eating an entire grilled artichoke – a dish “he had never seen or heard of previously.” The restaurant, he says, failed to explain that only the tender, inner leaves are digestible. *(The Week magazine, November 19, 2010)***

**A thief who stole an Oregon woman’s SUV with her 4-year-old child inside drove back to criticize her parenting. The unnamed woman left the vehicle idling outside a store while she ran in to buy milk. The suspect stole it and drove off, but briefly returned to demand the woman remove her child. Police said “he actually lectured the mother for leaving the child in the car and threatened to call the police.” *(The Week magazine, January 29, 2021)***

**Years ago, while visiting my elderly widowed sister in Muhlenberg County, Kentucky, I noticed that the “flapper” in her toilet tank had worn out. I purchased a new flapper at the hardware store and installed it. Two weeks after I returned home, I received a letter from my sister thanking me for the repair job. She wrote, “Every time I flush the toilet, I think of you.” *(William Smith, in Reminisce magazine)***

**On the waterfront sometime back at Southport, England, a man became trapped under a sandbank. City employee James Clarkson, 35, ran to his rescue and worked 1 ½ hours to free him. City Council members didn’t much like that. To penalize Clarkson for the time he took off his own job, they docked his pay the equivalent of 55 cents. *(L. M. Boyd)*  
The Portland Oregonian ran an article about a volcano in Iceland, including this passage: “No one was in danger from the eruption; the sparsely populated region is uninhabited.” *(Reader's Digest)***

**A farmer had always wanted ducks in his pond, so one day he bought a pair. The ducks did well . . . so well, in fact, that in a few years the farm was overrun with ducks. The farmer didn't want to shoot them, but he had to do something. He decided to give them to the city zoo. He called his neighbor, who had a big truck, and said to him, “Here's $20, if you'll take these ducks to the zoo for me.” His neighbor, who was kinda dense, scratched his head, then agreed. Off he drove with the ducks. After a few hours, the neighbor hadn't returned, and the farmer was getting worried that something was wrong. He drove into the city only to see the truck parked outside the movie theater with the neighbor sitting in the cab. He asked the neighbor what he was doing. “Well,” he said, “I still had $10 left after taking them to the zoo, so I thought I'd take them to the movies.” *(Rocky Mountain News)***

**Former President George Washington owes more than $300,000 in late fees to a New York library, says the New York Daily News. On October 5, 1789, Washington borrowed a treatise on “The Law of Nations” and a volume of transcripts from the British House of Commons from the New York Society Library in Manhattan, and has yet to return them. “We’re not actively pursuing the overdue fines,” said head librarian Mark Bartlett. “But we would be very happy if were able to get the books back.” *(The Week magazine, April 30, 2010)***

**Only in America: A Connecticut man convicted of killing a 14-year-old boy on a bicycle is suing the boy’s parents, because the boy wasn’t wearing a helmet. David Weaving is serving 10 years in jail for running down Matthew Kenney while driving 80 miles an hour. He accuses the Kenneys of “contributory negligence” and says his conviction has caused him “great mental and emotional pain and suffering.” *(The Week magazine, November 26, 2010)***

**A Washington state middle schooler was sent home for wearing the wrong NFL jersey. Truman Middle School, which has an official school uniform, last week allowed students to wear Seattle Seahawks jerseys for a team-appreciation day. Grendon Bailie, 13, wore the jersey of his beloved Pittsburgh Steelers and was told to change or be suspended. “Not everyone is a Seahawks fan,” said Bailie. *(The Week magazine, January 28, 2011)***

**Bad week for: The birds and the bees, after a patch of woods containing 6,000 trees was cut down outside Lancashire, England, because it had become a popular spot for sexual trysts. Since the trees were cleared, said councilmember Jean Rigby, “it’s quieted down a lot.” *(The Week magazine, April 2, 2010)***

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