

## Nuggets of Fun and Nostalgia for Treasure Valley Golden-Agers

### “She’s Eating With Us”

My 12-year-old daughter, Emma, led a girl I’d never seen before straight through the front door and into our kitchen. No hesitation. No introduction. Just a quiet, determined look that said this wasn’t up for discussion.

“This is Zoe,” Emma announced, already pulling an extra plate from the cabinet.

Zoe hovered near the doorway, hands wrapped around the straps of a faded backpack. She wore an oversized hoodie; her sneakers were patched with silver duct tape, but she stood very straight, trying to take up as little space as possible.

I glanced at the single pound of ground beef browning in the skillet—meant to become tacos for the four of us. I did the quick mental math: more beans, a little extra rice, stretch the cheese. It would be fine.

“Hi, Zoe,” I said, offering a warm smile. “Come sit down. Dinner’s almost ready.”



The meal was quiet. Not uncomfortable, just... gentle. My husband asked soft questions—about school, about favorite subjects. Zoe answered in small, polite phrases, eyes mostly on her plate. She ate slowly, carefully, like she was savoring every bite and memorizing the feeling of a full stomach. After she left, the front door clicking softly behind her, I turned to Emma.

“Sweetheart... we’re on a tight budget right now. You can’t just—”

“She doesn’t have food at home, Mom.” Emma’s voice was steady, but her eyes were fierce. “Her dad works two jobs. He’s trying so hard. But the fridge is empty most nights. She eats the free lunch at school and then... nothing until the next day.”

My breath caught. “How long has this been going on?”

“Long enough that she passed out in gym today. The nurse gave her juice and said to eat better. But there isn’t better.”

I sank onto a kitchen stool, the fight draining out of me. All month I’d been worrying about stretching groceries, about the electric bill creeping higher. This girl had been worrying about whether telling the truth would cost her the only parent she had left.

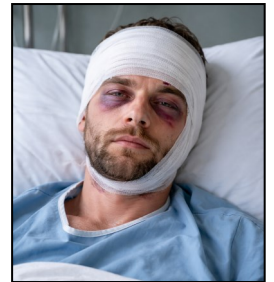
“Bring her tomorrow,” I said quietly.

*(Continued on page 2)*

### No Brainer

A man was lying in the hospital, waiting to be the first person in history to receive a brain transplant.

The doctor came in and said, “I have an update on your surgery.”



Unfortunately, since this is a new procedure, your insurance isn’t going to cover it all. So we’re going to give you three choices of brains and you can decide which one you can afford.”

“Okay, what are they?” the man asked.

“Well, first there’s the engineer brain,” said the doctor. “That’s \$100 an ounce. Then there the scientist brain—that’ll cost you \$200 an ounce. Finally there’s the politician brain. That’s the most expensive at \$1,000 an ounce.”

The man looks at the doctor, surprised. “That’s absurd! Why is the politician brain so expensive?”

The doctor turns to him and says, “Sir, do you realize how many politicians it takes to get an ounce of brain?”



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## Flying Blind

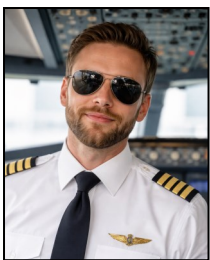
A woman was flying from Seattle to San Francisco. Unexpectedly, the plane was diverted to Sacramento along the way.

The flight attendant explained there would be a delay, and if the passengers wanted to get off the plane, they would reboard in 50 minutes.

Everyone got off the plane except one lady who was blind. The pilot recognized her as she took that flight many times a year.

“Katherine,” he said, calling her by name. “We are in Sacramento for almost an hour—would you like to get off and stretch your legs?”

“No, thanks,” she replied. “But maybe Buddy would like a walk,” motioning to her guide dog who lay quietly under the seat in front of her.



You can imagine what the people in the gate area thought when they saw the pilot walk off the plane—wearing

sunglasses, no less—following a guide dog for the blind!

There was a scramble as dozens ran to change their flight!

*(She’s Eating With Us—Continued from Page 1)*

Emma’s face softened. “Really?”

“Every day she needs to come. Until she doesn’t need to anymore.” And she did.

Zoe became part of the rhythm of our evenings. She’d slip in after school, settle at the kitchen island with her homework, pencil moving steadily across the page. I’d cook, and she’d watch sometimes, asking small questions about recipes or spices.

We didn’t make a big deal of it. We didn’t talk about empty fridges or hungry nights. We just passed the bread. We just refilled her glass. We just made sure there was always enough.

Three years slipped by like that—quiet, steady, warm.

On the evening of her high school graduation, Zoe stood in our living room in her cap and gown, the gold cord of valedictorian shining against the black. She’d earned a full ride to the state university. Engineering. A future she’d built one careful, determined step at a time.

She pressed a small card into my hands. Inside was a photo of her and her dad—both smiling, standing beside his old truck. His arm was around her shoulders, proud and tired and relieved.

“I never said much,” Zoe whispered, voice trembling. “I was scared if I talked too much, you’d see how much I was taking and... stop.”

I pulled her into a hug before she could finish. She felt small and strong at the same time. “You were never taking, Zoe. You were part of us. You still are.”

She stepped back, tears shining. “You gave me over eight hundred dinners. You never made me feel like charity. You never called anyone. You just... let me be here. You let me study instead of worry. Because of you, Dad and I are still together. Because of you, I get to dream bigger.”

I cried then—quiet, grateful tears. I hadn’t saved anyone. I’d only stirred an extra pot of pasta. I’d only added one more carrot to the soup. But sometimes the smallest acts of welcome become the strongest bridges.

Look at the quiet ones. The friend who never mentions dinner. The one who says “I’m fine” a little too quickly. They’re not looking for pity. They’re not looking for a spotlight. They’re just hoping there’s still room at someone’s table.

Set the extra plate. Fill it without fanfare. Smile when they sit down.

That simple gesture—the open door, the full bowl, the unspoken understanding—might be the kindest, most beautiful thing you ever do.

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When checking out at the supermarket, ask your checkout person what kind of candy bar they like, then buy them one. I did this today, even though I was at the self-checkout.



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## Growing Up the Right Way!

I was born and raised in southwestern Idaho and learned many good lessons along the way growing up.



We grew up mowing lawns, bucking hay, splitting wood, pulling weeds, babysitting, and helping with all the chores. By no means were we given everything we wanted.

We went outside a lot to play, run with friends, play hide and seek, or go bike riding. We rarely just sat inside. We were never bored!

We had to tell our parents where we were going, who we were going with, and had to be home before dark.

Bottled water was unheard of; if we wanted water we drank straight from the faucet or hose. If we had a soda, it was in a glass bottle and we saved the bottle to return to the store for the deposit money.

We never touched anything that did not belong to us. We never opened a refrigerator or drawer at anyone's house unless asked to do so. We were taught to respect other people's property. And we were rewarded for acting properly.

You didn't hear swear words in songs on the radio or on TV shows. "Please" and "Thank you," were part of our daily vocabulary!

We watched what we said around our elders and neighbors because we knew if we disrespected any grown-up, we would get a real good whooping; it wasn't called abuse, it was called discipline!

We held the doors open for others. We gave up our seat for an older person without being asked.

You learned from your parents instead of disrespecting them and treating them as if they knew absolutely nothing. What they said was law and you did not question it, and you had better know it!

I will never forget where I came from and only wish children and people nowadays had half the chance at the fun and respect for real life we grew up with!

## That's a Good Question!

Why do croutons come in airtight packages? Aren't they just stale bread to begin with?

Why isn't the number 11 pronounced onety-one?

If people from Poland are called Poles, then why aren't people from Holland called Holes?

Why is a person who plays the piano called a pianist, but a person who drives a race car is not called a racist?

Do Lipton Tea employees take 'coffee breaks'?

What hair color do they put on the driver's licenses of bald MEN?

I thought about how mothers feed their babies with tiny little spoons and forks, so I wondered what do Chinese mothers use - toothpicks?

If a cow laughed, would milk come out of her nose?

Why do we press harder on the remote control when we know the batteries are getting weak?



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## Did You Know?

- The U.S. has more tornadoes than every other country combined.
- The United States has over 90 active volcanoes with most of them located in Alaska.
- Florida gets more lightning strikes per square mile than any other state.
- The tallest tree in the world, Hyperian, is in California and stands 379.7 feet tall.
- Lake Superior is so massive it could cover all of North and South America in one foot of water.



- Crater Lake in Oregon is the deepest lake in the United States, reaching 1,943 feet at its deepest point.

## A Promise is a Promise!

There was a man who had worked all of his life and had saved all of his money. He was a real miser when it came to his money. He loved money more than just about anything. Just before he died, he said to his wife, "Now listen, when I die, I want you to take all my money and place it in the casket with me. I want to take my money to the afterlife."

So he got his wife to promise him with all her heart that when he died, she would put all the money in the casket with him.

Well, one day he died. He was stretched out in the casket, the wife sitting there in black next to her closest friend.

When they finished the ceremony, just before the undertakers got ready to close the casket, the wife said, "Wait just a minute!" She had a shoe box with her, which she placed in the casket.

Then the undertakers closed the casket and rolled it away.

Her friend said, "I hope you weren't crazy enough to put all that money in the casket."

She said, "Yes, I promised. I can't lie. I promised him that I was going to put his money in that casket with him."

"You mean to tell me you put every cent of his money in the casket with him?"

"I sure did," said the wife. "I got it all together, put it into my account and I wrote him a check."



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<b>Average Rent</b>	\$150.00 per month
<b>Tuition to Harvard University</b>	\$2,600.00 per year
<b>Movie Ticket</b>	\$1.50 each
<b>Gasoline</b>	40¢ per gallon
<b>United States Postage Stamp</b>	8¢ each



## FOOD

<b>Granulated Sugar</b>	62¢ for 5 pounds
<b>Vitamin D Milk</b>	\$1.17 per gallon
<b>Ground Coffee</b>	98¢ per pound
<b>Bacon</b>	80¢ per pound
<b>Eggs</b>	45¢ per dozen
<b>Fresh Ground Hamburger</b>	62¢ per pound
<b>Fresh Baked Bread</b>	25¢ per loaf

## Clearly Stated



"Well to be perfectly honest, in my humble opinion, of course without offending anyone who thinks differently from my point of view, but also looking into this matter from a different perspective, and without condemning another's view and trying to make it more objective, and by considering each and every one's valid opinion, I honestly believe that I completely forgot what I was going to say."



In addition to winning a Nobel Prize for her work leading to improved prevention and treatment of malaria, eminent Chinese scientist Tu Youyou has officially been named the World's Most Confusing Person to sing Happy Birthday to.




If you eat an entire cake without cutting it, technically you have only had one piece.

I just sold my  
homing pigeon  
for the  
27th time!



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### 8 LIFE LESSONS FROM AN 80-YEAR OLD

1. Peace matters more than success.
2. Kindness always comes back.
3. No one thinks about you as much as you fear - live freely.
4. Time with family is never wasted.
5. Forgive others; it heals you more than them.
6. Worry solves nothing; preparation solves most things.
7. Health is true wealth after fifty.
8. You don't need many friends, just the right ones.

## Milestones



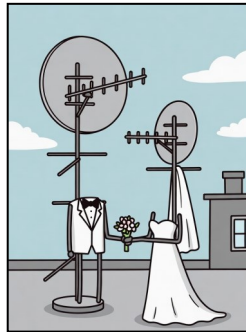
**Irma Montor Gil**  
Mar 2, 1941—85 years  
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**Ann Hayes**  
Mar 26, 1946—80 years  
Weiser



**Barbara Herrera**  
Mar 23, 1951—75 years  
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The ceremony wasn't much,  
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