

Janet's Journal

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Every Summer Has A Story

Dear [FirstName],

Welcome to the dog days of summer: hot and busy! Chances are, you're lugging around a lot these days as life opens back up again and we all slide back into a more public environment.

Well, my friend, the first article in this August newsletter, Check Your Bags, suggests we consider the weight of all that we carry around with us and how our attitude can affect our approach to life. It's a good read, followed by a wise piece on how to truly relax and enjoy the sweetness of life after so many months of uncertainty.

Here's to finding a good spot to sit down at home and peruse the August newsletter (and maybe one of those summer books) at your leisure. If you suddenly realize you don't have a quiet place to sit and read solo, then it might be time to take a look at how you can create a space just for yourself, or rethink your space entirely. Please let me know if I can do anything to help you carve out space that works for you and your lifestyle— if you're ready to buy or sell, I'd be happy to help.

Looking ahead,
Janet Browning

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Check Your Bags

A wealthy man complained aloud and wished the same thing every night: *"I am the most unhappy man on the earth and I would like to live a different life, an easier life."*

One night in a dream he heard a voice that told him: *"Gather all of your miseries into a bag and bring them to the town hall."*

When he got to the town hall, the rich man saw that all of his neighbors had also packed their miseries into big bags. He saw that some people were carrying much bigger bags than his, some tattered and torn, and some so heavy it appeared they were filled with rocks. Even people he had always seen smiling at community events and saying nice things were carrying bigger bags.

Inside the hall, the unseen voice said, "*Lay your bags down.*" Everyone put their bags down, and the voice said, "*Now you can choose any bundle that you like,*" but everybody rushed to their own bags.

The wealthy man also rushed towards his own bag, afraid that somebody else might choose it now that he saw how much smaller it was.

He walked home thinking, "*Who knows what is in the other bags? I have the power to change my lot and my lot alone.*"

That night, instead of wishing for an easier life, he realized how easy his life was and wished that someone else might have an easier time as well.

August Question

Q: Betty Boop first turned up in an August cartoon in what year?

July Question

Q: Babe Ruth made his Red Sox debut in July of what year?

A: 1914



Berry Good



One of the sweetest things about summer is the fruit: plump, ripe, juicy delectables that beg for bare fingers snatching just one more strawberry. The *Cooking Classy* site offers the following tips for creating the perfect fruit salad, along with a light topping recipe that won't overpower the naturally sweet flavor of fruit.

- Keep berries together and save the citrus for another day.
- Use fresh, not frozen, fruit so it stays firm.
- Prep fruit ahead of time. Mix it all just before eating or when company arrives.

Try this honey-lime dressing for an extra kick:

Mix 1/4 cup honey, 2 teaspoons of lime zest, and 1 1/2 tablespoons of fresh lime juice, then add evenly to the fruit salad. Better than whipped cream and healthier, too!

Time and Again

Did you know? According to the *history.com* site the world's first planned time capsule debuted in 1876, when *New York* magazine publisher Anna Deihm assembled a "Century Safe" at the U.S. Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia.

The iron box was stuffed with 19th century relics, including a gold pen and inkstand, a book on temperance, a collection of Americans' signatures, and snapshots of President Ulysses S. Grant and other politicians taken by photographer Mathew Brady.

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After being sealed in 1879, the purple velvet-lined safe was taken to the U.S. Capitol and eventually left to languish under the East Portico.

Though nearly forgotten, it was later rediscovered, restored and unlocked on schedule in July 1976, during the nation's bicentennial festivities. At a ceremony attended by President Gerald Ford, Senator Mike Mansfield said the opening had honored "the wish of a lady who sought to speak to us from the other side of a 100-year gulf."

Committing to Safety

Employee safety calls for a commitment from management. But what does that kind of commitment look like? The Maine Department of Labor's *SafetyWorks* website spells it out:

- **Policy:** Create a written policy emphasizing the importance your organization places on workplace safety and health.
- **Resources:** Commit the time, money, and personnel necessary to protect your workforce.
- **Meetings:** Hold regular safety meetings with specific expectations. Let employees know they will be expected to follow safe work practices on the job. Follow them yourself.
- **Listen:** Respond to all reports of unsafe or unhealthy conditions or work practices.

Dog-eared Pages

These lazy days of summer are perfect for a good read and “must-read” lists abound during these hot months. Check out these sites for a literary round-up that is sure to hold a few books to pique your interest:

- **www.townandcountrymag.com**

According to their website, the classic mag lists “buzzy novels, compulsively readable non-fiction tales, and a few old-fashioned beach reads.”

- **www.beyondthebookends.com**

No tearjerkers here, just simple beach reads. Sweet!

- **www.barnesandnoble.com**

“Summer reading lists for all ages & interests” are listed here, so you can grab a good book for yourself and one for a bookworm kiddo in your life.

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Screen Up

With so many sunscreen choices available, how do you pick a sunscreen that’s right for you? The Skin Cancer Foundation gives a simple answer: purchase the one you are most likely to use, as long as it provides safe and effective protection, and is broad spectrum with an SPF 15 or higher.

Whether you choose a physical or chemical sunscreen, both include active ingredients that help prevent the sun’s UV radiation from reaching your skin. Here’s how the two types of sunscreen work:

Physical sunscreen, also called mineral sunscreen, contains ingredients like titanium dioxide and zinc oxide that block and scatter the rays before they penetrate your skin. Chemical sunscreen ingredients absorb UV rays, using ingredients like avobenzone and octisalate, before they can damage your skin.

While physical sunscreens may be less likely to cause skin irritation than chemical sunscreens, both types have been tested as safe and effective. In fact, many sun protection products available today combine both types of ingredients.

Keep in mind that while crucial, sunscreen alone is not enough. Seek the shade whenever possible and wear sun-safe clothing, like a wide-brimmed hat and UV-blocking sunglasses, for a complete sun protection strategy.



Relax and Enjoy

After all the stresses of the past year, the thought of relaxing and just enjoying the summer months can feel unfamiliar. You can reduce anxiety and let yourself go with this advice from the *University of Colorado* website:

- **Let yourself feel everything.** Don't try to force happiness. Allow yourself to feel a full range of emotions— excitement, anxiety, joy and everything else, including multiple emotions at the same time. You can be excited about traveling, yet nervous about flying on an airplane, for example. Learn to balance your emotions so a single feeling doesn't overwhelm you.
- **Take a proactive approach.** Confront your fears openly. This can be as simple as brainstorming summer projects or just making a packing list for a trip.
- **Accept what you can't control.** Things happen. Don't try to take on everything. For example, you don't know what the weather will bring on a day you've planned for a hike, and rain is a possibility. You can't always predict what will happen in life, but you can take steps to maintain control.
- **Find ways to cope.** Practice meditation and mindfulness; try journaling. Spend time with friends and family you care about, and don't forget to celebrate the small victories after a long year of unusual limitations.



World Water Week is August 23 to 27. In an effort to develop a water-wise world, individuals and organizations from around the globe meet in Sweden annually to brainstorm sustainability issues and preserve access to our planet's most valuable natural resource.

This year's theme is Building Resilience Faster. Visit www.worldwaterweek.org/ to learn more.

Take It For Action

The pandemic changed everything about the modern workplace, and pushed managers and worker bees alike to rethink what makes for a successful workplace. A vision statement, even one modified for newly learned lessons in diversity and inclusion, can guide your team or organization, but it needs to stimulate real action. Don't waste your time on vague, feel-good catchphrases. Try this approach for project management:

- **Recruit a diverse team.** Don't start crafting a vision by yourself, and refrain from including only your usual group of friends and colleagues. Your vision-building team should include people from outside your department, and include employees who work closely with current customers and suppliers, and people from the top, middle, and lower levels of your group or organization. Or, if you work solo, be sure to include freelancers who embody different ideals for a wide scope of insight.
- **Define your process and purpose.** What's your objective in creating a vision? How do you plan to go about the task? What will the final vision look and sound like? Setting this out ahead of time minimizes the chances that you'll fall prey to "mission creep" and try to accomplish too much with your project.
- **Take your time.** A vision that inspires people to action doesn't come out of a single afternoon brainstorming session. Everyone involved with your latest project needs to spend time asking questions about your industry, customers, competitors, trends—everything that affects the success of your vision. You have to build a foundation of learning before you can go forward.
- **Base your vision on principle.** An effective vision isn't about processes or products, but principles— guidelines for action and behavior. Explore the values that guide the organization: What's their impact on what people do? Rely on principles that are timeless and easy to grasp, even if they're sometimes difficult to live up to.
- **Think from a future perspective.** Don't base your vision on where you are today, but on where you want to be in five, or 10, or 50 years. Pretend you're writing a history of the organization and talk about the directions you took and the obstacles you had to overcome in order to succeed.



Figure this: people send 205 billion emails every day. If you were to print out each one on a separate sheet of office paper— which would consume 25 million trees — the stack would stretch halfway around the equator.



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