

# SENIOR ADVOCATE

Prime News for Those in Their Prime

## Whatdaya Think?

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Being retired and a senior citizen certainly has its perks. Daily when I go to the local gym I encounter businessmen who after their workout are leaving for the world of meetings, financial crises, recalcitrant employees and a whole host of irritations. My parting gesture to these denizens of the business world is to thank them for supporting me on Medicare and Social Security. I remind them that while they are toiling at work I am spending their money judiciously. It always elicits a laugh or sometimes just a smirk. Retirement? I'm loving it!

+ And speaking of senior citizens, my 104 year old grandmother had a couple of interesting episodes recently. A new landlord for her apartment where she lives with her 85-year-old sister, wanted her to sign a one-year lease. As ridiculous as that seems I guess it demonstrates that the landlord suspects that my grandmother and her sister are healthy and just might try to stage an escape in the middle of the night and not honor their rent obligations. Kind of difficult to make a nocturnal getaway with a walker though!

And to carry this to the next extreme, my grandmother was recently in the hospital for a minor ailment when she was visited by a Catholic priest who wanted to hear her confession. I suggested to Grandma that she state: "Bless me Father for I have sinned. I disobeyed my parents twice ninety five years ago". And my other suggestion was for her to state that she knows the location of Jimmy Hoffa. Can you see the look on the priest's face upon this disclosure!

+ Does it seem as if the whole world is attempting to get its mitts into our Economic Stimulus Payments? A local grocery store indicated that if we buy gift cards of \$300, \$600 or \$1200 (the amounts of the checks), the store will increase the card by 10%. So if one were to pay the maximum of \$1200 for a gift card at the grocery store, there would be a bonus of \$120 – that's a lot of Cheetos and Eggos!

Our Stimulus Check has already been earmarked because our car and our TV gave up the ghost on the same day. The car had 135,000 miles and was ready for a permanent resting place and the TV had logged thousands of programs over a fifteen-year span and evidently decided that it too needed a rest.

The new car is a Chevrolet Impala with something called FlexFuel E85 fuel. I guess that means that we are now ecological minded drivers, that is, if we could ever locate a station that sells E85. Actually there is one but unfortunately it is thirty-one miles away from our home. The cost of \$200,000 for station owners to install these new fuel tanks is a bit prohibitive so it will be awhile before the E85 pumps are seen anywhere except for the picture in my owner's manual. And with a 20% to 25% decrease in gas mileage with E85, it may be awhile before I make my first purchase on this new car elixir.

+ And speaking of technological nightmares, when's the last time you purchased a new TV? The focal part of our family room is a beautiful 35-inch console we bought fifteen years ago. As mentioned earlier, it decided to go "mute" and thus we began the long, tedious process of researching the various TV offerings. We were shocked to discover that only flat screen plasma or LCD televisions are available in the market place. We quickly learned the difference between 720 digital and 1080 digital –the latter is more expensive. In any event our new wide screen, digital, LCD, 1080 pixel, surround sound monstrosity will be arriving soon – probably simultaneous with our Stimulus Check!

+ The price of gasoline continues to escalate and of course the oil companies will be announcing record profits again and claim that they are doing their best to hold costs in check. The explanations of why we are being gauged at the pump should all be prefaced with the song from Gilligan's Island: "Just sit right back and you'll hear a tale". The tale is about uprisings in the oil producing nations, bad weather, changeover to summer fuel additives, oil rigs that are being upgraded, oil rigs that need repair, and ships laden with crude that encounter storms. How about adding to this list the exorbitant perks being paid to oil executives along with the extravagant retirements paid to some of these greedy charlatans.

It is obvious that the oil companies need someone to enhance their greedy image. Here is one suggestion: it is no secret that there are thousands of people in our nation who depend on the Meals On Wheels for their daily

no secret that there are thousands of people in our nation who depend on the Meals On Wheels for their daily sustenance. In fact my aforementioned 104 year-old grandmother receives meals everyday from volunteers who support this important program.

Why can't the oil companies set aside some of their profits and subsidize the volunteers who daily bring meals to senior citizens? Provide these volunteers who use their own automobiles with oil company debit cards so that their daily trips to deliver food and good cheer to the homebound is not interrupted. It's a small price for the oil companies and a tremendous assistance to the Meals On Wheels program!

Message to oil executives – help feed the homebound and not your wallets!

+ A recent motorcar trip provided us with quite an experience! The Hampton Inn we stayed at overnight provided one of the laughs of our trip. My early morning shower became quite an adventure as I tried to adjust the water pressure. Now I am 5'10" but I found myself standing on my toes in an attempt to grab the showerhead. When I mentioned this at the front desk, the clerk stated that a survey had been done and that the majority of their customers were businessmen who stood on average 6'2". So all the showerheads and even the sinks were adjusted accordingly. Guess next time I travel to this hotel I will bring my stepping stool!

+ And if you are like me, when I travel I fall into the same pattern for meals by stopping at the Cracker Barrel. My favorite meal over the years has been a turkey sandwich on toasted sourdough bread because the turkey is freshly cut from a real turkey. Well, much to my surprise and consternation, the turkey is no longer sliced but shredded. I asked if there was a way to accommodate my request for sliced turkey but was informed that only shredded turkey was available. And then it hit me! We were dining on Thursday at the Cracker Barrel and that is the day that turkey with dressing, potatoes, gravy and cranberry sauce is served. So I merely suggested that the waitress ask the cook to substitute the turkey from the meal to my sandwich and, eureka, I had my favorite meal! So let that be a lesson to all you Cracker Barrel turkey sandwich fanatics (of which I am certainly one), that Thursdays is the day to substitute the shredded turkey sandwich for a one with sliced turkey. And you have me to thank for this information!

+ And speaking of food, I still have vivid memories of a trip to Fort Worth, Texas where we dined at Cattleman's Fort Worth Steakhouse. The atmosphere, ambience, the crowd and of course the delectable food with a Texas size steak as the featured item makes my taste buds salivate even today. Two stepping at Billy Bob's and then watching a rodeo rounded out our day. For someone like me from the Midwest it was like Utopia. Can't wait for a return trip! Maybe this time I will stay longer than three seconds on the mechanical bull!

And let me leave you with this observation from James Dent - -

A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawn mower is broken.

If something in my column resonated with you or just irritated you, let me know. I respond to all letters. So if the spirit moves you, write to me c/o of our editor at [jheuvers@matureadvisor.com](mailto:jheuvers@matureadvisor.com)