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SO BAD, THEY'RE GOOD!

The Whole Family Loves a Dad Joke

Laughter has always been a big part of our family dynamic. Life brings enough tough times, and sometimes, it's nice to just laugh and relax.

As the first Sunday in May is World Laughter Day, it's a good time to appreciate how a little humor can help us all cope with life's ups and downs.

When I was growing up, laughter was a big part of how our family interacted. At holiday dinners, my great uncle and great aunt were always ready with a humorous or quick-witted remark, resulting in engaging dinnertime conversations.

On family road trips, we always tried to find humor in good times and bad and make light of tough situations. Something silly always happened on every trip that became a longstanding joke. We all laughed with my mom when she tried to ride a horse. We all joked about my brother's having to stop for what seemed like a bathroom break every 2 miles, accusing him of having the smallest bladder in the world. There was always something to make us laugh.

We have made an effort to extend that to our kids. We encourage them to approach life with humor and develop a quick wit, to interact, participate, and think nimbly on their feet. If you want to make a joke, you can't just sit and wait a week. Timing is essential. If the moment of opportunity passes and you try to make the joke later, listeners will likely wonder, "What are you talking about?"



At family dinners, our 9-year-old son has perfected his comedic timing. He is as quick on the uptake as Johnny Carson. He can always lighten the mood if things get a little too serious. His most frequent target is his 12-year-old brother. To his credit, our middle child likes the attention. He will put a joke out on the table for you and make himself the target. It's like he positions a watermelon on the tee and hands you a bat. It's pretty hard to miss. So, you take a swing and deliver your joke.

We try to use humor to help our kids see that tough problems are not the end of the world. Our 14-year-old daughter has been through a couple of relationship breakups,

which at that age can *feel like* the end of the world. Humor helps remind her it's not — that we can all get past things and keep moving on.

My kids find a lot of humor on YouTube or TikTok. I don't always understand the jokes when they show me a meme or video and say, "Look at this! It's so funny!"

But the one thing we all agree on at our house is that I'm the chief maker of Dad Jokes! The Dad Joke is where I shine. I can usually come up with one on the spot. When we're all laughing around the dinner table, the repartee usually comes to a Dad Joke at some point. Everybody knows it's coming. Sometimes, they just look at me and say, "Uh-oh, here it comes!" And everybody puts up with it. I know I've done my job when everybody at the table groans.

Our kids see the value of being a good sport about humor. They also like telling some of my Dad Jokes themselves. When my daughter was asked to bring her best Dad Joke to a recent event, her reaction was, "YES! This is my time to shine!" When she asked me for a Dad Joke about a friend named Maddie, I asked, "Does she drive a Tesla? Or does she drive a Maddie Gas Car?"

To our satisfaction, that Dad Joke drew the desired response — groans all around!

- Andrew M. Ayers

Criminal Mastermind? Not Quite

Woman Arrested After K9 Sniffs Out Her ‘Innocent’ Tote Bag

There are bad decisions, and then there are “Florida-level” bad decisions. And right at the top of that list is walking around with a bag that literally announces your crime in bold letters. That’s exactly what 31-year-old Teryn Acri did when she was caught with a tote bag that read, “**Definitely Not a Bag Full of Drugs**” — which, naturally, was full of drugs. You can’t make this stuff up.

Acri’s latest brush with the law happened when the car she was riding in got pulled over by deputies in Brevard County. The driver, clearly possessing a stellar decision-making record, assured the

officer that “nothing illegal should be inside.” Unfortunately for her, Aurora, the department’s drug-sniffing K9, had other ideas.

When the deputy searched the vehicle, Acri’s ironically labeled tote bag was sitting there like a neon sign screaming, “**CHECK ME IMMEDIATELY.**” Inside? Allegedly, police found meth, needles, Narcan, digital scales, small baggies, cut straws — pretty much everything except what you would usually find in someone’s bag.

What makes this situation even more ridiculous is that this isn’t even Acri’s first run-in with the law this year. She was arrested on Jan. 6 for — you guessed it — drug trafficking. But after making her \$15,500 bond just two days later, she was out and about, making more exceptionally bad life choices. Now, she’s back behind bars, and something tells us she won’t be meeting bail this time.

If irony were a crime, Acri would be serving a life sentence. Carrying drugs is bad enough, but labeling them like a cartoon villain? That’s next-level absurdity. The universe has a sense of humor, but so does law enforcement, and they love an easy arrest. If nothing else, let this be a PSA: If your bag screams, “I’m guilty,” expect to be treated accordingly.



WHEN LAUGHING WAS SCANDALOUS

Outrageous Etiquette Rules From the Past

Etiquette has always been an ever-changing game, but some rules from the past are so bizarre that it’s hard to believe anyone actually followed them. From mandatory gloves to rain-soaked gentlemen, let’s take a trip back in time and appreciate just how far we’ve come in the world of social graces.

Imagine being a Victorian woman at a fancy gathering. You spot someone across the room and want to strike up a conversation — but wait! **If you weren’t spoken to first, you had to stay silent.** Initiating conversation could ruin your social standing because heaven forbid a woman has an independent thought. And if you did manage to chat with someone, you had better keep your laughter under control. **Women were expected to cover their mouths when laughing** because too much joy was unacceptable.

Speaking of controlling appearances, let’s talk about the ultimate fashion injustice — men and umbrellas. In 18th-century England, **a man carrying an umbrella was seen as weak.** A true gentleman had to brave the rain with a stiff upper lip and a soggy coat. Meanwhile, women had their own list of fashion do’s and don’ts. Gloves?

Mandatory. Hair up at all times? Absolutely. When crossing the street, **a lady could only lift her dress with one hand** because lifting with two hands was just too scandalous and might show off too much ankle.

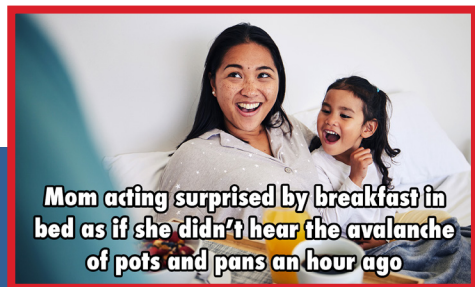
Photographs were another place where emotions were strictly off-limits. Smiling in photos was considered undignified, and people had to remain as serious as possible. So, if you’ve ever wondered why your great-great-grandparents looked like they just lost a bet in every old photograph, now you know!

Fast forward to the 1960s, and while some rules relaxed, others remained oddly specific. Holding your drink in your right hand at a party? Absolutely not! **Your right “social” hand had to stay free to shake hands and light cigarettes.** And **if you were a dinner guest, you had better prepare a toast** — because nothing says party etiquette like being put on the spot for an impromptu speech.

So, the next time you see someone laughing freely or using an umbrella without shame, take a moment to appreciate just how much times have changed!



TAKE A *BREAK*



Ingredients

- 1 boneless beef chuck roast (about 2 lbs)
- 3 medium carrots, peeled, chopped
- 2 medium sweet red peppers, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 8-oz can unsweetened crushed pineapple, undrained
- 1/2 cup reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 2 tbsp packed brown sugar
- 2 tbsp white vinegar
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/2 tsp pepper
- 3 tbsp cornstarch
- 3 tbsp water
- 24 lettuce leaves for serving

Directions

1. In 4- or 5-quart slow cooker, combine roast, carrots, peppers, and onion.
2. In small bowl, stir together the next 6 ingredients; pour over roast.
3. Cover and cook on low for 6–8 hours. Remove roast, let cool slightly, then shred.
4. Skim fat from cooking juices, then transfer juices and vegetables to a small saucepan; bring to a boil over high heat.
5. In a small bowl, combine cornstarch and water, stir mixture into juices, and cook 3–4 minutes until sauce is thickened.
6. Return beef, sauce, and vegetables to slow cooker; cook for 10–15 minutes.
7. Serve beef in lettuce leaves.



For families, “sick season” can seem never-ending. Just when it feels like the sniffles are gone for good, someone else comes down with a cold. Even though the weather’s getting warmer, germs have not taken a vacation. Keeping your family healthy requires extra precautions, no matter the time of year.

Keep your hands clean.

Focusing on everyday hygiene is one of the best ways to prevent illness, and it all starts with hand-washing. Soap and water are the go-to combo, but hand sanitizer is an excellent option for cleaning on the go. Teach kids to wash their hands before eating and after using the restroom, playing outdoors, and visiting crowded places. You can even turn this habit into a fun family ritual by having your little ones sing their favorite song while scrubbing for 20 seconds.

Fuel up with healthy choices.

A strong immune system is also key to illness prevention. Getting adequate sleep and eating a nutrient-dense diet provides natural immune-system support. The kids and adults in your family can boost immunity by loading up on fruits and vegetables; focus on those full of vitamin C, such as strawberries, citrus fruits, and bell peppers. Lean proteins like chicken and fish and fiber-rich foods like avocados and broccoli also support a robust immune system.

Stay on top of surface cleaning.

Germs love high-contact areas like countertops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, and light switches. Cleaning these surfaces daily reduces germ exposure and complements frequent handwashing. If someone has been sick, more frequent wipedowns will help prevent others from getting sick. And don’t forget about phones, tablets, and remote controls. These devices harbor bacteria and viruses and come into contact with our hands and some of them, our faces.

See a doctor when symptoms linger.

Unfortunately, even the best prevention habits can’t guarantee an illness-free household. If a family member has a fever lasting more than two days or cold and flu symptoms lasting longer than 10 days, it’s time to visit your health care provider. When in doubt, trust your instincts — early treatment can be key to ensuring quick recovery.

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RIDESHARE REFUSAL

Detroit Woman Sues Lyft Over Driver's Discriminatory Behavior

Rideshare services like Lyft and Uber have become popular ways for Americans to get from point A to point B. Most drivers are courteous, kind, and conversational as long as you return the favor and respect their vehicle. However, not every ride will be perfect. Every once in a while, you encounter a rude, unaccommodating, or disrespectful driver. A Detroit woman

recently found herself in a disagreement with a Lyft driver who was unwilling to provide service, resulting in a lawsuit.

This past January, Detroit rapper Dajua Blanding, known on stage as Dank Demoss, requested a Lyft to drive her to her cousin's house so she could attend a Detroit Lions watch party. The driver arrived at her home 10–15 minutes later in his Mercedes-Benz sedan but locked the doors upon seeing Blanding approach his vehicle. The driver, identified as John Doe, refused to let Blanding in his car.

Realizing something wasn't right, Blanding pulled out her phone and started recording. The driver claimed that Blanding was too big to fit in the back seat and that his vehicle's tires could not support her weight. Blanding assured the driver she could fit, but he responded, "Believe me, you can't."

He encouraged her to order a Lyft XL before apologizing, canceling and refunding her ride, and driving away.

Blanding, who says she weighs about 490 pounds, has since obtained legal counsel who stated the Lyft driver's actions were against the law. Michigan is the only state where weight is a protected characteristic. Her attorney claims that denying someone a ride based on their weight is the same as denying them due to their race or religion under the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act.

Lyft released a statement afterward, stating that it "unequivocally condemns all forms of discrimination." Blanding is currently suing Lyft and the driver for damages, including stress, humiliation, embarrassment, outrage, mental anguish, fear, and mortification, as well as emotional, economic, and noneconomic damages.

