



## Priceless!

Here is a summary of "must know items" received in the past year on my computer. . .

I must send my thanks to whoever sent me the one about rat dirt in the glue on envelopes because I now use a wet towel on every envelope that needs sealing.

Also, now I scrub the top of every can I open for the same reason.

I no longer have any savings because I gave it to a sick girl (Penny Brown) who is about to die in the hospital for the 1,387,258th time.

I no longer have any money at all, but that will change once I receive the \$15,000 that Bill Gates/Microsoft and AOL are sending me for participating in their special e-mail program.

I no longer use cancer-causing deodorants even though I smell like a water buffalo on a hot day.

I have learned that my prayers only get answered if I forward an email to seven of my friends and make a wish within five minutes.

I no longer buy gasoline without taking a friend along to watch the car so a serial killer won't crawl in my back seat when I'm pumping gas.

I no longer use Saran wrap in the microwave because it causes cancer.

I now know that I can't boil a cup water in the microwave anymore because it will blow up in my face...disfiguring me for life.

I no longer check the coin return on pay phones because I could be pricked with a needle infected with AIDS.

I no longer go to shopping malls because someone will drug me with a perfume sample and rob me.

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I no longer receive packages from UPS or FedEx since they are actually Al Qaeda in disguise.

I no longer shop at Target since they are French and don't support our American troops or the Salvation Army.

I no longer answer the phone because someone will ask me to dial a number for which I will get a phone bill with calls to Jamaica, Uganda, Singapore, and Uzbekistan.

I no longer have any sneakers -- but that will change once I receive my free replacement pair from Nike.

I no longer buy expensive cookies from Neiman Marcus since I now have their recipe.





# Abbot and Costello on the Tech Scene

If Bud Abbott and Lou Costello were alive today, their infamous sketch, "Who's on First?" might have turned out something like this:

Costello calls to buy a computer from Abbott . . .

ABBOTT: Super Duper computer store. Can I help you?

COSTELLO: Thanks. I'm setting up an office in my den and I'm thinking about buying a computer.

ABBOTT: Mac?

COSTELLO: No, the name's Lou.

ABBOTT: Your computer?

COSTELLO: I don't own a computer. I want to buy one.

ABBOTT: Mac?

COSTELLO: I told you, my name's Lou.

ABBOTT: What about Windows?

COSTELLO: Why? Will it get stuffy in here?

ABBOTT: Do you want a computer with Windows?

COSTELLO: I don't know. What will I see when I look at the windows?

ABBOTT: Wallpaper.

COSTELLO: Never mind the windows. I need a computer and software.

ABBOTT: Software for Windows?

COSTELLO: No. On the computer! I need something I can use to write proposals, track expenses and run my business. What do you have?



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ABBOTT: Office.

COSTELLO: Yeah, for my office. Can you recommend anything?

ABBOTT: I just did.

COSTELLO: You just did what?

ABBOTT: Recommend something.

COSTELLO: You recommended something?

ABBOTT: Yes.

COSTELLO: For my office?

ABBOTT: Yes.

COSTELLO: OK, what did you recommend for my office?

ABBOTT: Office.

COSTELLO: Yes, for my office!

ABBOTT: I recommend Office with Windows.

COSTELLO: I already have an office with windows! OK, let's just say I'm sitting at my computer and I want to type a proposal. What do I need?

ABBOTT: Word.

COSTELLO: What word?

ABBOTT: Word in Office.

COSTELLO: The only word in office is office.

ABBOTT: The Word in Office for Windows.

COSTELLO: Which word in office for windows?





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ABBOTT: The Word you get when you click the blue "W".

COSTELLO: I'm going to click your blue "w" if you don't start with some straight answers. What about financial bookkeeping? You have anything I can track my money with?

ABBOTT: Money.

COSTELLO: That's right. What do you have?

ABBOTT: Money.

COSTELLO: I need money to track my money?

ABBOTT: It comes bundled with your computer.

COSTELLO: What's bundled with my computer?

ABBOTT: Money.

COSTELLO: Money comes with my computer?

ABBOTT: Yes. No extra charge.

COSTELLO: I get a bundle of money with my computer? How much?

ABBOTT: One copy.

COSTELLO: Isn't it illegal to copy money?

ABBOTT: Microsoft gave us a license to copy Money.

COSTELLO: They can give you a license to copy money?

ABBOTT: Why not? THEY OWN IT!

(A few days later)

ABBOTT: Super Duper computer store. Can I help you?

COSTELLO: How do I turn my computer off?

ABBOTT: Click on "START"...



# The Sandpiper

by Robert Peterson



She was six years old when I first met her on the beach near where I live. I drive to this beach, a distance of three or four miles, whenever the world begins to close in on me. She was building a sand castle or something and looked up, her eyes as blue as the sea.

"Hello," she said.

I answered with a nod, not really in the mood to bother with a small child.

"I'm building," she said.

"I see that. What is it?" I asked, not really caring.

"Oh, I don't know, I just like the feel of sand."

That sounds good, I thought, and slipped off my shoes.

A sandpiper glided by.

"That's a joy," the child said.

"It's a what?"

"It's a joy. My mama says sandpipers come to bring us joy."

The bird went gliding down the beach. Good-bye joy, I muttered to myself, hello pain, and turned to walk on. I was depressed, my life seemed completely out of balance.

"What's your name?" She wouldn't give up.

"Robert," I answered. "I'm Robert Peterson."

"Mine's Wendy... I'm six."

"Hi, Wendy."

She giggled. "You're funny," she said.

In spite of my gloom, I laughed too and walked on. Her musical giggle followed me.

"Come again, Mr. P," she called. "We'll have another happy day."





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The next few days consisted of a group of unruly Boy Scouts, PTA meetings, and an ailing mother. The sun was shining one morning as I took my hands out of the dishwasher. I need a sandpiper, I said to myself, gathering up my coat.

The ever-changing balm of the seashore awaited me. The breeze was chilly but I strode along, trying to recapture the serenity I needed.

"Hello, Mr. P," she said. "Do you want to play?"

"What did you have in mind?" I asked, with a twinge of annoyance.

"I don't know. You say."

"How about charades?" I asked sarcastically.

The tinkling laughter burst forth again. "I don't know what that is."

"Then let's just walk."

Looking at her, I noticed the delicate fairness of her face. "Where do you live?" I asked.

"Over there." She pointed toward a row of summer cottages.

Strange, I thought, in winter.

"Where do you go to school?"

"I don't go to school. Mommy says we're on vacation."

She chattered little girl talk as we strolled up the beach, but my mind was on other things. When I left for home, Wendy said it had been a happy day. Feeling surprisingly better, I smiled at her and agreed.

Three weeks later, I rushed to my beach in a state of near panic. I was in no mood to even greet Wendy. I thought I saw her mother on the porch and felt like demanding she keep her child at home.

"Look, if you don't mind," I said crossly when Wendy caught up with me, "I'd rather be alone today." ; She seemed unusually pale and out of breath

"Why?" she asked.

I turned to her and shouted, "Because my mother died!" and thought, why was I saying this to a little child?





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"Oh," she said quietly, "then this is a bad day."

Yes," I said, "and yesterday and the day before and -- oh, go away!"

"Did it hurt?" she inquired.

"Did what hurt?" I was exasperated with her, with myself.

"When she died?"

"Of course it hurt!" I snapped, misunderstanding, wrapped up in myself. I strode off.

A month or so after that, when I next went to the beach, she wasn't there. Feeling guilty, ashamed, and admitting to myself I missed her, I went up to the cottage after my walk and knocked at the door. A drawn looking young woman with honey-colored hair opened the door.

"Hello," I said, "I'm Robert Peterson. ; I missed your little girl today and wondered where she was."

"Oh yes, Mr. Peterson, please come in. Wendy spoke of you so much. I'm afraid I allowed her to bother you. If she was a nuisance, please, accept my apologies."

"Not at all -- she's a delightful child." I said, suddenly realizing that I meant what I had just said.

"Wendy died last week, Mr. Peterson. She had leukemia. Maybe she didn't tell you."

Struck dumb, I groped for a chair. I had to catch my breath.

"She loved this beach, so when she asked to come, we couldn't say no. She seemed so much better here and had a lot of what she called happy days. But the last few weeks, she declined rapidly..." Her voice faltered, "She left something for you, if only I can find it. Could you wait a moment while I look?"

I nodded stupidly, my mind racing for something to say to this lovely young woman. She handed me a smeared envelope with "MR. P" printed in bold childish letters. Inside was a drawing in bright crayon hues -- a yellow beach, a blue sea, and a brown bird. Underneath was carefully printed:

A SANDPIPER TO BRING YOU JOY





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Tears welled up in my eyes, and a heart that had almost forgotten to love opened wide. I took Wendy's mother in my arms. "I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry," I uttered over and over, and we wept together. The precious little picture is framed now and hangs in my study. Six words -- one for each year of her life -- that speak to me of harmony, courage, and undemanding love.

A gift from a child with sea blue eyes and hair the color of sand -- who taught me the gift of love.

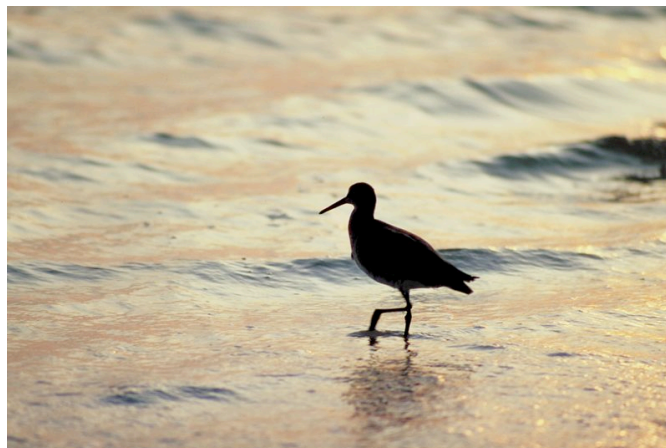
NOTE: This is a true story sent out by Robert Peterson. It happened over 20 years ago and the incident changed his life forever. It serves as a reminder to all of us that we need to take time to enjoy living and life and each other. The price of hating other human beings is loving oneself less.

Life is so complicated, the hustle and bustle of everyday traumas can make us lose focus about what is truly important or what is only a momentary setback or crisis.

This week, be sure to give your loved ones an extra hug, and by all means, take a moment... even if it is only ten seconds, to stop and smell the roses.

Everything that happens to us happens for a reason. Never brush aside anyone as insignificant. Who knows what they can teach us?

**I wish for you, a sandpiper.**



adapted from: [www.humanhealing.com/stories/sandpiper-joy.php](http://www.humanhealing.com/stories/sandpiper-joy.php)





# How Much for That Kid?

The government recently calculated the cost of raising a child from birth to 18 and came up with \$160,140.00 for a middle income family.

Talk about sticker shock! That doesn't even touch college tuition. But \$160,140.00 isn't so bad if you break it down. It translates into:

- \*\$8,896.66 a year
- \*\$741.38 a month, or
- \*\$171.08 a week
- \*That's a mere \$24.24 a day!
- \*Just over a dollar an hour.

Still, you might think the best financial advice is don't have children if you want to be "rich." Actually, it is just the opposite.

What do you get for your \$160,140.00?

- \* Naming rights. First, middle, and last!
- \* Glimpses of God every day.
- \* Giggles under the covers every night.
- \* More love than your heart can hold.
- \* Butterfly kisses and Velcro hugs.
- \* Endless wonder over rocks, ants, clouds, and warmcookies.
- \* A hand to hold, usually covered with jelly or chocolate.
- \* A partner for blowing bubbles, flying kites
- \* Someone to laugh yourself silly with, no matter what the boss said or how your stocks performed that day.

For \$160,140.00, you never have to grow up. You get to:

- \* finger-paint,
- \* carve pumpkins,
- \* play hide-and-seek,
- \* catch lightning bugs, and
- \* never stop believing in Santa Claus.



You have an excuse to:

- \* keep reading the Adventures of Piglet and Pooh,
- \* watching Sunday morning cartoons,
- \* watching Disney movies, and
- \* wishing on stars.
- \* You get to frame rainbows, hearts, and flowers under refrigerator magnets and collect spray painted noodle wreaths for Christmas, hand prints set in clay or Mother's Day, and cards with backward letters for Father's Day.

For a mere \$24.24 a day, there is no greater bang for your luck.

You get to be a hero just for:

- \* retrieving a Frisbee off the garage roof,
- \* taking the training wheels off a bike,
- \* removing a splinter,
- \* filling a wading pool,
- \* coaxing a wad of gum out of bangs, and coaching a baseball team that never wins but always gets treated to ice cream regardless.

You get a front row seat to history to witness the:

- \* first step,
- \* first word,
- \* first report card,
- \* first date, and
- \* first time behind the wheel.

You get to be immortal. You get another branch added to your family tree, and if you're lucky, a long list of limbs in your obituary called grandchildren and great grand children. You get an education in: psychology, nursing, criminal justice, communications, and human sexuality that no college can match.

In the eyes of a child, you rank right up there under God. You have all the power to heal a boo-boo, scare away the monsters under the bed, patch a broken heart, police a slumber party, ground them forever, and love them without limits,

So, love without counting the cost - - That is quite a deal for the price!!!!!!



## The Teacher Applicant

After being interviewed by the school administration, the teaching prospect said, "Let me see if I've got this right:

"You want me to go into that room with all those kids, correct their disruptive behavior, observe them for signs of abuse, monitor their dress habits, censor their T-shirt messages, and instill in them a love for learning.

"You want me to check their backpacks for weapons, wage war on drugs and sexually transmitted diseases, and raise their sense of self esteem and personal pride.

"You want me to teach them patriotism and good citizenship, sportsmanship and fair play, and how to register to vote, balance a checkbook, and apply for a job.

"You want me to check their heads for lice, recognize signs of antisocial behavior, and make sure that they all pass the state exams.

"You want me to provide them with an equal education regardless of their handicaps, and communicate regularly with their parents by letter, telephone, newsletter, and report card.

"You want me to do all this with a piece of chalk, a blackboard, a bulletin board, a few books, a big smile, and a starting salary that qualifies me for food stamps.

"You want me to do all this? I am SO fortunate that God is my partner. HE will help me make a difference for His children."





## First Impressions

When I was quite young, my father had one of the first telephones in our neighborhood. I remember the polished, old case fastened to the wall. The shiny receiver hung on the side of the box. I was too little to reach the telephone, but used to listen with fascination when my mother talked to it.



Then I discovered that somewhere inside the wonderful device lived an amazing person. Her name was "Information Please" and there was nothing she did not know. Information Please could supply anyone's number and the correct time.

My personal experience with the genie-in-a-bottle came one day while my mother was visiting a neighbor. Amusing myself at the tool bench in the basement, I whacked my finger with a hammer, the pain was terrible, but there seemed no point in crying because there was no one home to give sympathy.

I walked around the house sucking my throbbing finger, finally arriving at the stairway. The telephone! Quickly, I ran for the footstool in the parlor and dragged it to the landing. Climbing up, I unhooked the receiver in the parlor and held it to my ear. "Information, please" I said into the mouthpiece just above my head. A click or two and a small clear voice spoke into my ear.

"Information."

"I hurt my finger..." I wailed into the phone, the tears came readily enough now that I had an audience.

"Isn't your mother home?" came the question.

"Nobody's home but me," I blubbered.

"Are you bleeding?" the voice asked

"No," I replied. "I hit my finger with the hammer and it hurts."

"Can you open the icebox?" she asked.

I said I could.

"Then chip off a little bit of ice and hold it to your finger," said the voice.





After that, I called "Information Please" for everything. I asked her for help with my geography, and she told me where Philadelphia was. She helped me with my math. She told me my pet chipmunk that I had caught in the park just the day before, would eat fruit and nuts.

Then, there was the time Petey, our pet canary, died. I called, "Information Please," and told her the sad story. She listened, and then said things grown-ups say to soothe a child. But I was not consoled. I asked her, "Why is it that birds should sing so beautifully and bring joy to all families, only to end up as a heap of feathers on the bottom of a cage?"

She must have sensed my deep concern, for she said quietly, "Wayne always remember that there are other worlds to sing in."

Somehow I felt better.

Another day I was on the telephone, "Information Please."

"Information," said in the now familiar voice. "How do I spell fix?" I asked.



All this took place in a small town in the Pacific Northwest. When I was nine years old, we moved across the country to Boston. I missed my friend very much. "Information Please" belonged in that old wooden box back home and I somehow never thought of trying the shiny new phone that sat on the table in the hall. As I grew into my teens, the memories of those childhood conversations never really left me.

Often, in moments of doubt and perplexity I would recall the serene sense of security I had then. I appreciated now how patient, understanding, and kind she was to have spent her time on a little boy.

A few years later, on my way west to college, my plane put down in Seattle. I had about a half-hour or so between planes. I spent 15 minutes or so on the phone with my sister, who lived there now. Then without thinking what I was doing, I dialed my hometown operator and said, "Information Please."

Miraculously, I heard the small, clear voice I knew so well.

"Information."

I hadn't planned this, but I heard myself saying, "Could you please tell me how to spell fix?"



There was a long pause. Then came the soft spoken answer, "I guess your finger must have healed by now."

I laughed, "So it's really you," I said. "I wonder if you have any idea how much you meant to me during that time?"

I wonder," she said, "if you know how much your call meant to me. I never had any children and I used to look forward to your calls."

I told her how often I had thought of her over the years and I asked if I could call her again when I came back to visit my sister.

"Please do", she said. "Just ask for Sally."

Three months later I was back in Seattle. A different voice answered,

"Information." I asked for Sally.

"Are you a friend?" she said.

"Yes, a very old friend," I answered.

"I'm sorry to have to tell you this," she said. "Sally had been working part-time the last few years because she was sick. She died five weeks ago."

Before I could hang up she said, "Wait a minute, did you say your name was Wayne?"

"Yes." I answered.

"Well, Sally left a message for you. She wrote it down in case you called. Let me read it to you."



The note said, "Tell him there are other worlds to sing in. He'll know what I mean."

I thanked her and hung up. I knew what Sally meant.

Never underestimate the impression you may make on others.

Whose life have you touched today?

adapted from: <http://www.whatistruth.info/>



## *Interesting Lexophilic Observations*

1. A bicycle can't stand alone; it is two tired.
2. A will is a dead giveaway.
3. Time flies like an arrow; fruit flies like a banana.
4. A backward poet writes inverse.
5. In a democracy it's your vote that counts; in feudalism, it's your count that votes.
6. A chicken crossing the road: poultry in motion.
7. With her marriage she got a new name and a dress.
8. Show me a piano falling down a mine shaft and I'll show you A-flat miner.
9. When a clock is hungry it goes back four seconds.
10. The guy who fell onto an upholstery machine was fully recovered.
11. A grenade fell onto a kitchen floor in France, resulting in Linoleum Blownapart.
12. You are stuck with your debt if you can't budge it.
13. Local Area Network in Australia: The LAN down under.
14. He would often have to break into song because he couldn't find the key.
15. A calendar's days are numbered.
16. A lot of money is tainted: 'Taint yours, and 'taint mine.
17. A boiled egg is hard to beat.
18. He had a photographic memory which was never developed.
19. A plateau is a high form of flattery.





20. Those who get too big for their britches will be exposed in the end.

21. When you've seen one shopping center you've seen a mall.

22. If you jump off a Paris bridge, you are in Seine.

23. When she saw her first strands of gray hair, she thought she'd dye.

24. Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead to know basis.

25. Acupuncture: a jab well done





# Kids!

TEACHER: John, why are you doing your math multiplication on the floor?

JOHN: You told me to do it without using tables.

TEACHER: Glenn, how do you spell 'crocodile?'

GLENN: K-R-O-K-O-D-I-A-L'

TEACHER: No, that's wrong

GLENN: Maybe it is wrong, but you asked me how I spell it.

TEACHER: Donald, what is the chemical formula for water?

DONALD: H I J K L M N O.

TEACHER: What are you talking about?

DONALD: Yesterday you said it's H to O.

