



Just in case it matters to you:

- “WHEN ‘FATHER’S DAY’ WAS FIRST PROPOSED IN THE EARLY 1900S, PEOPLE LAUGHED. One NY Times reader asked ‘What’s next, Household Pet Day?’” But somehow, with support from the Hallmark Cards company, it grew around the globe and last year Americans spent \$11 billion for this occasion – \$700M on greeting cards alone. [FAST COMPANY – June 09]
- THE WORD ‘EMERGENCY’ IS NOT SO RELEVANT ANYMORE IN HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOMS. Since American hospitals are required by law to treat patients without health insurance and without regard to legality of U.S. residency, many E.R. rooms have effectively become medical care clinics for the indigent. The impact is that ‘wait times’ have increased dramatically for ‘urgent care’ patients. According to U.S. Gov’t Accountability Office, wait time for ‘immediate needs’ care now averages 28 minutes (versus ‘immediate’) and for ‘urgent’ care now averages 37 minutes (versus maximum 14 recommended by medical associations). Meanwhile, average wait time for ‘non-urgent’ care is just over an hour. [TIME – June 15, 09]
- MEDICARE AND SOCIAL SECURITY ARE “THE POLITICAL STINKBOMB OF AN AGING SOCIETY” which Congress and the Administrations keep sidestepping. Newest actuarial reports show that as Americans’ health and longevity continue to increase (now age 75+ for men and 80 for women – fourteen years greater than when Baby Boomers were born), and even without medical cost inflation (which is inconceivable), that spending would consume over 40% of the federal budget in ten more years. The issue is about the degree to which ongoing entitlement obligations *should* “displace other national needs like defense, education, research, housing, transportation...and what is the right balance between the past and the future?” With a projected shortfall of perhaps \$50 trillion over the next 75 years, the ultimate bankruptcy of these Trust funds is inevitable without fundamental policies overhaul, including increases in eligibility age and decreases in benefits for wealthier retirees. What’s missing is simply the fortitude of elected representatives to deal with the problem. [NEWSWEEK – June 1, 09]
- CHILDREN ARE NOT IMMUNE TO THE ANXIETY THEIR PARENTS FEEL OVER ECONOMIC STRESS. “The long term psychological effects may be most profound for youngsters...seeing the world as an uncertain place where they have to struggle to succeed and later making them cautious about career choices and financial decisions.” For tweens and teenagers, the impact is often more personal when change in material circumstances create “a sense of loss...– losing confidence in the idea of the American dream and the assumption that they will live better than their parents.” For the millennial ‘why?’ generation, the situation is still worse: used to being “protected and coddled... aware that first career decisions could have financial implications that last for years, they may resent parents for raising them to *believe* that their success was assured.” The ‘age of anxiety’ will take its toll for many years to come. [BUSINESSWEEK – June 8, 09]
- “THE HARDEST THING ABOUT BEING A PARENT is watching your children struggle and suffer, learning what you already know but, cannot, for the life of you, pass on... The mean-spirited judgment of others is deeply wounding when you’re 13; at 17, the outrageous unfairness of life is not a simple reality, but the source of recurring anger and angst. Into your 30s, everyday blunders keep you up nights, squirming with humiliation and self-doubt. Over time, repeated exposure to these psychic pathogens renders them less toxic; you learn to maintain your equilibrium. What you can’t do, unfortunately, is distill that process into a vaccine to administer to your children. Only through their own mistakes and heartache do they develop antibodies of their own.” [THE WEEK – June 5, 09]

THOUGHTS FOR THE WEEK: ***The interchange for freeways 101 and 405 in Los Angeles is one of the busiest in America with over 500,000 vehicles converging daily.***

Rising stress levels in the workplace bring out the ‘bullying’ instinct in managers and supervisors. Of the offenders, some 60% are men, but also around 40% are “women who target other women” according to the New York Times.

The likelihood of an oncoming migraine headache, arthritis flare-up or asthma attack can now supposedly be predicted by Meteorologists, based on “tracking weather patterns, like barometric pressure and humidity, to identify when health impacting events may occur,” with subscribers notified by email in time to take medications.