

Richard Gee

From: -- Maverick Spirit -- [thespirit@spiritmailer.com]
Sent: Monday, 27 August 2007 12:16 p.m.
To: Richard
Subject: Richard Whose life have you touched today? spiritmail27082007



**"If you can imagine it, you can achieve it
If you can dream it, you can become it." WILLIAM ARTHUR WARD**

Whose life have you touched today? August 27th, 2007

Michelle Allsop of [Dare To Succeed](#) sent me this great story called **The Old Phone** with a simple note:

This is a beautiful story and really encourages us to stop and think how we behave and who is watching and remembering the hand of friendship we may have reached out and offered...

"When I was quite young, my father had one of the first telephones in our neighbourhood. 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 neighbour. 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 parlour and dragged it to the landing. Climbing up, I unhooked the receiver in the parlour 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 dialled 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 calls 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?

Life is a journey.... NOT a guided tour. So don't miss the ride and have a great time going around, you don't get a second shot at it."

Thanks Michelle for sharing the story - it made me catch my breath when I read the man's name was Wayne... and I do remember those old wooden phones and the "operator". I hope you are touched by this or one of the other stories we share in [The Maverick Spirit](#).

Enjoy this issue of **The Maverick Spirit...** That's it for today, until next time, continue to enjoy being a free spirit in a complicated world...

Wayne Mansfield

P.S. Did you know that Frank McEnroe, no relation to John the tennis player I am reliably informed, who hailed from Bendigo, invented the **Chico Roll in 1951**. Originally including chicken in its ingredients, the Chico Roll has a mixture of barley, celery, onion, carrot and cabbage with beef mince. About **2 million are sold each month**, and whilst they might look light and crispy, after being reheated a dozen times they taste like **deep-fried linoleum with soggy stuff inside**.

P.P.S. Australia has **more sheep** than any other country in the world... we probably have a few less due to the long running drought but apparently we had **177.8 million of the creatures in 1990**. For one hundred years, before the miners took over, it was said that Australia "rode on the sheeps' back."

Sheep and Chico Rolls can be seen side by side at the Perth Royal Show!

And for something really different:

Visit my daily thoughts and views at [Confessions of a Boy from Margaret River](#) where you can leave comments and ideas on stuff that doesn't make it to [The Maverick Spirit](#)



Life's Little Instruction Book

When your children are learning to play a musical instrument, buy a good one.

Be a tourist for a day in your own hometown. Take a tour. See the sights.

A race horse that consistently runs just a second faster than another horse is worth millions of dollars more. Be willing to give that extra effort that separates the winner from the one in second place.

Source: H. Jackson Brown, Jr **Life's Little Instruction Book**

MAVERICK QUOTE OF THE DAY



"Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, 'I will try again tomorrow.'"

Samuel Maverick (1803-70) Texan rancher who, when branding of stock was introduced chose "**Not to Brand.**" Every unbranded horse or cow he then claimed as a **Maverick!**

Mary Anne Radmacher

Feedback: There has been a flood of comments and feedback over the last week. Thanks again for sharing - it lifts my spirits to think that you get pleasure reading the Spirit.

Wayne

I thought that those of us now over 60, realised a long time ago that there are really no such things as excuses - only reasons which, by definition have to be genuine. The problem is, of course, that it is difficult to always live by that rule but difficulties, as we were once always being told, are made to be overcome.

Today it seems that all that is now considered out of date. Rather like all those professional protesters who insist that they are simply exercising their democratic rights but never accept their democratic responsibilities or that there are such things.

What a world we are living in!

Jack Leech


Hi Wayne,

I was just wondering if we were supposed to smell both the Banana and the Green Apple together or would just smelling one of the two choices suffice? I guess that just smelling any food should work like a charm eventually - so long as you never actually

eat it.

Thanks for the wisdom

G'Ma G.



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Until next time then... enjoy being a free spirit in a complicated world.

Wayne Mansfield Editor

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