

Stark Raving Sane: On Getting Older

By Catherine SWEET

I've wanted to write a column on aging for quite a while now, but for some reason it seemed too macabre. I think that, in itself, is the saddest thing ever. Do you think it's because we associate getting older with death? I think that's why.

Really, I decided to go ahead with this because my birthday is this week (that's right, boys: Aquarius). I wasn't going to write about how old I am, like the number itself is some big deal. It's like how you're not supposed to tell people how much money you make. It's not necessary and considered too personal. Or in my case, embarrassing.

"The average 24-year old will have at least one BA, be able to juggle, whistle, and understand how to manipulate a catalytic converter."

Big deal, I'm going to be 24. Man, just looking at that number next to the cursor on my screen is strange. 24. When I was younger, I could never really conceive of being 24. It was like beyond

20 was unfathomably adult. I think I still think of 24 as a 16-year-old would think of 24. Unfathomable.

I don't think the number represents me. Yes, I'm older than most people working on the newspaper, or in the Student Union, or in the Student Body, for that matter, but I don't feel 24. Adults are 24. Urban professionals and wives and mothers and millionaires are 24.

It doesn't really matter. It's not like in infant development books when at a certain age, children are supposed to be able to sit up, crawl, and walk. Imagine that: "The average 24-year old will have at least one BA, be able to juggle, whistle, and understand how to manipulate a catalytic converter."

Ok, let's look at it this way: people my age are mothers and millionaires, but their lives have followed different paths to arrive at what they are today. I like my path. I've done a lot of fun and interesting things, and I've learned a lot. There's still one thing that I have to do before I die: I must spend my birthday on a beach.

It's a drag to have your birthday in February. It's cold and crap and miserable. When I was a kid, I had more than one birthday party postponed because of a

blizzard. Well, at least school is always in session. I liked the extra attention. I still do.

I don't know why I'm doing a retrospective on my life. Maybe it's a birthday thing. At a certain age, you look forward. After that age, you look back. Maybe that is macabre.

Identify the songs these lyrics come from:

1) Then you flew your Leer Jet up to Nova Scotia,
To see the total eclipse of the sun.

2) "I guess the winter makes you laugh a little slower
Makes you talk a little lower
about the things you could not show her."

Movie Quotes (identify the film):

1) "I am father to a murdered son and husband to a murdered wife and landlord to a murdered world -- and I will have vengeance!"

2) "She wanted me to tell you, she saw you dance. She said when you were little, you and her had a fight right before your dance recital."

Trivia:

1) Who was the only Bible character to be eaten by dogs?
2) Where are the Isles of Langerhan? (Hint: they're closer than you think!)

Answers from last issue:

Lyrics:

1) "Let Me Entertain You" by Robbie Williams
2) "Goodbye Earl" by the Dixie Chicks

Movie Quotes:

1) That Thing You Do!
2) Philadelphia Story (please rent this- it's great!)

Trivia:

1) Ferris Bueller's Day Off
2) 08.12.80?: John Lennon was shot dead.

Fun & Games

Feed Food, Not Bombs

By Brad DEIGHAN

This is an interesting and apparently effective anti-war protest that I recieved through my e-mail account, perhaps you'd like to have the option?

There is a grassroots campaign underway to protest war in Iraq in a simple, but potentially powerful way; place 1/2 cup uncooked rice in a small plastic bag (a snack-size bag or sandwich bag work fine). Squeeze out excess air and seal the bag. Wrap it in a piece of paper on which you have written, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. Romans 12:20. Please send this rice to the people of Iraq; do not attack them."

Place the paper and bag of rice in an envelope (either a letter-sized or

padded mailing envelope--both are the same cost to mail) and address them to :

President George Bush White House,
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Attach postage. Drop this in the mail. It is important to act NOW so that President Bush gets the letters ASAP. In order for this protest to be effective, there must be hundreds of thousands of such rice deliveries to the White House. We can do this if you each forward this message to your friends and family.

There is a positive history of this protest! In the 1950s, Fellowship of Reconciliation began a similar protest, which is credited with influencing

President Eisenhower against attacking China. Read on:

"In the mid-1950s, the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation, learning of famine in the Chinese mainland, launched a 'Feed Thine Enemy' campaign. Members and friends mailed thousands of little bags of rice to the White House with a tag quoting the Bible, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him." As far as anyone knew for more than ten years, the campaign was an abject failure. The President did not acknowledge receipt of the bags publicly; certainly, no rice was ever sent to China.

"What nonviolent activists only learned a decade later was that the campaign played a significant, perhaps even determining role in preventing nuclear war. Twice while the campaign was on,

President Eisenhower met with the Joint Chiefs of Staff to consider U.S. options in the conflict with China over two islands, Quemoy and Matsu. The generals twice recommended the use of nuclear weapons. President Eisenhower each time turned to his aide and asked how many little bags of rice had come in. When told they num-

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bered in the tens of thousands, Eisenhower told the generals that as long as so many Americans were expressing active interest in having the U.S. feed the Chinese, he certainly wasn't going to consider using nuclear weapons against them."