



*July 2023 Newsletter
Magazine Section*

*FRIENDSHIP, FELLOWSHIP
AND FUN*

*Stayin' Alive
Hastings Pawsey*

I like "Stayin' Alive" – so did the Bee Gees

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fNFzfwLM72c>

So to the point of my article. Every so often, one attends a presentation that has a lasting effect. On the 13th June, I (with a number of our Probian) was fortunate to attend such a one. It was presented professionally, had a little fun and we all learnt about a subject that may have a positive effect on us continuing to live. Belrose Rotary had such a speaker. The name of the presenter didn't jump at me, till I heard he was the original 'Yellow Wiggle', Greg Page. He didn't do any finger wiggling or dancing, but was able to tell us, in simple words, that he had died, as a result of a cardiac arrest, but because there was a defibrillator very near to where he collapsed – he survived.

Simplistically, the defibrillator saved his life. The defibrillator was a small compact AED (Automatic External Defibrillator), which was fully automated and can be used by anyone – no training is required. It talks the user through all the simple steps. To bring his subject straight into our own lives, Greg gave us some very simple stats that you and I need to carefully think about, • Around 74 – 80 % of cardiac arrests occur while we're at home • Without a defibrillator (and who has one ?), there's only around 10% chance of surviving. • But if a defibrillator is available in the first few minutes, your survival chance increases to around 70% So are there sufficient defibrillators in our community? The simple answer is no. However, the number is rapidly increasing. All hospitals and ambulances have them and there's a rapid increase in community locations. They're being placed in Clubs, Churches, shopping centres, and sporting locations, etc. There is one at Lionel Watts Sports Fields and another (initiated by Belrose Rotary) will be placed on the Frenchs Forest Showground. And that's all good. Also, there's one where we meet in Morgan Rd Uniting Church.

But, what about all those cardiac arrests that happen in our homes (about 75-80%) but only about 10% live when there's no defibrillator VERY close at hand. I don't have one at home, and I'd guess most of our Probus members, and society in general, don't have one at home. For the betterment of society, Greg Page has initiated and runs an amazing Australia wide project/campaign to greatly increase the positioning of

AEDs in increasing numbers throughout our society. There's great progress to have them installed in the locations where our communities gather in numbers. BUT, what about our thousands of homes, where most of the cardiac arrests happen ??? His project is aimed at rapidly increasing the number of AED into positions very close and available to anyone who finds someone who's collapsed and is not responsive. His project recognises that (due to price) most of us won't want to purchase an AED. So, to overcome this challenge, he's established a method for a small local community to purchase one and have it in a position to allow anyone in that small community to access it and use it. The project is clever and effective and makes sure all those in this small community know where it is and can access it very quickly. There's much more to this AED project, which is simply designed to keep us living longer – to enjoy more Probus activities. I recommend you have a look at some more detail which can be found on the following links:

<https://www.heartofthenation.com.au/communities>

<https://www.heartofthenation.com.au/hotn-app>

This subject is so simple and effective and am sure more of us will want to know much more about it. Our Guest Speakers' Co-ordinator, Cherry Robinson, has been given Greg Page's contact and will be asking him to present his story and the project to us. When he comes, you'll also be as fascinated as Belrose Rotary and our few members discovered.

Colleen McCullough



Radio and TV personality Wendy Harmer with author Colleen McCullough and former NSW Premier Bob Carr at the launch of his book 'My Reading Life, Adventures in the World of Books' in Sydney.

Colleen Margaretta McCullough - Australian author known for her novels, her most well-known being *The Thorn Birds* (the best selling Australian novel of all time) The *Thorn Birds* was turned into a popular UK television miniseries, starring Richard Chamberlain and Rachel Ward .

Colleen was born in Wellington, New South Wales, to James, an Irish immigrant who worked as a cane cutter, and Laurie, a New Zealander of Maori descent. The family moved around for many years, eventually settling in Sydney. Colleen spoke of how she started writing, buying a typewriter with money given to her by

her mother for an overcoat. "I saw a Blue Bird portable typewriter for five pounds so I bought that instead," she said.

Raised in Wellington and then Sydney, McCullough began writing stories at age 5.

She won a scholarship to the Holy Cross college in Woollahra, excelling in science and the humanities, before studying medicine at the University of Sydney. Planning to become a doctor, she found that she had a violent allergy to hospital soap and turned instead to neurophysiology – the study of the nervous system's functions.

After graduation she moved to London to work at Great Ormond Street hospital, then accepted a research post at Yale medical school in the US, where she worked for 10 years.

After her beloved younger brother Carl died in 1965 at age 25 while rescuing two drowning women in the waters off Crete, a shattered McCullough quit writing. She finally returned to her craft in 1974 with *Tim*, a critically acclaimed novel about the romance between a female executive and a younger, mentally disabled gardener. As always, the author proved her toughest critic: "Actually," she said, "it was an icky book, saccharine sweet." The book was later made into a film starring Mel Gibson and Piper Laurie.

A year later, while on a paltry \$10,000 annual salary as a Yale researcher, McCullough began work on the sprawling *The Thorn Birds*, about the lives and loves of three generations of an Australian family. Many of its details were drawn from her mother's family's experience as migrant workers, and

one character, Dane, was based on brother Carl

Three years after the publication of *The Thorn Birds*, Colleen found a permanent home and a refuge from her sudden rise to fame on Norfolk Island, an improbable speck of subtropical paradise lost in the ocean midway between Australia and New Zealand. She bought a property, Out Yenna, built a house and married the builder, Ric Robinson, a descendant of the mutineers on the *Bounty* whom she used to describe as "part Samoan prince, part devoted husband".

Following *The Thorn Birds*, Colleen wrote her magnum opus: seven novels on the life and times of Julius Caesar, each a colossus weighing in at up to 1,000 pages. The *Masters of Rome* series preoccupied her for almost 30 years, from the early 1980s to the publication of the final volume in 2007.

The research was a monumental task: a library of several thousand books and monographs on every aspect of Roman history and civilisation accumulated on the shelves of her home. She drew maps of cities and battlefields, scoured the world's museums for busts and inscriptions, consulted experts in a dozen universities and recorded every known fact about her subject and his times.

The work was not originally intended to be on such a scale, but it grew and kept on growing, impelled by the tidal force of her determination and the fierce joy she felt when a new fact or an alternative interpretation came to light. No editor or publisher could resist the tide or dare to suggest that the storyline might be improved by some judicious cutting.

Colleen wrote 23 more books, but none came near the success of *The Thorn Birds*.

In addition to her prodigious output of novels, history, science fiction, myth and biography, Colleen wrote a volume of autobiographical essays with a title that summed up her attitude to the world, *Life Without the Boring Bits* (2011). She wrote mainly after dark, slept late into the morning, and re-emerged in the afternoon to organise the household. Guests were fed with gargantuan steaks larger than dinner plates, or sweet potatoes and roast pork with crackling raised to an art form, and Colleen would share her infallible views on everything from astrophysics to zoology, before crushing any challengers on the Scrabble board with her mastery of exotic two-letter words.

Throughout her life on Norfolk Island, she was dogged by health problems: skin, eyes, joints, kidneys and insomnia took turns in creating an obstacle course that she negotiated by the sheer power of her will. The arthritis in her fingers seemed the cruellest punishment for a writer who had to wear gloves to diminish the pain of touching a keyboard. But Colleen had no time for anyone who behaved like a wuss, herself included.

Towards the end there were money worries. The royalty payments were diminishing, the medical bills mounting. Her unbounded hospitality took its toll. It is fitting that her final novel, *Bittersweet* (2014), took her back to her roots: two sets of twin girls working in a hospital in rural New South Wales, tending a generation of soldiers

maimed in the trenches of the first world war. It was a bestseller.

Colleen won numerous academic and literary awards, degrees and prizes, both at home and abroad. The most appropriate must surely be the 1997 declaration by the Australian government that she was a national treasure.

The Benefits of Walking

Hippocrates proclaimed that “walking is man’s best medicine.” The good doctor also knew that walking provided more than mere physical benefits when he suggested: “If you are in a bad mood, go for a walk. If you are still in a bad mood, go for another walk.”

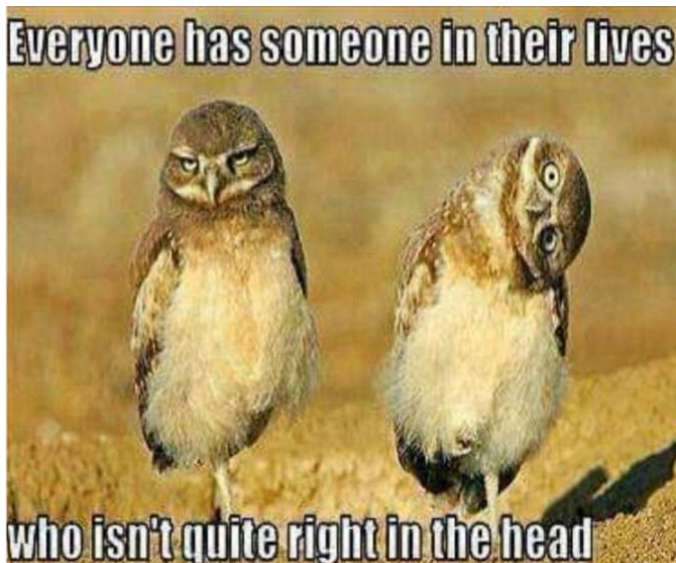
He was alluding to what so many who came after would attest, that walking not only nourishes the body but also soothes the mind while it burns off tension and makes our troubles recede into a more manageable perspective.

Danish theologian and philosopher Soren Kierkegaard agreed when he confessed, “I know of no thought so burdensome that one cannot walk away from it.” And Charles Dickens was even more direct. “If I could not walk far and fast,” he wrote, “I think I should just explode and perish.”

But walking does more than keep the devil from the door. The Welsh poet (and sometime vagabond) W.H. Davies wrote:

Now shall I walk
Or shall I ride?
“Ride,” Pleasure said.
“Walk,” Joy replied.

There’s abundant testimony that a good ramble fuels creativity. William Wordsworth swore by walking, as did Virginia Woolf. So did William Blake. Thomas Mann assured us, “Thoughts come clearly while one walks.” J.K. Rowling observed that there is “nothing like a night-time stroll to give you ideas,” while the turn-of-the-20th-century novelist Elizabeth von Arnim concluded that walking “is the perfect way of moving if you want to see into the life of things.”



With thanks to Malcolm McLean

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner

This is the longest major poem by the English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, written in 1797–1798 and published in 1798 in the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads*. Along with other poems in *Lyrical Ballads*, it is often considered a signal shift to modern poetry and the beginning of British Romantic literature.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner recounts the experiences of a sailor who has returned from a long sea voyage. The mariner stops a man who is on his way to a wedding ceremony and begins to narrate a story. The Wedding-Guest's reaction turns from bemusement to impatience to fear to fascination as the mariner's story progresses, as can be seen in the language style: Coleridge uses narrative techniques such as personification and repetition to create a sense of danger, the supernatural, or serenity, depending on the mood in different parts of the poem.

The poem begins with an old grey-bearded sailor, the Mariner, stopping a guest at a wedding ceremony to tell him a story of a sailing voyage he took long ago. The Wedding-Guest is at first reluctant to listen, as the ceremony is about to begin, but the mariner's glittering eye captivates him.

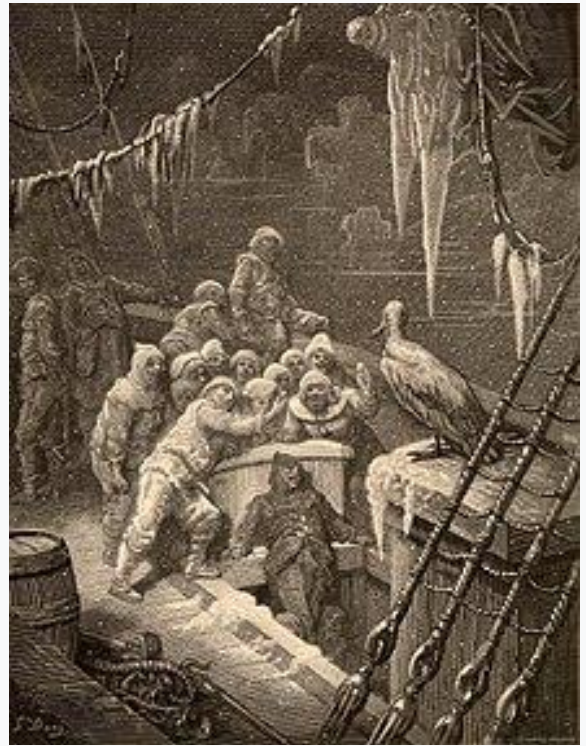
The mariner's tale begins with his ship departing on its journey. Despite initial good fortune, the ship is driven south by a storm and eventually reaches the icy waters of the Antarctic.



The Mariner up on the mast in a storm. One of the wood engraved illustrations by Gustave Doré of the poem.

An albatross appears and leads the ship out of the ice jam where it is stuck, but even as the albatross is fed and praised by the ship's crew, the mariner shoots the bird:

*With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.*



Engraving by Gustave Doré for an 1876 edition of the poem depicting 17 sailors on the deck of a wooden ship facing an albatross. Icicles hang from the rigging.

The crew is angry with the mariner, believing the albatross brought the south wind that led them out of the Antarctic. However, the sailors change their minds when the weather becomes warmer and the mist disappears:

*'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay,
That bring the fog and mist.*

They soon find that they made a grave mistake in supporting this crime, as it arouses the wrath of spirits who then pursue the ship "from the land of mist and snow"; the south wind that had initially blown them north now sends the ship into uncharted waters near the equator, where it is becalmed:

*Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.*

*Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.*

*The very deep did rot: Oh Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.*

The sailors change their minds again and blame the mariner for the torment of their thirst. In anger, the crew forces the mariner to wear the dead albatross about his neck, perhaps to illustrate the burden he must suffer from killing it, or perhaps as a sign of regret:



*Frontispiece by William Strang for a
1903 edition of Coleridge's poem.*

*Ah! well a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.*

After a "weary time", the ship encounters a ghostly hulk. On board are Death (a skeleton) and the "Nightmare Life-in-Death", a deathly pale woman, who are playing dice for the souls of the crew. With a roll of the dice, Death wins the lives of the crew members and Life-in-Death the life of the mariner, a prize she considers more valuable. Her name is a clue to the mariner's fate: he will endure a fate worse than death as punishment for his killing of the albatross. One by one, all of the crew members die, but the mariner lives on, seeing for seven days and nights the curse in the eyes of the crew's corpses, whose last expressions remain upon their faces:

*Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.*

*The souls did from their bodies fly,
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!*

Eventually, this stage of the mariner's curse is lifted after he begins to appreciate the many sea creatures swimming in the water. Despite his cursing them as "slimy things" earlier in the poem, he suddenly sees their true beauty and blesses them ("A spring of love gush'd from my heart, And I bless'd them unaware"). As he manages to pray, the albatross falls

from his neck and his guilt is partially exiated. It then starts to rain, and the bodies of the crew, possessed by good spirits, rise again and help steer the ship. In a trance, the mariner hears two spirits discussing his voyage and penance, and learns that the ship is being powered supernaturally:

*The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.*

Finally the mariner wakes from his trance and comes in sight of his homeland, but is initially uncertain as to whether or not he is hallucinating:

*Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The light-house top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?*

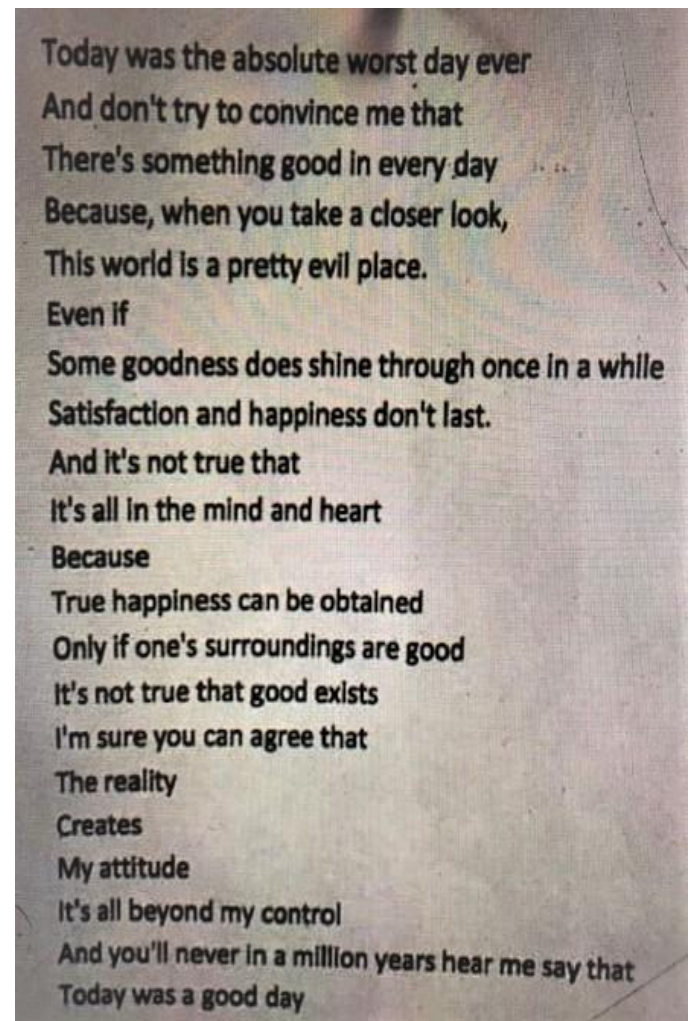
*We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God!
Or let me sleep alway.*

The rotten remains of the ship sink in a whirlpool, leaving only the mariner behind. A hermit on the mainland who has spotted the approaching ship comes to meet it in a boat, rowed by a pilot and his boy. When they pull the mariner from the water, they think he is dead, but when he opens his mouth, the pilot shrieks with fright. The hermit prays, and the mariner picks up the oars to row. The pilot's boy laughs, thinking the mariner is the devil, and cries, "The Devil knows how to row". Back on land, the mariner is compelled by "a woful agony" to tell the hermit his story.

As penance for shooting the albatross, the mariner, driven by the agony of his guilt, is now forced to wander the earth, telling his story over and over, and teaching a lesson to those he meets:

*He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.*

After finishing his story, the mariner leaves, and the wedding-guest returns home, waking the next morning "a sadder and a wiser man"



.....Now read line by line from the bottom to the top.

For lovers of the English language

- 1) The bandage was wound around the wound.
- 2) The farm was used to produce produce.
- 3) The dump was so full that it had to refuse more refuse.
- 4) We must polish the Polish furniture.
- 5) He could lead if he would get the lead out.
- 6) The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.
- 7) Since there is no time like the present, he thought it was time to present the present.
- 8) A bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.
- 9) When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.
- 10) I did not object to the object.
- 11) The insurance was invalid for the invalid.
- 12) There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row.
- 13) They were too close to the door to close it.
- 14) The buck does funny things when the does are present.
- 15) A seamstress and a sewer fell down into a sewer line.
- 16) To help with planting, the farmer taught his sow to sow.
- 17) The wind was too strong to wind the sail.
- 18) Upon seeing the tear in the painting I shed a tear.
- 19) I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.
- 20) How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend?

Let's face it - English is a crazy language. There is no egg in eggplant, nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England or French fries in France. Sweetmeats are candies while sweetbreads, which aren't sweet, are meat. We take English for granted. But if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig..

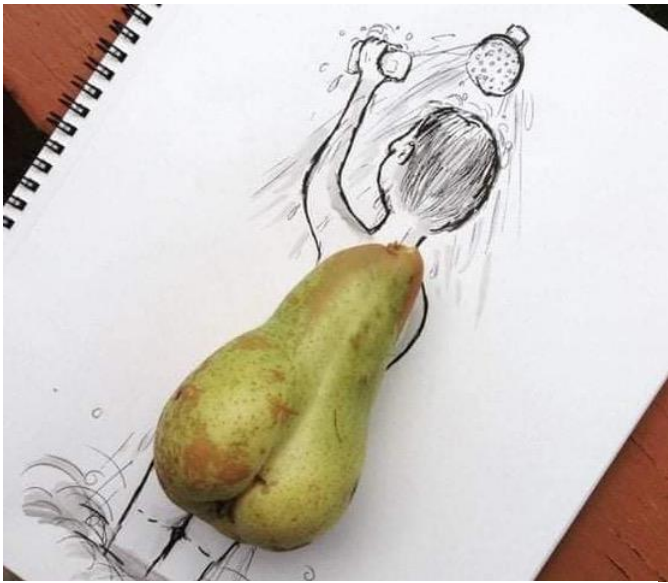
And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham? If the plural of tooth is teeth, why isn't the plural of booth, beeth? One goose, 2 geese. So one moose, 2 meese? One index, 2 indices? Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend? If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat?. In what language do people recite at a play and play at a recital? Ship by truck and send cargo by ship? Have noses that run and feet that smell?

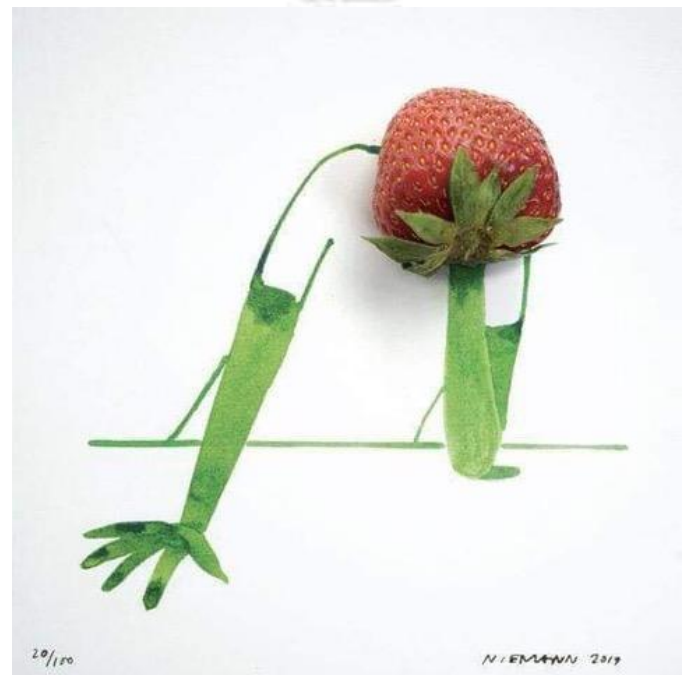
How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites? You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out and in which, an alarm goes off by going on.

With thanks to Malcolm McLean

Food Art

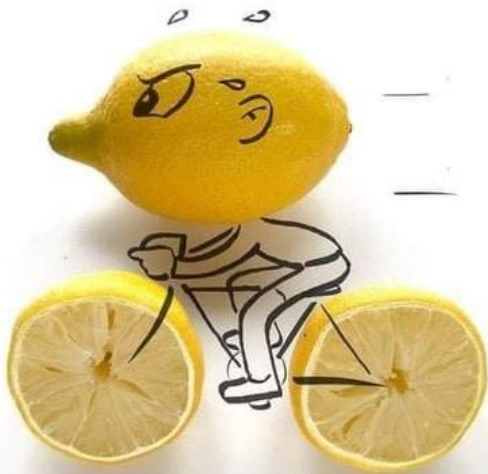


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DIANA KUSAN

