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Together, we can build a stronger, more caring community—one act of kindness at a time.



BY David Williams

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October EVENTS

BY David Williams

MAIN STREET FESTIVAL

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

NASHVILLE CULTURAL FESTIVAL

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HALLOWEEN

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ALL MONTH

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31

SPECIAL THANKS FOR TRUSTING OUR AGENCY...

IT'S SO REWARDING TO SHARE FRIENDS !!!

COOK THIS RECIPE

PUMPKIN is the New Pasta

By Mayra Zambrano



The only better coverage than silky pasta in pumpkin's golden glow? The peace of mind from great insurance with us. With **World Pasta Day** on **Oct 25** and **Pumpkin Day** on **Oct 26**, this one-pot wonder is your perfect fall celebration - fragrant rosemary, indulgent Parmigiano, and cozy comfort you can twirl on a fork! Ready to get this party (in your mouth) started?

Ingredients:

- **6-8** fresh pasta nests (*fettuccine/egg tagliatelle nidi*)
- **2 cups** pumpkin, peeled and diced into small cubes (*sugar pumpkin preferred*)
- **2** cloves garlic, smashed
- **1** sprig fresh rosemary
- **3 tbsp** olive oil (*plus a drizzle for roasting*)
- **1-2 tsp** honey or a pinch of sugar
- **4-5 cups** water or vegetable broth
- **½ cup** Parmigiano-Reggiano, grated (*plus extra to serve*)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper



Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Toss the pumpkin cubes with a drizzle of olive oil, honey (or sugar), salt, and pepper. Spread evenly on a baking sheet and roast for 20-25 minutes, until caramelized and golden around the edges. **2.** In a wide pot, warm the remaining olive oil. Add garlic and rosemary, letting them sizzle until fragrant. **3.** Stir in the roasted pumpkin cubes. They should be soft enough to mash slightly, creating a creamy base with little caramelized bits still intact. **4.** Nestle the fettuccine nidi into the pumpkin mixture. **5.** Pour in hot water or broth until pasta is just covered. Cook uncovered, stirring gently, until the nests loosen and pasta is al dente (about 12-15 minutes).

6. Remove rosemary and garlic. Stir in Parmigiano, extra black pepper, and a final drizzle of olive oil. **7.** Plate the nests whole, spooning creamy pumpkin sauce over the top. Garnish with more Parmigiano and rosemary if desired.

Savor the swirl and stay wrapped in **tasteful protection!**





Fear's Out

By David Williams

The velvet curtain of life doesn't always move as you expect it. For Vess, it had stayed closed for years regarding her career, while she devoted herself to raising her twins. Once, she had been a bright young eye doctor - invited to teach, research, and travel the world. But after a hard journey to pregnancy, she chose to give it all up, embracing motherhood fully.

It was the best decision she ever made. But as the twins grew older, the curtain started to tug at her again.

Her days were full of gratitude - giggles over pancakes, sticky hands from candy bags, bedtime stories that stretched too long. Yet as the noise of childhood filled the house, silence grew in her heart. She had discipline - oh, did she ever. Packed lunches labeled, homework checked, costumes ironed for trick-or-treat night. But none of that discipline was for her.

Some nights she lay awake, guilt pressing heavily. How could she want more when she'd already been given the biggest blessing of her life? She and her husband were comfortable, life was stable, and the children thrived. Still, she felt like an understudy in her own story. The stage lights were burning, but she hadn't stepped forward in years.

One October evening, her husband offered to stay home with the twins. Vess went out for the first time in a long while. A college friend, Merina, was premiering a play.

The show ended to roaring applause. Afterward, the two sat at a familiar old-time diner, with warm pumpkin pie between them.

Vess broke the silence first, her voice low. "I felt so proud of you there

tonight... But can I be honest? You put me in deep pondering, and I kept wondering if I could still have that same fire you obviously have to make big things happen. Sometimes I feel like I vanished. I used to be someone. I had a purpose outside my home. And now, I feel like I've hidden behind the curtain so long I don't even know how to step out anymore."

Merina listened intently. "I'm so glad you liked the play! But Vess, that sounds heavy."

"It is. And the worst part is, I feel so guilty! Even sharing this now... I'm sorry. You're always just so easy to talk to! Please don't get me wrong, I love my children more than life, but I keep wondering if something is missing. And that feels... ungrateful."

Merina reached across the table and squeezed her hand. "It's not ungrateful. It's human. I fought my own monsters, too. Not the fake ones we see hanging on porches in October - scarier ones. Fear. Rejection. Failing. Want to know how I kept going?"

Vess nodded and Merina ticked her fingers like acts in a play.

Replace your simple habits. "You've mastered routines for your twins - packed lunches, homework checks. But where are the routines for you? Fear doesn't only creep in during empty hours - sometimes it hides in overloaded ones. The cure isn't piling on more chores - it's adding intention, or shifting things. Even ten minutes redirected to something just for you can change everything. Swap habits that drain you for ones that grow you."

Change your environment. "Your stage crew matters. With seven-year-old twins, your world might be all about playdates and parent chats. Sprinkle in more intelligent conversations with other adults who really get you - laughter, debate, ideas. Some of the people in your world, I'm sure, are capable of that, and will clap when you step forward, right? Others, those who roll their eyes at your ambitions, you might want to consider dropping. Forget judgment - you don't need anyone's approval. Choose courage! The right cast will always want you to shine."

Nurture discipline. "You already live

disciplined days, Vess. No one wrangles twins without it! But discipline can't only serve *their* schedules. It must serve yours, too. Don't wait for motivation - it's unreliable. Use the same structure you give your kids and apply it to your own goals."

Control your time. Merina leaned closer. "Here's the scariest monster - not October masks, but waking up years later, realizing every hour went to everyone else. Not all 24 hours belong to your kids. Take a chunk back. There's no shame in that."

Look for long-term gratification. "Your children love quick rewards - candy, cartoons, the sugar rush of October treats. But the greater reward? Having a strong role model they can look up to. They may miss you a little now when you're not present every waking hour, but imagine how much they'll respect you when you put all your intelligence back on stage and shine out there again!"

Build stats and results. "Goodness, I had to scramble on off-circuit plays for years until my name carried a little weight! No one respects you until they see proof. You know it. And you're already brilliant, Vess. You don't necessarily need a clinic or hospital position to keep showing up in your field. Get back to writing papers and publishing your ideas. Pick things back up, continue your track record. Every small proof stacks up until no one can ignore it."

Learn from the best only. "Are you still in touch with Dr. Olos, your residency mentor? I bet connecting with him would be stimulating. Check in on LinkedIn, watch his lectures, or just poke around and find other mentors. There's so much you can learn and do, even from that rocking chair you probably still have in the house from baby days."

Invest in yourself wisely. "You've invested everything in your family, which is beautiful. Now invest a little in yourself. Courses, books, coaching - the kind of tools that multiply your growth. Not shiny distractions - the state-of-the-art stroller days are over. Sure, you may still overindulge in the latest backpacks, but could you also pay a little more attention to further developing your skills and knowledge from here?"

The OVERSHARE SCARE

By David Williams



Protect your backstage.

Merina softened her voice. "This one is key. We parents want to make darn sure our kids are safe before thinking of our own dreams. Insurance helps carry that load. It's the peace of mind you need to actually do the important stuff - to take over the stage of your own life."

Vess sat quietly, heart swelling with both hope and ache. "What if it's too late?" she whispered.

Merina shook her head. "You're right on time. The curtain is just that - a curtain. Easily open if you're willing to do it yourself. The scariest thing is never trying."

That night, as she slipped back home, the twins were sprawled on the couch, candy bowls half-empty, cartoons humming in the background. Her husband smiled from the rocking chair. Half asleep, he muttered, "We *did* brush our teeth - don't worry."

Vess tucked the twins in and, as she wiped chocolate smudges still on their cheeks, whispered a promise only she could hear: "I'll always be your fiercest cheerleader. But now, I'll also work to show you what it looks like to step into the world with real courage and fire."

Since October has this scary vibe, you should be reminded that fear isn't failure. It means you care about your scene. Evaluate Your Life Day this Oct 19 is the ideal moment to realize the only real fright is staying behind the curtain of your own story, because on the other side awaits a sweet, messy, brilliant life. Let us insure your stage so you can perform freely from here on!

PROTECT & GUARD

Oversharing might feel harmless in the moment - just a little extra context, a few more details, a story to soften the edges. But in reality, it's a communication habit with *teeth*. What starts as a helpful explanation quickly turns into something that chips away at confidence, authority, and trust.

AWKWARD SITUATIONS MULTIPLY. Oversharing almost always creates awkwardness. The more words spill out, the less effective the message becomes. It's like trying to fly a plane that keeps circling the runway - listeners start shifting in their seats, wondering when they'll take off or when the ride will be over.

AUTHORITY AND CREDIBILITY SLIP AWAY. Every additional sentence that doesn't serve a point starts to dilute the message and erode authority. Instead of walking away with clarity, the listener wonders if the speaker even means what they say. That uncertainty sticks - not in a good way.

A PUBLIC ADMISSION OF INSECURITY.

Oversharing isn't just too many words; it's a (not-so) silent confession that screams: "I don't trust my message to stand on its own." And friends, nothing weakens a position faster than a communicator signaling they're unsure about the topic.

THE VALIDATION TRAP.

Here's another pitfall: oversharing hands the steering wheel over to the listener. The unspoken request is, "Please confirm that what I'm saying makes sense." That search for validation rarely inspires respect. Instead, it leaves the speaker looking smaller.

LOSS OF COMPOSURE.

Oversharing doesn't just happen verbally. It shows up in the body, too. The nervous fiddling with rings, excessive fidgeting, the hair twirls, and exaggerated gestures - these little tells are amplified when overexplaining. Together, they signal discomfort, making the oversharer look distracted, uneasy, and off-balance.

THE VOICE BETRAYAL. Then

there's the voice. Oversharing often lowers projection or pushes tone into a higher pitch. Both can drive people away. The whisper says, "I'm not confident." The high pitch says, "I'm not steady." Either way, the result is the same: the message loses impact, and the audience tunes out.

THE EXCEPTION. There is, however, one scenario where oversharing is not only welcome but encouraged: when talking to us, your trusted insurance agents. Unlike in presentations or social settings, here the more detail, the better. Sharing today's realities, tomorrow's goals, and the milestones expected along the way isn't overexplaining - it's painting a picture of a life that deserves the right protection. With every detail, the plan becomes more precise, more personal, and more in tune with your financial situation - now and in the future. Oversharing in this context means fewer blind spots, smoother adjustments, and coverage that fits like it was designed for you - because it was.

SO, SAVE THE OVERSHARING FOR OUR POLICY REVIEW CHATS - EVERYWHERE ELSE, LET YOUR WORDS LAND LIKE A MIC DROP.



Q & AMAZING

BY Mayra Zambrano

Questions are like keys, but they don't just unlock boxes and places - they unlock people, ideas, and - if you're paying attention - the next question you didn't even know you had. Asking them is an art, much like learning a foreign language. You don't have to be born into it; you can pick it up at any stage.

Think of a tangled necklace. You don't yank at the knot and expect it to magically undo itself. You tease it apart piece by piece. Questions work the same way: they pull gently at life's knots until clarity shows up. Problems become solvable, conversations become richer, and people feel like you actually see them. Amazing, right?

Now, you might be thinking: "Easy for you all to say. You're brilliant insurance agents. Asking questions is literally your job!" How kind - you flatter us. Thank you. But it's not that. We love the asking game around here, no doubt, but let's be honest: this "art" isn't reserved for any specific kinds of pros. You can master it,

too. And once you do, your life (personal and professional) won't just improve - it'll get **Q&Amazing**.

So, how do you do it? Here's your starter pack:

1 Play the (at least) 3 Questions

Game. Opportunities to connect are everywhere - your coworker in the break room, the friend texting you about dinner, even the stranger commenting online. Don't let those interactions just pass by. Commit to three questions. They don't need to be profound, but they should be real. Ask what someone is working on, what's challenging them, or what joy made their day better. Each interaction can be a gem if you give it a chance.

2 Push yourself all the way through.

Half measures don't work. Don't stop at one or two questions - get to three. And ensure you get real answers - even if that means asking four, five, or six questions. That's a win. It shows you struck gold, and the other person wants to keep going.

Conversations don't fizzle when you push with genuine curiosity; they flourish.

3 Use your creativity. Sure, "How was your weekend?" is serviceable, but you're capable of more. Ask "What was the biggest highlight of your weekend?" Be playful, thoughtful, even a little cheeky. As long as you stay respectful of boundaries, creative questioning makes people light up. With common sense and finesse, you can build memorable exchanges.

4 Pay close attention to the answers.

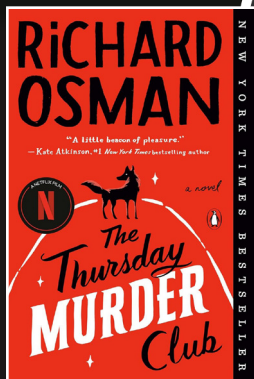
This is the whole point! Don't just nod while drafting your next question. Listen. Really listen. Answers aren't placeholders - they're the substance. They might spark your next question, but don't rush to formulate it or repeat yourself. If you make someone feel like they're wasting time, the game is over. If you make them feel valued, the door opens to trust, insight, maybe even friendship.

5 Practice on us. We're professionals at this. Call us and try it out. Ask us three questions - or ten. We'll gladly help you polish your skill while we polish your coverage. It's a win-win (both yours): you get better at the art of asking, and we make sure your life is protected.

So go ahead - start small, play the game, and keep pushing your curiosity. Don't worry - you won't turn into an insurance agent overnight! You'll just have a much more **Q&Amazing** life!

The Thursday MURDER Club

A BOOK BY
RICHARD OSMAN



Retirement communities usually promise peace and quiet. At Cooper's Chase, however, peace is frequently interrupted by murder, and calm is impossible when you've got four septuagenarians with magnifying glasses, sass, and suspiciously sharp observational skills. Welcome to *The Thursday Murder Club*, where bingo night is canceled due to homicide. With a new Netflix movie and the fifth book in the series just hitting shelves now, it seems a perfect time to turn you onto this excellent series by Richard Osman.

Our unlikely crime-fighting crew is made up of Elizabeth (whose mysterious past probably includes MI6 and at least one exploding briefcase), Ron (an ex-union firebrand who still shouts at full volume, whether you asked or not), Ibrahim (a psychiatrist with spreadsheets for everything, including tea preferences), and Joyce (retired nurse, cake enthusiast, and accidental scene-stealer with her diary entries). Together, they meet every Thursday to poke at cold cases. Then, because the universe clearly loves irony, a very hot case drops in their laps: a shady local developer winds up murdered, photograph in hand, and

suddenly the Club is on the frontlines.

The fun here is twofold: first, Osman's knack for twisting a murder mystery into a comedy of errors. Suspects pile up faster than bodies, red herrings flop all over the place, and the official police team (including rookie cop Donna De Freitas) quickly realizes that the real detectives in town qualify for senior bus passes. Second, the banter is glorious. These characters weaponize sarcasm, deploy charm, and occasionally blackmail people with the kind of finesse that only comes from decades of practice.

But don't be fooled by the humor: tucked between the laughs are moments with surprising weight - reflections on aging, friendship, and what it means to still want adventure when the world thinks you've slowed down. It's a balancing act between murder and merriment, and Osman pulls it off with style.

In short, *The Thursday Murder Club* is like Agatha Christie crashed a retirement party and spiked the sherry with stand-up comedy. It's clever, charming, and cheerfully chaotic. You'll come for the mystery, stay for the lemon drizzle cake, and leave hoping your golden years come with a pension plan and a detective squad as lovable as this one.



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I'm a circle that changes, yet always return,
A lesson in cycles for those who will learn.
I govern the oceans with pull yet no hand,
A wanderer's lantern not lit by the land.
I'm absent at times, yet at others I gleam,
The centerpiece shining in many a dream.

WHAT AM I?

Submit your answer by **Oct 31st** at:
ourhometownmag.org/riddle

A young boy with brown hair and rosy cheeks is looking upwards with a wide-eyed, open-mouthed expression of surprise or delight. He is wearing a dark plaid shirt. The background is dark, and the scene is filled with numerous colorful jelly beans in shades of blue, orange, red, yellow, green, and purple, some of which are floating around his head.

ALL YOU SEE IS CANDY...

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