

Gardner Newsletter



AS PROMISED, AUNT BEULAH'S 90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION CONTINUES FROM OUR LAST ISSUE

By: Beulah Griffes

I was thinking that there couldn't be much celebration for my 90th birthday because of the virus, but I was wrong. It started out on February 11 at Sheryl and Gary's house with a delicious dinner and tasty birthday cake. Sheryl had taught Millie, her dog, to bark Happy Birthday to me which Millie did when asked to.

I received 30 beautiful cards, many with handwritten notes in them. I received many gift, including:

A gift certificate to Target; a book *Listen to your Dreams*; four packages of nuts – hazel nuts, cashews, Brazil nuts, and almonds. Nuts are very healthy, and I had planned to buy some.

Gift certificate to a local restaurant; 1000-piece jigsaw puzzle of the front page of *The New York Times* dated February 11, 1931; certificate to a grocery

store - from Millie and Bess, Sheryl's dogs; portable magnifying light; gift certificate to my hairdresser; a book, *Fish Out of Water*; two speakers installed in the living room so that I can hear music from the CD player, which is downstairs; several gift certificates to Hoagies.

But there is more!

Sharon planned to take me out for lunch on Saturday. Most restaurants are closed. She said she made reservations at the Eastside Restaurant, which is the only way you can go to a restaurant around here during these COVID-19 times. I had no clue what would happen next.

We went into the restaurant and the waitress said something about needing a long table. I wondered why Sharon and I needed a long table. And of course we didn't. We walked into the room with a long table that was filled with 18 family members. What a nice surprise! Sorry that Donna, my daughter-in-law,

couldn't be there. She had undergone a knee replacement a few days before.

We had good food and fellowship and Sharon had planned a game. She took each decade of my life, 9 decades, and read a "fact" or "fiction" statement about my life. Each person was asked to hold up a sign that Sheryl had made which read "FACT" or "FICTION" to indicate whether they felt the statement was true or not.

Here are the statements.

0 – 9 years old

#1: In 1930 Mom/Grandma was born in Orleans County Memorial Hospital.

FICTION. She was born in East Charleston in 1931 in the home of the nurse.



Beulah and her daughter, Sharon

#2: At Christmas, 1939, 9-year old Mom received her first store-bought dress.

FACT. Lois bought Elinor and Mom matching dresses. Most clothes during that time were either homemade or hand-me-downs.

10 – 19 years old

#1: In high school Mom was an athlete.

FACT. She played softball for 1 year.

#2: During Mom's high school years, she had all the ice cream she wanted because she lived next to an ice cream factory.

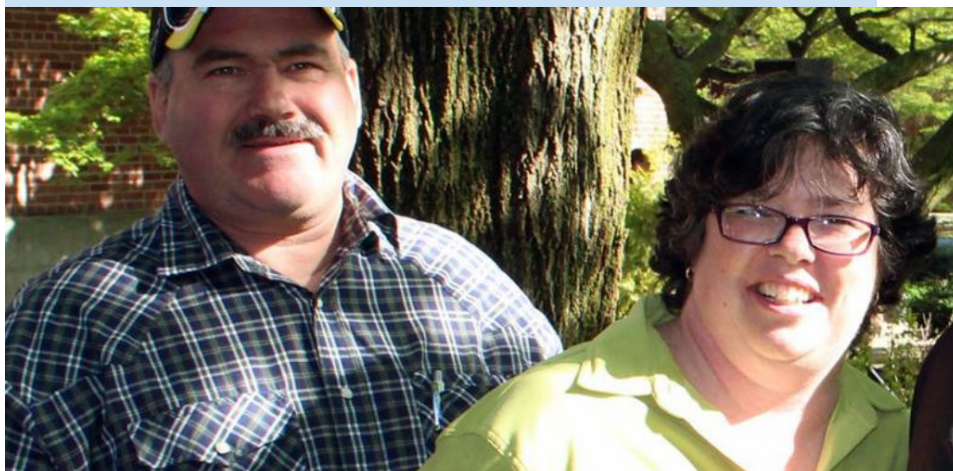
FICTION. By this time, Grandpa had long ago closed his factory. I am told that Grandpa and Grandma had an ice cream parlor with tables and chairs where people could sit down and eat ice cream. Some of the metal chairs are still around. Also, the sign advertising the homemade ice cream is still hanging in

the entry at Mom's house in East Charleston.



20 – 29 years old

#1: In her early 20s at ENC, Mom had a babysitting job. She got fired because she did not put a bib on



Gary and Sheryl Hosford, Aunt Beulah's son-in-law and daughter the child while feeding her.

FICTION. She got fired because she spanked the child. The mother was mad, but the dad said the child needed it.

#2: On her first wedding day in November 1955 when she married Leonard Luginsland, it was a perfect day - *other than ripping her wedding dress when she threw her bouquet of flowers.*

FACT.

#3: In her 20's she had two wonderful children, Sharon and Len.

FACT.

30 – 39 years old

#1: On her second wedding day, on December 31st, she married Don Griffes in order to avoid paying taxes.

FACT. This was Dad's idea, but Mom agreed with it. She was blessed with two more children, Shirley and Mike, when she married Don on December 31st.

#2: She had two more wonderful children, Jonathan and Sheryl.

FACT.

40 – 49 years old

#1: Mom was a great gardener. She canned many things. Some of them were dill pickles, bread and butter pickles, venison, and homemade ketchup.

FACT.

50 – 59 years old

#1: While working at NEVTEC, a donut shop moved in next door. She said, “I go over and get a donut almost every day.”

FACT. Sharon said that Mom never gained weight.

60 – 69 years old

#1: Mom and Dad went to Island Pond on a beautiful winter day. It was their anniversary. A freak snow blizzard surprised them on their way home. The windshield wiper broke and Dad had to lean out of the window and try to clean the snow off - all the time trying to keep the car on the road. Mom leaned out the other window watching out for the snowbank to try to keep Dad on the road. It took them about two hours to get home. It was a scary trip.

FACT.

70 – 79 years old

#1: Mom and Dad spent some time in Florida visiting Lois. One day they were fishing in a boat and Mom fell into the alligator infested water. A nearby boat came by and pulled Mom into his boat.

FACT. The reason Mom fell

into the water was because Dad stood up and threw a big branch into the water - something he had cautioned the kids not to do. This action caused the boat to tip and Mom to fall out.

#2: Mom got a ticket for running a red light. Did she try to get out of it by telling the police officer, “My son is the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles?” The police officer still gave her a ticket.

FACT. This happened at Essex 5 Corners. A big truck was ahead of her so she couldn’t see that the light had turned red. Dad urged her to keep going, and then they heard the police car siren.

80 – 89 Years old

#1: Did Mom go sliding down a hill in the snow and get to the bottom of the hill and say, “Once is enough for me!?”

FICTION. She said, “Let’s go again!”

2021

“Prophetic Fact or Fiction” by Sharon.

She will stack wood and keep the fires going for anyone who wants!

Sharon read this scripture. “The unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit is of great worth in God’s sight.” I Peter 3:4 NIV. This is Mom!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Prices in 1931

Bread \$.05; **Car** \$650.00; **1 pound of bacon** \$.38; **gallon of gas** \$.10; **Stamp** \$.02

After we left the restaurant, we went to my (Lois’s) house. We played games and had fun and a great celebration.

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED ME CELEBRATE MY 90TH BIRTHDAY. THANKS TO SHARON AND SHERYL FOR ALL THE PLANNING AND WORK TO MAKE SUCH AN ENJOYABLE CELEBRATION.

GOD HAS BLESSED ME WITH THE BEST FAMILY IN THE WORLD.

Grandma Beulah's Hair Raising Experience Deep in the Vermont Woods

By: Gary Hosford



Our family decided to go to Westmore Mountain to find a Christmas tree and asked Grandma if she wanted to come along warning her that we may have to walk a ways in the woods. She said, "Sure." So we all met at my uncle's farm on Westmore Mountain.

We drove as close as we could to where we were going to look for a tree, but still had to walk about a quarter of a mile into the woods to find a good mountain tree. At 89 years old, Grandma held up as well or better than some of us. When we found three Christmas trees to suit us, it was getting dark and we thought we might be walking back in the dark if we went out the same way we came in.

We asked Grandma if she wanted to try a little shortcut directly through the woods where there was no trail or path. As she usually does, she said, "Sure." So off we went through a shorter section of thick trees and brush, and even had to cross a three-foot ditch before making it back to the truck.

When we finally made it through the woods and into the field again, we asked Grandma how she was doing. Her surprisingly wry and witty reply was, "I hope I haven't lost my hairpiece on a tree limb!"

What a trooper!

HERE ARE A FEW PICTURES TAKEN DURING AUNT BEULAH'S 90TH BIRTHDAY PARTY AT THE EASTSIDE RESTAURANT IN NEWPORT, VERMONT



Aunt Beulah standing with her half-cousin, Sandra Baraw. Sandra is a member of the Lang-Johnson-Eggleston Connection.





You can also see a video of Aunt Beulah's birthday party by going on-line to www.gardnernews.org. Click on Aunt Beulah's face way to the right of your screen.

You've probably noticed by now that this issue of the newsletter celebrates the nonagenarians who are within the orbit of the Gardner Newsletter.

We've already celebrated Aunt Beulah's 90th birthday twice – once in the Winter 2021 issue and now in this current one. But wait, there's more!

Uncle Raymond Gardner, Aunt Beulah's brother, turned 95 years old on March 23rd. As you can see, we have a few photos of that event right here to the right on this page where, because of the pandemic, people drove by his house shouting and waving best wishes while accompanied by a police escort.

We also have photos of Uncle Raymond receiving his two COVID-19 shots at his historic Fenway Park, thanks to his daughters, Gloria and Sharon.

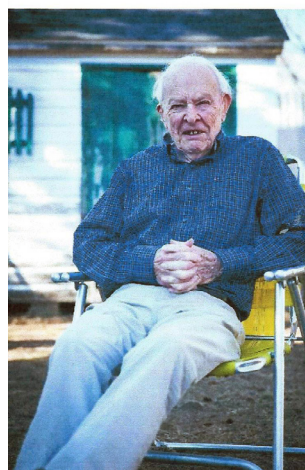
As frosting on the cake, we turn to another newly minted nonagenarian, Eleanor Strong.

She is a cousin on Jean Gonzalo's and Paul Gardner's mother's side. Though not technically a "Gardner," (although Earl Gardner was once her "uncle-in-law") she is an honorary subscriber to the newsletter as is their other cousin, Mervin Avants, who helped to celebrate Eleanor's birthday outing at Las Brisas Restaurant in Laguna Beach, CA and who is also a recent new grandfather!

All these stories are within the pages of this issue. Anyone entering his/her 90th decade deserves to be recognized, don't you agree?

Don't forget to read the news article included here about how YOU too can achieve nonagenarian status!

You are invited to:



A Drive-By Celebration

for
**Raymond R. Gardner's
95th Birthday**

Time: 6pm

Date: March 23, 2021

Place: Meet at Edwin Circle,
Reading, Ma

➔ A police escort will lead our
car parade @ 6:15pm

*Suggestions: Banners; Decorate w/balloons,
streamers; Honk & Wave as you pass!*

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Sharon Gardner, Raymond Gardner, and Gloria Parsons at Fenway Park in Boston, MA

Uncle Raymond got his two COVID-19 shots at historic Fenway Park.



(From the Life Enriching Communities website/blog)

Wouldn't it be nice if we could unlock the secrets to living past 100?

Well, as it turns out it might not just be a matter of genetics, but rather a matter of lifestyle. Today, people are living longer than ever, with the number of nonagenarians (people in their 90's) hitting a record 16.5 million in 2017. In fact, living past 100 is the fastest-growing age group. But how are people managing to live so long and how can you do the same?

New studies have been looking at the typical characteristics of people in their 90's and 100's and they found a few things in common.

They are Positive Thinkers

Life is full of downfalls and curveballs, but staying positive is the key to getting through each challenge. When you choose to think positively and face your challenges with optimism it reduces stress which is great for your overall health. Mind over matter really comes into play here, so here are a few ways you can stay more optimistic and think positively.

Smile often and freely. This is an indicator of several positive lifestyle factors that lowers stress. Try not to dwell on negatives. It can be tough, but ruminating will only keep those negative feelings

on your mind and can muddy your ability to see the good all around you. Keep a positivity journal. Also called a gratitude journal, this little companion can keep track of all your positive thoughts so you can remind yourself when things get hard. Be kind to others. This not only helps you build good connections with the people you love but being nice to others stimulates the reward centers in the brain.

They are Social

Good news, being social is great for your health! Loneliness not only affects the way we feel about ourselves but also is a major factor in developing memory challenges as we age. Staying social lowers your stress, reduces inflammation and swelling in arthritis patients, and becoming diabetic is less likely. If you are looking for ways to stay social, look no further.

Volunteer. This is also one of many ways you can be kind to others and to your positive thinking. Education. Whether you are taking an on-line group class or getting out there to ask a friend to teach you a new game, learning things is a great way to interact with others.

They "Eat Right"

So, this is a little loaded,



but by "eating right" we mean eating in balance with veggies, fruits, whole grains, nuts, and low-fat dairy. This also includes less fatty meats, butter, sugar, salt, and packaged foods. Many studies have found that this diet helps you live longer and prevents heart disease, cancer, Parkinson's, and Alzheimer's disease. If you are looking for some healthy snacks, try: Hard-boiled eggs; mixed nuts; Greek yogurt; popcorn; avocado.

They Are Active

Even just 30 minutes a day can greatly improve your long-term health. Regular exercise — especially if you do it briskly enough to feel a little breathless — delivers huge health benefits including keeping brain cells healthy by delivering more blood and oxygen. These exercises are ways to stay active: Walking; jogging; stretching; swimming.

The Big Takeaway of Living Past 100

It's important to challenge old fashioned attitudes about aging. We believe aging well leads to long-term happiness and health and everyone can attain it. Research is showing that the way we think and feel about ourselves is one of the greatest influencers to health as we get older. So now the ball is in your court to age on your terms.

Cousin Terry Ames is resting comfortably at home after experiencing open heart surgery. This is not new for Terry. He went through it way back in 2009 and recovered well. You can learn more about his experiences back then by going to Aunt Nita's page on www.gardnernews.org. Scroll down a bit until you find the article posted there. Now he is recovering from this new triple by-pass threat.

Terry and Patty have built a reputable and award-winning wedding cake business from the ground up. It's probably safe to say that the pandemic and then the cataclysmic and devastating news that he needed surgery yet again placed a huge strain on their business and personal life.

They both have taken on these current challenges that life

has thrown at them without complaint or self-pity. Always optimistic, Terry and Patty are going through this together and are managing and coping with everything with their usual grace and aplomb.

Perhaps you would like to send Terry and Patty some words of encouragement via letters and/or cards. I'm sure they would

love hearing from our Gardner Newsletter family. Their address is: Terry and Patty Ames, 106 Idyllwilde Drive, Sanford, FL 32771-3635.

We all can learn something from this extraordinary couple about how to deal with adversity while remaining calm and steadfast.



Gail Avants and Mervin Avants at Las Brisas Restaurant in Laguna Beach California

Costa Cousin Merv Avants reflects on what it's like to become a new grandfather at an advanced age.

I am probably not the right candidate to offer thoughts on becoming a grandfather. Being in my 70s when I began, instead of 40s or 50s like everyone else, makes me atypical. When my friends became grandfathers over the years they often commented, "What, me? I don't see myself as a grandfather. I am too young!" Instead, I cried when my daughter-in-law, Sabrina, announced the news. To me, it was far more moving than when I learned my wife, Gail, was pregnant with Brian, our first son, or Michael, our second son. Then, time stretched beyond the horizon so far into the future, I could not imagine an ending. There was no hurry. If Gail had not been pregnant, "No problem." We had years to spare.

Not so when Sabrina and my son Mike announced our granddaughter Lillianna was on the way. By then, I had spent seven decades being oh-so-busy getting ahead in the world and had long since accepted life without a grandchild. I had explained to my wife that I was fine with that and was satisfied with our boys and daughters-in-law just as we were. And it was absolutely true – until the night in 2016 when Mike and Sabrina shared the news that Lilly was on the way. I will never forget that moment. The

future was illuminated. Generations to come appeared before me. Have to plan. Need a legacy. Got to get ready. A thousand things to do. It was electric. I loved it! A year or so later Brian and daughter-in-law, Jacqui, announced that our second granddaughter, Mara, was on the way in 2018. Two weeks ago, twins, Zachary and Zoey, were born to Mike and Sabrina. Reverence. Wonder. Gratitude.

Each grandchild is great. My projection is that Lilly will be the captain of the cheerleaders and Mara the president of her class. Zach is huge with broad shoulders and a deep chest. He was two weeks old three days ago and weighed in at an impressive 7 pounds 11 ounces. "Not much," you think? He was born prematurely and was not due until next week! His much younger and petite little sister, Zoey, is also thriving at 7 pounds 3 ounces. She did not come along until two minutes after Zach; so, naturally, he is quite protective of his younger sibling. He is blond, like Lilly and Mara, but Zoey is a brunette. He looks like a linebacker; she looks like a line dancer.

Now it will be about watching them grow, loving them, helping the parents, being there for all, sound counsel, some spoiling, kind, gentle. A grand adventure. A grandparent. The person they can always rely on.

The Avants Grandchildren



Lillianna Avants holding
Zach and Zoey



Grandpa Merv with Lillianna

Costa Cousin Eleanor Strong turned 90 years old on March 31, 2021. The Avants-es and Strongs, along with Doug's girlfriend, Tammy, celebrated at Las Brisas, a great restaurant in Laguna Beach. Tammy made all the arrangements. For Eleanor's birthday, California provided the best weather day of 2021 so far -- it was in the upper 70's, sunny, and clear.

To refresh your memory about Jean and Paul Gardner's Costa cousins and their Portuguese heritage, you can re-read the Summer, 2006 and the Summer, 2013 issues of the **Gardner Newsletter**.



Son Mike, Grandson Zach, and Merv



Mara Avants



Douglas Strong and his mother, 90-year old Eleanor Strong, at Las Brisas Restaurant in Laguna Beach, California