

Cocktails and tall tales — a fabulous party mix

If the first half of the season is any indication, more than the boys of summer have come out to play. Cocktail parties, barbecues, marriages, and anything worth celebrating is happening now, because parties are more fun in the summertime.



You can't beat a system you can't understand

By Sam Bari

Celebrations are less corporate and more eclectic. Neighborhood affairs where nobody has to impress the boss or schmooze clients are often the order of the day. The dog days of summer are here, and people get together for no other reason than to have a good time. Consequently, the conversation over cocktails is less stilted. It is interesting, and often reveals people at their funniest.

Like when a father of three told the story about coaching a soccer team of 4 year olds, of which his daughter was a member.

"We played the kids in teams of six," he began. "It was the gold team against the silver. We were the silver. When they're that small they have a tendency to stick together, so you see the teams moving up and down the field in tight little groups. After all, they can't kick the ball that far," he added.

"Anyway, I'm watching the gold team moving the ball down the field towards our goalie, when I notice that he is the only kid wearing a silver uniform on the field. The gold team rushed him, and scored a goal. I was like - Where'd they go? What happened to my team?"

"Then I saw them. They weren't even on the field," he said sadly. "They were all huddled together looking at something on the grass. I thought maybe one of them was hurt or something.

"You guys! What are you doing?" I shouted. "The gold team just scored a goal!" I screamed as I ran over to them. "Why aren't you on the field?" When I got to

the group, they looked at me and yelled almost in unison. "We found a caterpillar."

"Now how can you argue with that? When you're 4, caterpillars are serious business."

The story was great. Everyone who heard it howled. So I said to the guy, whose name was Dan, "Dan. You know why that happened don't you?" He said, "I have no idea. Kids will go to great lengths to embarrass their parents, I guess."

"Exactly," I said. "It's pay-back." Then I asked the group, "Did any of your parents ever say 'I hope your children are just like you'?" They all had the same answer: "Of course."

"Well, That's it," I said to Dan. "You're getting paid back." Then I asked him to tell us about the worst thing he ever did when he was a kid that caused his mother to say those words.

"Oh. I know exactly why I'm getting paid back," he said. "This is really funny."

"I have a little brother. Well, he's not so little now. But at the time I guess he was about 8 and I was a couple years older, so I was 10.

"Anyway, I found this rectangular cardboard box. You know, a packing box," he said. "For some unknown reason I put the box over my brother's head and it fit perfectly. His feet stuck out the bottom, and his head stuck out the top. The box went from his ankles to his neck.

"Now the interesting part was that it fit rather snugly, so his arms were pinned. He couldn't even bend his knees so he could hop around. Poor little guy couldn't move. So I knocked him over. I dunno, it seemed funny at the time. He was not amused.

"We were on the second floor, right by the staircase. It dawned on me that it would be even funnier if I pushed him down the stairs just to see if the box would slide. As soon as I dragged him in that direction, he started yelling and screaming. Fortunately, or unfortunately, depending on how you look at the situation, our parents were outside, so they didn't hear a thing.

"Well - the box slid all right, and really fast. When it was about halfway down the carpeted stairs, I realized that when he got to the bottom, he was going to hit the floor - face first. This was not good. So I go tearing down the stairs after him. Oops! Too late. I couldn't catch him. He stopped with a good solid 'thunk' —face first.

"He wasn't really hurt that bad. But he screamed and yelled even more as I slid the box off over his head. Then he tried to take off to tell Mom. I couldn't let that happen, so I grabbed him and tried to calm him down, but he wasn't hearing any of that. So I put him in a headlock and told him I was going to hold him like that until he promised not to tell.

"He promised. So I let him go. Then he ran out the door and immediately told her. The fact that I'm here today is living proof there is a God."

And everyone had a story to tell, each funnier than its predecessor. The party was a testament to why summer is so much fun. And every story proved that beyond a reasonable doubt, we live in a system we can't understand.

History

Continued from page 6

ing the price of a token on the Newport Bridge was reviewed by the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority and local legislators next week.

With a goal of raising the water level in the water tower to 85 feet, Public Works Director Steven Goslee told the Town Council, sitting as the water and

sewer board Monday, that the tower level was now just a little over 70 feet.

A recent proposal to construct energy-producing windmills at Beavertail State Park has been unanimously opposed by the park's advisory board.

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