

SENIOR MOMENTS
By *jean cherni* Column for 03/07/2010

THIS WINTER WEATHER IS GETTING UNDER MY SKIN

When I awakened last week to see our small corner of the Connecticut shoreline resembled a frosted birthday cake, I momentarily enjoyed the sight but then, getting dressed and piling on the warm clothes, I felt impatient for winter to be over.

“March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb” I muttered in an effort to encourage myself. Upon reflection at breakfast, however, I realized I was feeling more impatient of late..... and not just with the weather but with a host of every day occurrences. It could be the weather has been affecting my temper control gauge but here are just a few annoyances that have gotten under my skin lately (my mother used to call them things that gave her the heebie-jeebies).

- *Calling a telephone number and being plugged into a menu of choices*

My problem is never one of the six choices on their menu and after I have listened to the firm’s latest promotional pitches, my account balance, their web site, after hours phone numbers and newest locations in Arkansas, I am screaming into the phone and madly pushing zero. “I want to speak to a representative” I shout.

“I’m sorry”, another slightly sterner recorded voice replies, “That is not a valid answer”. Now near tears, and repeating each syllable as one might when trying to communicate with a 3 year old, I try. “I want to speak to a live person.... I need help”. If I’m lucky, a recording may finally respond, “Someone will be with you momentarily”..... after which, I will only have to endure fifteen minutes of awful guitar strumming music alternated with “Your call is very important to us”

before reaching a living, breathing, English speaking individual. If it is an unlucky day, I am either connected with their branch in New Delhi or there is that sudden fatal click and disconnect leaving me no choice but to return to the menu and repeat the entire agonizing process all over again. Equally as frustrating as the “menu”, is the programmed robot voice right out of “The Stepford Wives”. It can apparently hear you but can only respond to certain words when it asks you its pre-set questions. If, for instance, you say, “That is not the problem” instead of the requisite “yes” or “no”, you throw the poor thing into a state of confusion and she (have you ever noticed its always a female voice?) will insist on starting over.

- *The cost of movies*, like my supplemental health insurance, seems to increase every time I turn around. Even a senior ticket is no bargain and then certain theaters have the gall to tell you you’re forbidden to bring in your own candy. I would like to see a copy of the law that says I have to pay three times the price for my Hershey bar in their theater. You can bet that I’m going to smuggle my Snickers no matter what they say.

- *I could probably do an entire column on rude drivers* but some of the worst offenders are people who don’t signal causing you to wait un-necessarily to make a turn or to slam on your brakes when you realize they are going to turn. Other drivers who should be banished are those who insist on having their radios at full blast. Even with my windows shut, I nearly jump out of my seat belt when one of those blare-mobiles suddenly pulls alongside me. Of course, I can’t leave this category without citing cell phone addicts who put my life as well as theirs at risk by putting conversation before attention to driving. Just plain stupid!

Oh well, Daylight Savings starts next Sunday so can Spring be far behind? Perhaps then, along with the flowers that bloom, tra la, I'll find more patience for my fellow human beings.... even the recorded ones.