



# The Keynote Chronicle

*Humor News from Jan McInnis*  
*Co-Star of the Baby Boomer Comedy Show*

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## Looping Through Life

I really enjoy hiking and I try to do it whenever I can. I think the most fun hikes are those when the trail is a loop instead of just up and back. If all goes well, you wind up back at your car, and you've gotten to see some new sights along the way. Plus, the journey is always a lot more interesting!

I feel like my life has been more of a loop than a back and forth trail as well. There's been plenty of adventure and I generally wind up back to where things started – only I'm in a better place! When I was ten years old I told my parents that once I turned 16 I was going to “buy a motorcycle, ride across the country to Los Angeles and become a comedian”. My parents didn't exactly share my “vision” so I ended up graduating from Virginia Tech. The night I graduated, I remember looking at my parents during the celebration dinner at the restaurant and thinking, “Now is *not* the time to announce that I want to be a comedian.” So I floundered into a few weird part-time jobs (telemarketing sides of beef, overnight-store-inventory-taker, and tour guiding come to mind) until I finally ended up in a great marketing career. And while I enjoyed my career, I always felt I had never closed that loop on my budding entertainment aspirations.

Fast forward 14 or so years into my day job, and with a few starts and stops (and a lot more floundering), I finally worked my way on stage at a comedy club. I did well that night, ended up getting into show business full time a few years later and the rest is history! Okay, that's the very, very, very short version! After being a comedian for a few years, I decided I needed to head to Los Angeles, and finally, 2 years ago I bought a motorcycle. The loop was complete, though it was exactly backwards and it took much longer from my prediction of having those things by age 16.

People ask me what the hardest part of leaving my “day job” was: was it the unsteady paychecks, the weird hours, the occasional really slimy entertainment person I'd have to deal with, or the fact that I'd be totally, 100% responsible for generating my income? Nope, the only things that I was worried about in my new career were the different “accommodations” when I toured. I'd always had jobs where I stayed in nice hotels when I traveled, sometimes with mini bars in the room and plush towels that covered your whole body. Many of the sleeping arrangements when you're starting out in entertainment are a bit different. So right before I quit my day job, I had one last business trip to San Jose where I stayed at the Fairmont. I spent most of that last night luxuriating in their whirlpool tub while sipping on chardonnay – I knew the fall from the Fairmont was going to be rough! And the comedy accommodations did not disappoint. The places that they found to stick the comics never ceased to amaze me. I don't mind budget hotels (they *saved me* when I had to pay on my own!), and in fact a budget hotel would be welcome, but what I'm talking about are places that were bordering on illegal. I once spent the weekend sleeping in a room in the rafters of the club, with the doors locked from the outside! And there's the time I had to stay with the club owner in her daughter's bedroom while her daughter slept on the couch. Weird, weird, weird. And some hotel rooms were just plain run down. These were the ones that we comics used to joke that they had “just moved the body an hour before I arrived.” I've slept in my socks to avoid touching some carpets! This was a loop that I wasn't sure would ever close.

## Spotlight

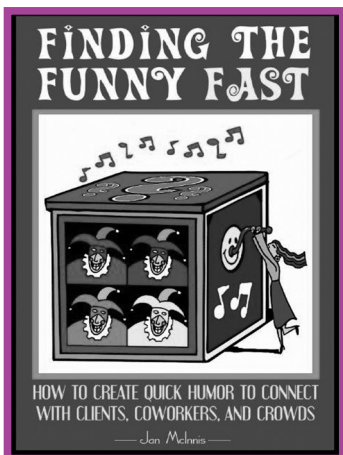
### Jan's Keynotes:

- *Finding the Funny in Change* - Learn to use humor during change situations to diffuse tense situations, kick off tough topics and facilitate communications.
- *Finding the Funny in Communications* - Learn how to use humor in your business communications to connect with clients/coworkers, sell your product/idea/service, get people to listen to you and be memorable.
- *Hilarious Hosting* - Keep your audience engaged and keep the program running smoothly and on schedule with Jan as your emcee.
- *Cubicle Comedy* - Clean, customized comedy focusing on work, family and day-to-day life.

*Feel free to pass this newsletter along and refer me!*

The funniest loop closing was between my brother Dan and my younger sister Brenda. Dan was the only boy with three sisters, which meant he had to make up for no brothers by doing extra teasing of us (or being a pest – you decide). . .and he did. During one of our cross-country family trips, he actually spent the entire six weeks ordering the exact same thing that my sister Debbie ordered at every restaurant we went to. That will drive you insane! We still laugh about it as one of his “master” accomplishments in pestering. And as a young teen he continued bugging us. He once bought these red, white and blue mirrored sunglasses that were 70s cool, and then he proceeded to taunt my younger sister Brenda by putting his face in her face, showing her how cool he looked and making sure she knew that she would never be able to afford glasses that were this hip. And then one day, his glasses disappeared. He complained to mom that he knew Brenda had taken them. He didn’t have proof, and there was no forensics back then, so he had to go by what my mom said; and her verdict was to leave Brenda alone because it wasn’t her fault. End of discussion. Thirty years later Dan and Brenda were cleaning out boxes in my parents’ attic when Brenda opened up her jewelry box and found Dan’s sunglasses. As she tossed them over to him, she said “Oh, yeah, here are your glasses, I did take them!” The loop was closed!

Surprise loop closings, like finding your 70s sunglasses three decades later, are the best. Many years ago after working the road in comedy clubs, I started moving into the convention arena. The crowds were more my style (read: sober), the hours were better because of no late shows, and the travel was shorter – no more three months on the road at one stretch. One of my first convention gigs was at a conference in Las Vegas at a hotel I had never heard of. I thought no big deal, my comedy career had prepared me for no-name hotels – I once worked at a comedy club located in a Ramada hotel and the club owner was so cheap that when the R fell off the hotel marquee, she changed the name of the hotel to the Amada so she didn’t have to buy an “R”. True! As I checked into this Vegas no-name hotel, I wondered if these convention gigs might be the same accommodations as the comedy gigs. The clerk was very nice and as he handed me the room keys, for some reason, out of the blue he blurted out, “You are gonna like this hotel, it’s just like the Fairmont.” At that moment, I thought “I’M BACK!” I had closed that loop, and it was a nice surprise!



*Jan has shared her customized humor keynotes with thousands of associations and corporations. She is also the author of “Finding the Funny FAST; How To Create Quick Humor To Connect With Clients, Coworkers And Crowds,” and she was featured in the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post for her clean humor. From a recent client: “Jan did a great job in bringing the right mood to the ‘Celebrate’ portion of our Women in Business Conference. She helped us all find the funny!”*

### **Baby Boomer Comedy Show; Clean Comedy For People Born Before Seatbelts, Safety Helmets, and Facebook**

Jan McInnis co-stars with Kent Rader in the Baby Boomer Comedy Show for theaters and private events around the country. This is a hilarious 90-minute laugh-fest, with clean humor on topics that the “boomer generation” can relate to - family, kids, work, do-it-yourself projects, dieting, aging and all. Check it out at [www.BabyBoomerComedyShow.com](http://www.BabyBoomerComedyShow.com) to see when they’re coming to your town, or contact them to book the show at your event!

#### **The Baby Boomer Comedy Show is Appearing at the Following Locations:**

- Historic Masonic Theatre, Clifton Forge, VA, September 7, 2013
- Bay City, MI, September 13, 2013
- Franklin Community Players, Lavonia, GA, September 14, 2013
- Kenworthy Performing Arts Center, October 12, 2013
- Missouri Theatre, St. Joseph, MO, November 2, 2013

*“A full house and an invitation to return is the best reference anyone can receive”*

*— Norm Small, Theatre Winter Haven*



*“Scan this for 2 minutes of my hilarious comedy on work!”*

*“This issue is dedicated to Rob Duffett - my friend and comedy buddy whom I miss laughing with.”*