



The Keynote Chronicle

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

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Watching the Nutcracker Ballet 22 Times

Yes, I've sat through the "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" so many times I could dance it myself. . . except no one would cast me because all the male dancers would quit if they thought they had to lift me up. (I am not light as a fairy!) But I bet my rendition would keep the audience awake. . .mostly hoping that I didn't trip and fall on them, or maybe waiting for me to.

I didn't see these shows in one big weekend Nutcracker marathon but rather once a year for the past 22 years as an annual holiday family tradition—one that my mom started and that we've continued at the beautiful Warner Theatre in Washington, D.C. since her passing. We've had some memorable moments, like the time when my little nephew saw a troop of mouse soldiers dancing and blurted out "Look, Mom, mice! Just like at our house!" The whole balcony cracked up, and my sister-in-law immediately jumped in with, "Remember, honey, Daddy took care of those." That was almost funnier than me dancing.

My mom started some other traditions that we've kept up as well. During the holidays, the women in the family go to tea at the Ritz; way too much food and drink, but it's relaxing! And during the summer, since my mom was such a huge baseball fan, we siblings and our families go to the Mom Memorial Nats Game to watch her cherished Washington Nationals. Last year, we were treated to the no-hitter by Zimmerman.

I love traditions, and I've realized that they aren't limited to just what you intentionally start: some of them occur organically. My three siblings and their families live 3000 miles away from me, but every time I visit, I

am treated to some travel traditions that just sort of happened. When I arrive at one sister's house, her son Ben always, without me saying anything, goes out to my rental car and brings in my stuff. He knows I'm tired! At my brother's house, I automatically hand my computer to his oldest kid, Drew, and ask him to "get me on the internet." When I wake up the next morning, I'm on! (Though he probably does it in part so that I don't wake him at 7 a.m. asking for help.) And at my other sister's house, her youngest son Noah always runs out to the rental car, as I pull up, with a football so we can toss it around before I go inside. He taught me how to throw a spiral.

In January we'll be celebrating our 30th annual "Cousins' Ski Trip" that my siblings, spouses, cousins and I started as a tradition back when we were younger (and more excited about skiing!). Over the years, our meals have gotten more gourmet while our skiing has gotten less risky; it's more of a "Cousins' Veg Weekend," but we haven't changed the name. . . probably because of tradition. And we also get together at the Outer Banks every year where we admit it's just a veg week, and that's about all we do.

Spotlight

Jan's Most Popular Keynote: *Finding the Funny in Change* - Learn to use humor during change situations to diffuse tension, kick off tough topics and facilitate communications.

Jan's Newest Keynote: *Flourishing in Failure; Managing Mistakes Like A Comedian* - Practical tips on how to handle, avoid and move through mishaps.



Scan for a 90 second clip of Jan's humor!

The Work Lady by Jan McInnis, Comedian



As I get older, I'm trying new things. Last night I went to the Opera. It's the first time in my life I've ever thought "man, I wish I was home doing my taxes!" ©2015

A friend once told me that the thought of doing the same thing every year, like skiing or beaching at the same place, would be awful! Too much repetition! But to me, it's comforting to have these traditions as sort of benchmarks during the year. I don't go to the Nutcracker because I want to see skinny women dance on their toes, I do it because it queues my brain to take a breath and reflect on the year: "Oh, yeah, it's December and what a year it's been." Traditions give you a mental break from the go-go-go lifestyle. They also give us a real chance to catch up with each other and really connect, rather than a quick text hello or an email update, and they are a way of telling each other "You're important to me, I've worked my schedule around us and this event." They also keep me connected to my mom. When it comes to traditions, I think it's not about what you do, it's just that you do it.

This summer I'll be carrying on one other tradition that Mom started, in which she took each grandchild when they turned 16 to Los Angeles to visit me. It's a unique tradition because the teen gets to pick out whatever we do, which means I get to see things in LA that I normally wouldn't. . . like the time we went to the Hollywood Bowl for a band I've never heard of. I'm pretty sure my sisters and I were the oldest people there, which had some perks: I scolded some young girl for cutting into the beer line and I got the entire line to shame her into going to the back! Only someone my age could do that! And if it weren't for these trips, I'd never have seen the guy at Venice Beach who wears nothing but a python snake, and I may never have eaten at the GI-NORMOUS champagne brunch on the Queen Mary where my nephew once finished his dessert and then went back for a "bacon chaser."



This summer's trip will be interesting because there will be two of them headed this way, and as I understand it, my nephew wants to eat his way through LA while my niece wants to shop her way around town. . . of course if one of 'em wants to go see the Nutcracker, I'm there!

Jan has shared her customized humor keynotes with thousands of associations and corporations, and she has just published her second book, titled Convention Comedian: Stories and Wisdom from Two Decades of Chicken Dinners and Comedy Clubs. Jan 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 health care client: "Just wanted to thank you again for a job well done. You were the perfect spark to kick off our annual conference. Your high energy and upbeat style set the tone for what turned out to be a successful event."



Baby Boomer Comedy Show

Jan McInnis co-stars with Kent Rader in this hilarious clean comedy show.

Check out their schedule and book them for your event at BabyBoomerComedyShow.com

Comedian Jan's Humor Article Inside - "Watching the Nutcracker Ballet 22 Times"

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