

# THE ACADEMY REPORTER

May 1, 2009

## INFORMATION PLEASE

When I was quite young, my father had one of the first telephones in our neighborhood. Too little to reach the telephone, I would listen with fascination when my mother talked to it. Then I discovered that somewhere inside the wonderful device lived an amazing person; her name was "Information Please," and there was nothing she did not know.

My first personal experience with this genie-in-the-bottle came while my mother was away. I whacked my finger with a hammer, and I walked around the house sucking my throbbing finger. The telephone! Climbing up footstool, I unhooked the receiver and held it to my ear. "Information Please," I said into the mouthpiece just above my head. A click or two and a small clear voice spoke into my ear. "Information" "I hurt my finger..." I wailed into the phone. "Isn't your mother home?" came the question. "Nobody's home but me," I blubbered. "Are you bleeding?" the voice asked. "No," I replied. "I hit my finger with the hammer, and it hurts." "Can you open your icebox?" she asked. I said I could. "Then chip off a little piece of ice and hold it to your finger," said the voice.

After that, I called "Information Please" for everything. I asked her for help with my geography and she told me where Philadelphia was. She helped me with my math. She told me my pet chipmunk would eat fruit and nuts. Then, I called her when Petey, our pet canary died. She listened and tried to soothe me, but I was unconsolated. I asked her, "Why is it that birds should sing so beautifully and bring joy to all families, only to end up as a heap of feathers on the bottom of a cage?" Sensing my deep concern, she said quietly, "Paul, always remember that there are other worlds to sing in." Somehow I felt better. Another day on the telephone, I asked, "How do you spell fix?"

When I was nine years old, we moved from the small town in the Pacific Northwest across the country to Boston. I missed my friend very much. A few years later, on my way west to college, my plane put down in Seattle. Between planes, I spent 15 minutes or so on the phone with my sister, who lived there now. Then, without thinking what I was doing, I dialed my hometown operator and said, "Information, please." Miraculously, I heard the small, clear voice I knew so well. "Information." I heard myself saying, "Could you please tell me how to spell fix?" After a long pause came the soft spoken answer, "I guess your finger must have healed by now." I laughed, "So it's really still you," I said. "I wonder if you have any idea how much you meant to me during that time." "I wonder," she said, "if you know how much your calls meant to me. I never had any children and I used to look forward to your calls." I told her how often I had thought of her over the years and I asked if I could call her again when I came back to visit my sister. "Please do," she said. "Just ask for Sally."

Three months later I was back in Seattle. A different voice answered, "Information." I asked for Sally. "Are you a friend?" she said. "Yes, a very old friend," I answered. "I'm sorry to have to tell you this," she said. "Sally has been sick. She died five weeks ago." Before I could hang up she said, "Wait a minute. Is your name Paul?" "Yes." "Well, Sally left a message for you. She wrote it down in case you called. Let me read it to you." The note said, "Tell him I still say there are other worlds to sing in. He'll know what I mean." I thanked her and hung up. I knew what Sally meant.

## **The Principal's Puzzler**

**This week's winner:** No One

**This week's hint:** It was about making change.

**This week's puzzle:** It is assumed that stores set prices just under a round figure because the price seems lower to the consumer, e.g. \$9.99 instead of \$10.00. But this is not the reason the practice started. What was the original reason for this pricing method?

## REMINDERS

May 21 – Kindergarten\Eighth Grade Graduation

May 23 – Awards Program, 10:00 AM

May 24 – Baccalaureate, 2:30 PM

May 25-31 – Camp Meeting

May 29 – Commencement, 7:00 PM

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(See Daniel 4:31-33)

05-31-2006

I SUPPOSE IT'S TIME I EXPLAINED THAT  
YOUR SWEET, LOVING NEBUCHADNEZZAR USED  
TO RUN WITH A DIFFERENT CROWD

Please cut out, sign, and return this slip to school.

I have seen and read the Friday Letter.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_