



National Bingo Day

National Bingo Day celebrates the popular game of bingo, which brings people together for fun, excitement, and friendly competition. Observed every year on June 27, the day highlights the social value of bingo in communities, schools, clubs, and charity events. People of all ages enjoy the game because it is easy to play and creates a joyful atmosphere. National Bingo Day also recognizes how bingo has been used to support fundraising activities and strengthen social connections. Families and friends often gather to play, share laughter, and win prizes. The celebration reminds everyone that simple games can create happiness, teamwork, and memorable moments for all.

#ARCHAEOLOGY

The Tragic Tale at Pichola Lake, Udaipur

As Galki Bai confidently began her crossing, the Maharaja and other ministers thought that she would win...



The historic city of Udaipur, nestled in the heart of Rajasthan, is renowned for its majestic palaces, serene lakes, and rich cultural heritage. One of its lesser-known but deeply significant landmarks is Natani Ka Chabutara (the platform of the Natani), located near Pichola Lake. This site holds a poignant story from the 14th century, encapsulating the courage, loyalty, and tragic fate of a woman named Galki Bai, a member of the Nat community, which left a lasting impression on the royal history of Mewar.

Who Were the Nat Community?
The Nat community, also known as Nats or Natwaris, was historically involved in performing arts and entertainment. They were known for their acrobatic skills, performing dances, songs, and feats that showcased their physical agility. Over time, however, they also became skilled in various labour-intensive crafts, especially bamboo weaving and woodwork, making significant contributions to the local economy and culture.

In the 14th century under the reign of the Mewar kings, the Nat community was a valued part of the kingdom. They were not only admired for their artistic abilities but also for their role in the development of the region's cultural and architectural landscape.

The Challenge by the Maharaja
The story behind Natani Ka Chabutara revolves around a dramatic challenge proposed by the Maharaja of Mewar. Legend has it that the Maharaja, intrigued by the Nat community's prowess and the strength of their bamboo craftsmanship, issued a seemingly impossible challenge to the members of the community in the early 1400s.

The Maharaja announced that if any Nat could prove the strength and durability of the bamboo used by the community, he would reward them with half of the Mewar state. This was a monumental offer, as it not only promised wealth and land but would

PART:3



To Be Responsible



Mirza Yawar Baig
Naturalist and Wildlife Conservationist

don't think the alternative even occurred to me. He was my mentor, I loved him very much and he loved me like his son. So, if he told me to do something, I did it, no question about it. I washed up, Kishta put the food on the table.

Shivaiyya went to the back of the house to eat in the kitchen. When we had both eaten, I picked up the 8mm carbine. Uncle Rama said to me, "Don't take that. Take the 12-bore shotgun. And take these (he gave me 4 buckshot cartridges). In the night, you will only get to shoot at close range. No time to fool around with a rifle. Use this. At close range, it will stop an elephant." There was so much love (though love alright) but love in this action of making me go into a dangerous environment but ensuring that I had everything I needed to be safe and survive.

The fact that he even ordered me to go was a credit to me, that he trusted in my ability to take care of myself and treated me like a responsible adult and not just an irresponsible teenager.

Talk about mentoring? Here is mentoring for you. Teach, equip and trust. To trust means to give responsibility. Which was more 'dangerous'? Me, taking care of myself or



The Tragic End: Galki Bai's Death

With a single stroke, the rope was cut, and the bamboo bridge collapsed, sending Galki Bai plunging into the lake's waters. The shock of her fall and the subsequent drowning proved fatal. Galki Bai's death was tragic and the king regretted that. He deeply lamented the loss of a woman who had been not only a remarkable acrobat and craftsman but also a symbol of strength, resolve, and loyalty.

The Legacy of Galki Bai
After Galki Bai's tragic death, the site where she fell was marked, and it became known as *Natani Ka Chabutara* (the Platform of the Natani) in her honour. The area near Pichola Lake became a memorial, not only for Galki Bai but for the Nat community and their indomitable spirit.

Shivaiyya was a realist (or was he acting on Uncle Rama's secret orders, to this day, I have no idea). He said to me, "Dora, let us sleep in my village and go out with the dogs in the morning before the sun rises. We will get the stag then. Trying to find him in the night without dogs to follow the scent is impossible. Getting the dogs to go into the forest in the night is impossible. What do you say?"



#RAISING SONS



I learnt early in life, never to argue with elders who have more experience. So, I agreed. We walked the half mile to his village. His village was a haphazard collection of mud huts with untidy grass thatch roofs. The hut had one door and no windows, and the women usually cooked inside the hut. The fuel was dried cow-dung cakes. In the night, the hut was not only home to the family but to two dogs, one goat and a young calf that was too young to be left outside with the other cattle.

Uncle Rama having to explain to my parents that he had sent me out in the forest in the night and that is why I had been eaten by a tiger or bitten by a cobra? He knew that, yet, he took a risk because he trusted me and needed to teach me a lesson that a gun was not a toy. Hunting was not about having fun killing animals. It was about behaving responsibly, taking ownership for your actions and accepting accountability, which means that if you make a mistake, you pay for it.

Shivaiyya and I left. There was a full moon, so, the forest was a landscape of light and shadows. We came out of the riverbed and climbed the far bank and took the path leading to Shivaiyya's village. Shivaiyya was a realist (or was he acting on Uncle Rama's secret orders, to this day, I have no idea). He said to me, "Dora, let us sleep in my village and go out with the dogs in the morning before the sun rises.

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The Village

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It was into this hut that Shivaiyya, very kindly, invited me to sleep. I politely declined and asked him to put the rope cut that he offered me, outside the hut and said that I preferred to sleep in the open. He was not happy with that, as the forest was home to tigers, leopards and bears. But I was happier taking my chances with than with sleeping inside the hut with its smoke and multiple smells. I lay on the rope net, kept my shotgun handy and lay on my back looking at the



sky. By this time, the moon had set, and the stars were out in their splendour. You must lie on your back in a forest without any ambient light and look up at the sky to understand the true magnificence of the night sky. As I lay there, I

thought to myself that I was probably seeing things that didn't exist. I mean, that the star that I may be looking at, could have 'died' millions of years ago, but I was 'seeing' it because its light reached me only now. Quite a sobering thought, if you ask me.

Long before the sun showed itself, Shivaiyya came out of his hut with sweet, milky tea, which we both drank in silent companionship. When we had finished and the light was stronger, he whistled to his dogs, and we set off to find the Chital. These are the famous Indian 'pie' dogs. Small cars, with a very highly developed sense of smell, and a lot of wisdom living in the jungle where they are the favourite food of leopards. So, only the clever ones live. We took the dogs to where I'd first shot at the Chital, and he tracked it into a ravine where he had fallen and died the previous night. Not too far from where we had been looking for him, but not having the dog's sense of smell, we had no chance of finding him in the dark. As I had thought, my shot went straight through his lungs and out of the back. As it did not break any major bone, the animal ran away and there, also was not much of a blood trail. It died eventually, but after

That is where external role models, teachers, mentors, uncles, coaches, make a huge difference. One because parents can't provide all the attention and inspiration which children need. Second because children see external role models differently from parents and see their good side and are usually more forgiving about their weaknesses. That is why it is important to have such people in your life and ensure that your children are exposed to them regularly and often.

My parents allowed me to go off to Sethupally every summer and winter. They never stopped me. I used to take a bus from Hyderabad, change at two places and walk the last 2-3 miles through fields and forest. Gone without trace until I returned because there was no way to inform them that I had even arrived. But they took that chance because they realized that the learning and opportunity to develop my leadership skills that I was getting, they couldn't give me. Nobody ever said any of this out loud but now with four decades of hindsight, I can see how it all worked out. That is why they say that it takes a whole village to raise a child. Sometimes, that village is dispersed all over the country.

Society, especially parents, owes a debt of gratitude to those in society, who take the time, trouble, thought, expense and emotion to invest in children who neither belong to them, nor can they be expected to do any good for them in the future. But the broad backs of such men carry the weight of the legacy that another generation is taught what it means to be real men.

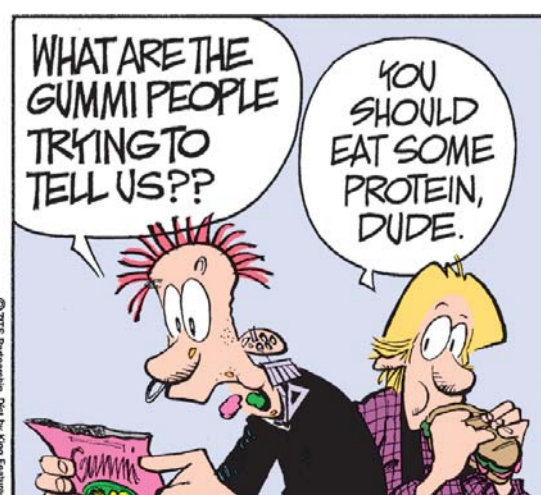
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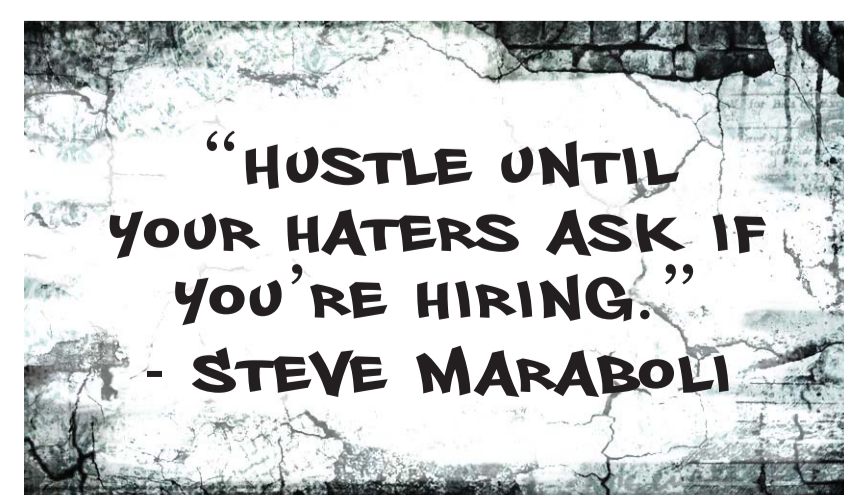


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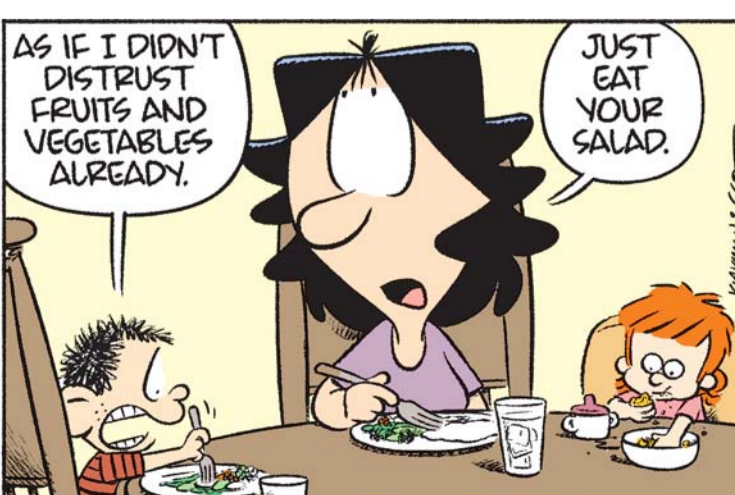
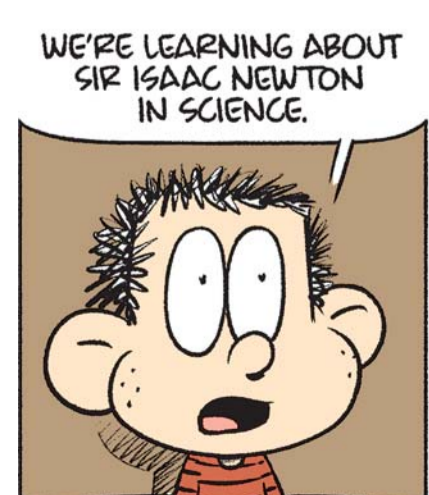
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THE WALL



BABY BLUES

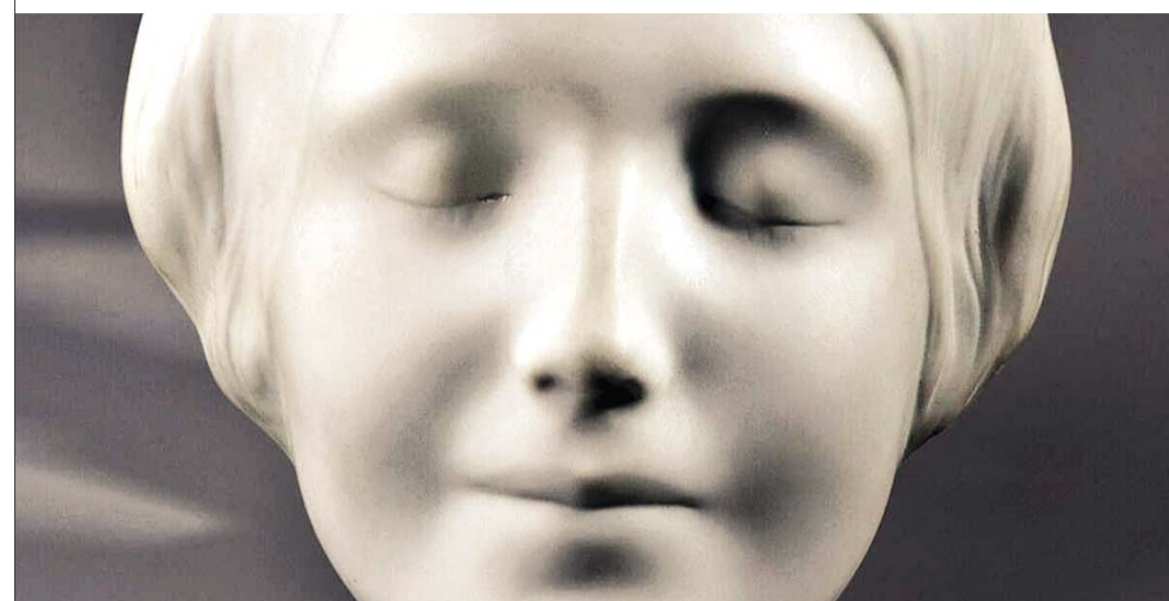


By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

#L'INCONNUE DE LA SEINE

The Mona Lisa and Michael Jackson

...A death mask admired across Europe... from a CPR mannequin used to teach life-saving skills, to a lyric sung by one of the world's biggest pop stars



In the late 19th century, a young woman's body was pulled from the River Seine in Paris. She had drowned, and no one ever discovered her identity. There were no signs of violence, no clues to her story, only a serene, almost haunting expression on her face. Captivated by her calm beauty, a pathologist created a plaster death mask of her face.

That mask would take on a life of its own. Copies began circulating across Europe, adorning artists' studios, writers' desks, and bourgeois homes. The girl became known as L'Inconnue de la Seine. Her faint, enigmatic smile drew comparisons to the Mona Lisa, earning her the nickname 'the drowned Mona Lisa.' Philosophers and writers, including Albert Camus, were struck by the paradox of her peaceful expression in death. She became a quiet cultural icon, her identity lost but her image immortal.

Decades later, in the 1950s, a Norwegian toymaker named Asmund Laerdal faced a very different challenge. He had been tasked with helping develop a



realistic training model for cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), a life-saving technique that was just beginning to gain global importance. Practicing CPR on real people was obviously dangerous, so, a mannequin was needed, one that felt human enough to teach properly, yet neutral enough not to represent a specific individual.

Laerdal struggled with one key question: what should the face look like?

It needed to be calm, approachable, and reassuring, not clinical or unsettling. One day he encountered a reproduc-

tion of the death mask of the Unknown Woman of the Seine. Her expression, serene, almost gently smiling, was exactly what he had been searching for. In that moment, he found the face for his creation.

The mannequin was named Resusci Anne. Millions of these CPR training mannequins were produced and distributed worldwide. Generations of people, doctors, nurses, students, and ordinary citizens, learned how to save lives by practicing on her. Ironically, the face of a woman who could not be saved in life became the face that would help save countless others.

Then, in the 1980s, the story took another unexpected turn. Michael Jackson, preparing for performances and committed to understanding emergency response techniques, learned CPR using a Resusci Anne mannequin. As part of the training, practitioners are taught to check responsiveness by asking a simple question: "Are you okay?"

That phrase stayed with him. It later became immortalized in one of the most iconic lines from his song, *Smooth Criminal*: "Annie, are you okay?"

And so, the journey comes full circle.

From an unidentified girl pulled from the Seine to a death mask admired across Europe... from a CPR mannequin used to teach life-saving skills, to a lyric sung by one of the world's biggest pop stars, the thread is as unlikely as it is poetic. Like the Mona Lisa, the Unknown Woman's expression continues to captivate: timeless, mysterious, and open to interpretation. But unlike Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece, her legacy is not confined to a museum wall. It lives in classrooms, hospitals, and training centers, and even in the rhythm of a pop song. A silent face from the past, still echoing through modern life.

