



UP front

I mentioned this in the previous issue, and I'll alert you to it once more now: We run a reader-participation, free-to-enter, real-prize-to-the-winner football pool each year.

Find it on page 28 in this issue and follow the instructions to play. Be sure to get your entry into us by the deadline – Thursday, September 7.

I realized something when I woke up this morning. Rather, when I was still half-sleeping and trying to ignore my deadline. We launched this business – this magazine – with its debut issue at the beginning of September of 2003. It's the beginning of September of 2023 today. Groggy – I thought, "We're 20." Could it be?

I did some infantile math. I wrote "03 – 04 = 1." (In other words, 2003 to 2004 is the span of year 1.) Below it (I switched to shorthand), "4 – 5 = 2." So on, until I reached today, "22 – 23 = 20." Still unconvinced (or desperate to avoid widespread embarrassment from making a false claim rooted in arithmetic deficiency), despite a lifetime of study and work spanning engineering and finance theory, I considered the context of my own age: I was born in September of 1964. I'm pretty sure I'll be 59 in a few weeks, which is September of 2023. The mathematical difference between 2023 and 1964 is 59. Therefore, it is, indeed, a simple case of basic subtraction. *The Skinnie* is 20 with this issue, which seems like a thing worth saying out loud.

A bit about the origin story...A friend of mine who has since moved away said an innocuous thing to me in passing during the late spring of 2003. I had been living on Skidaway Island for close to two years then, having moved from New York City three weeks prior to 9/11. Claude is the friend's name. He declared, "We should start a magazine," and he listed the reasons behind his claim. People say this kind of stuff all the time – the we-should stuff – and it almost never leads to anything. I had a lucrative and demanding career with no intention to derail it and two young daughters at home. A side-hustle would be tough.

I had always enjoyed writing, yet I had no outlet for it, which made a magazine more intriguing than many nascent throw-away commercial schemes. Eventually, I got to, "Okay...let's."

Claude knew a guy who wrote for a living – Joel. He used to live here, too, but left years ago. "He's a writer..."

let's get him involved," said Claude. Eventually, I got to, "Okay...let's."

Long story as short as I can make it: We had two months to figure out how to publish, and none of us had ever done anything similar before. "Writing" and publishing are, at best, distant cousins. We sold some anchor advertisers on our idea and committed to a Labor Day launch. On Labor Day minus 5, at 3 in the morning, I was sitting next to a SCAD student whose name I can't remember, in front of a fancy computer screen, trying to coax and coach her to learn the things that she claimed to already know. By that time, that middle of a dark weeknight, our original three had effectively shrunk to one. I was in it, and I was going to succeed or fail, somewhat publicly, largely on my own.

Except for the family that coalesced around the upstart effort. A "family" that includes my "literal" family, my new family, and teammates who have been wearing the uniform for many, if not all, of our 20 years. I owe them all...look at the names on the table of contents: That's the core. A core that includes my 89-year-old father, who continues to write his regular He Served feature in his 90th year.

The Skinnie is a business, so doing its work is a job. But every person who has given or continues to give a part of him or herself to it does so when he or she probably could do something else. Not because of the "job" part, but because of commitment to a community and a city and the creative process. We are advocates for and partners with our advertiser-clients. We are your neighbors. We are cheerleaders for the region we love dearly. We continue to try hard to earn your support.

Thank you for your part in our 20-year story. This isn't the epilogue. This writer continues to actively tweak the plot.

Scott A. Lauriat

www.theskinnie.com



To contact us with your ideas, responses, letters and more, email us at mail@theskinnie.com



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