

Last issue, I mentioned my birthday. I'm not interested in belaboring the celebration (although my family made it great), but I can't avoid thoughts of mortality that I didn't entertain as a younger man.

I'm 62. I'm in good shape. The metrics used to measure health and vitality tell an encouraging story in my case. But time is unflinchingly relentless. The universal clock never misses a tick.

My five closest college friends and I maintain an active text thread. It's important and special to me, and I'm sure it is for them, too. These guys have done admirable and impressive things; raised lovely families; and remain active and curious and relatively fit. They/we have access to excellent health care and quality food and attractive recreational facilities. But you can't engineer perfect outcomes where physiology is concerned. So, among the six of us early-60s-aged American men, there have been three cancers and a stroke since our Lehigh years...with each of the four affected doing encouragingly well today.

One of the six, John, lives in Wilmington, North Carolina, recently relocating after spending his career years in Atlanta. John is unceasingly thoughtful and warm. Last weekend, Jenna and I connected with John and his wife, Bowen, on eastern Long Island at a mini-reunion for a group of my graduate school friends. Although John wasn't our classmate, he has grown close to several of my Wharton chums; he's very likeable and open to building relationships and he can carry on a conversation with anyone. I remarked to John that it's nice that he has embraced and been embraced by a friend group that doesn't trace all the way back to our college days. He answered simply, "We're saying yes to everything we can," explaining his and Bowen's approach to this season of life.

John's attitude is the right one. We – my cohort – can travel in relative physical comfort and get around without inducing excessive residual pain. Our schedules are more open than they were a decade ago. Our kids have homes and lives and families of their own. So, in the last few years, various configurations of an assembly of 20, plus or minus a few, have met in Italy and imprinted some of the most precious memories on our mental files, just by being together and sharing time.

I'm a travel addict. I'd take 10 trips a year if left to my own devices and absent the many obligations of my real life. As it is, we typically do three or four annual biggish ones and a bunch of weekends away. Inevitably, the few days just prior to departure fill with stress as we realize the things we "must" but haven't done. Experience has

taught me, though, that the world will be fine without my focus and input for a week or two. Whatever hasn't been completed will be available for revisitation upon our return.

Today is an especially busy day. This magazine requires last-minute attention, October work schedules for the coffee shop are overdue, preparation to teach tomorrow's class is essential, and I can't miss my workout...plus, as with most days, I intend to cook. We're going to Greece Thursday, which has recently become an every-annum thing. This September excursion is the result of a postponement in May. When I'm worried about what I will fail to do in the coming 48 hours, I visualize us side-by-side in a two-seat window-side row on a Delta jet and know exactly how great and peaceful that moment will feel.

The underappreciated bonus of travel: The amazing gratitude that overcomes you when you return to your beloved home. Seeing the world is a wonderful privilege. Reminding yourself of the familiar exceptionalism of your chosen hometown is a gift that is given again and again.

Technology talk dominates a disproportionate amount of public discourse these days. As I tell my students: Relax, this stuff has been around for a long time. I did my collegiate senior project in 1986 on artificial intelligence and – actually – the world hasn't been destroyed in the 40 years hence. There are aspects of technology that are undeniably scary, like many things that are unknown or we don't well understand. But there's the indispensable flip side and convenience that we take for granted that we wouldn't undo: Next week, if anyone needs me, I'll have my laptop and a Greek coffee on a comfy couch overlooking the boats in Hydra's port, and I'll mix a little work in with my play.

* * *

Speaking of play...play along with our football pool. It's free and easy to enter and you'll find it on page 26.

Scott A. Lauretti

We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and content. We do not print unsigned letters. The Skinnie Magazine is not responsible for unsolicited materials and the publisher accepts no responsibility for the contents or accuracy of claims in any advertisement in any issue. The Skinnie Magazine is not responsible or liable for any errors, omissions or changes in information. The opinions of contributing writers do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the magazine and its publisher.

www.theskinnie.com

expert hearing

Living with ringing in your ears?

MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING THAT CAN HELP.

Tinnitus isn't a disease, it's a symptom, and the cause is different for everyone.

The First Step Is Finding the Cause.

At Expert Hearing, our comprehensive tinnitus evaluation helps identify what may be contributing to your symptoms and the options that may help.

Your Evaluation Includes:

Medical & Hearing History
Tinnitus Handicap Inventory
Pitch & Loudness Matching
Comprehensive Hearing Evaluation



RINGING • BUZZING • HISSING • ROARING • CRICKETS

You don't have to just "live with it"
Don't miss this event. September 15-30th.



DETAILED MEDICAL & HEARING HISTORY

Identify health and hearing factors that may be contributing to your tinnitus.



TINNITUS HANDICAP INVENTORY

Understand how tinnitus impacts your daily life.



PITCH & LOUDNESS MATCHING

Identify the pitch and intensity of your tinnitus.



COMPREHENSIVE HEARING EVALUATION

Determine if hearing loss is contributing to your tinnitus.



Our experienced Doctors of Audiology have been honored to be voted best in the community.

- We Verify Your Insurance Benefits
- 24/7 Phone Support

Schedule your Tinnitus and Hearing Evaluation today.

912.777.8580



2 Convenient Locations The Village at the Landings: 15 Lake Street, Suite 160 | Mid-town Savannah: 6602 Waters Ave, Bldg. B, Waters Medical Center

EXPERTHEARINGSAVANNAH.COM