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Marilynn Deane Mendell
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"It's the details that are vital. Little things make big things happen." John Wooden

"The secret of staying young, is to live honestly, eat slowly, and lie about your age." Lucille Ball

"Learning never exhausts the mind." Leonardo da Vinci

"Education is not the filling of a pot but the lighting of a fire." W.B. Yeats

"Man's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions." Oliver Wendell Holmes

Spring Chickens Stay Current

**"History Is Not Shaped by The Masses.
On the Contrary
History is Shaped by an Individual
With a Passion."**

I didn't pick that title, my friend Joyce Patton did. It's for a talk I'm going to give in Atlanta in April. Then there's the talk at [NEOCON's 50th](#) anniversary celebration this coming June; I'll be teaching people social media basics at 8am. Both of these talks have given me more than a few minutes of pause for various reasons. Two totally different audiences--a group of DAR ladies who range in ages from 99 to early teens and a group of well seasoned designers from all over the world. Different yet the same. What keeps bubbling to the top is the same advice about topics I've packaged a little differently each time: fear, guilt, persistence, courage, ask for help, and stay current. I've written many newsletters on these topics. So what makes this one stand out?

Before I go there I'd like to also add that pals have remarked more than once that I should put away the teaching tool when socializing. How does one who has spent their entire life helping others separate the two? If I'm sitting with people talking about a recent computer meltdown where I was saved by my intrepid time machine backup and I hear, "Oh I don't have a backup." I can't just sit there in a state of apoplexy and ignore that huge risk my friend has just devulaged. Why it would take me a fraction of the remaining glass of wine to say, "Hey, [1T Seagate drive for Mac](#), plug in, go to time

machine, select that drive and run." Besides if I didn't say something, I'd be asked why I suddenly had a stunned shocked look on my face and I'd have to explain anyway. Better to go straight to the advice. Clearly, I write these newsletters to help others and that's the same reason I speak. If at any time one person reads something I've suggested or that they have been inspired by a talk, then I have succeeded. And I want friends and mentors to do the same for me.

Now back to the theme of this newsletter (well, I really never left it). How to gain the fountain of youth....remain a spring chicken...at any age. Stay current. Allow yourself to be challenged, to be questioned, to be enticed by anything new. The idea of always learning parallels the concept of staying current.

People fall behind at any age. And they fall behind for many reasons. Failing to notice details or nuances in a surrounding can lead to a missed opportunity to advance. Mental laziness is the same as being a physical sloth. What do I mean by that? I'll use a recent example: Someone dumps garbage into a can. It's lined with a plastic bag. The next time they go to the can, there's no bag and they throw the garbage anyway. They don't think, "Hey, I'd better go get a bag before I pitch this." Maybe they never thought about the bag from the start. Whatever the reason, that person stands out from the one who goes and gets a liner before discarding their trash. Building a way of living where you learn from what's right there in front of you is, I will hazard to say, as important to learning as not noticing. And in the work world, people notice self learners. They get ahead--always. Staying current, doesn't mean just technologically, it means being aware and always looking for ways to improve. It's living purposefully in the present with an eye towards the future.

The question for me has always been: How to get people comfortable outside of their safe zone? Because ultimately people fear what they don't know or can't understand. And some people may even have an expectation that life will stay the same. It doesn't. So staying current means breaking through what scares us. And for that I think we need support. I hope that I provide a great deal of support for my friends and clients.

We will all, at various times, find ourselves in strange new worlds and it's our attitude in how we cope that will see us through, but I also think it's the people we rub against and keep as friends, who influence our thinking that may play the greater role. There's already plenty of proof out there that says if you want to lose weight, [don't associate with junk food addicts](#). That's why surrounding yourself with people who tend to be curious, who try new things, or who may even just be from a different generation can be the key to unlocking the door to youthful and productive thinking. And sometimes spring cleaning means evaluating current friendships and making a transition to new friends who can support you and help you grow.

Thank you in advance for reading the rest of this newsletter,



NEOCON 2018

The Advanced Beginner Class on Social Media

What You Need, How to Use It, and What Process Makes It Pay.

Wednesday June13, 2018 8:00am

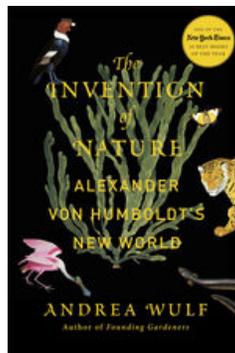
Get hands on lessons-detailed, every darn step on how to use Twitter, Instagram, Constant Contact, and LinkedIn to blow your firm's visibility and profits out of the water. Return to office armed with a phone filled with apps you know how to use and electronic action tools to prove ROI. See how utilizing these tools properly will justify spending time on social media platforms. You'll learn how to use these tools on your phones in real time, how they play with each other, why each one is important, and take away multiple reasons to implement them in your firm.

Here's a handy guide from [Hootsuite](#):

The Cheat Sheet: Social Media Images Sizes

| Platform | Profile Photo | Photo Size | Cover Photo | Background Photo | Shared Photo | Pin Sizes |
|-----------|---------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Instagram | 110 x 110 | | | | | |
| | Landscape: at least 1080px wide | | | | | |
| | Portrait: 320 x 1080 | | | | | |
| | Photo Thumbnail: 161 x 161 | | | | | |
| Twitter | 400 x 400 | 1024 x 512 | | | | |
| | Header Image: 1500 x 500 | | | | | |
| Facebook | 170 x 170 | | 820 x 312 | | | |
| | Shared Images: 1200 x 630 | | | | | |
| LinkedIn | 400 x 400 | | | 1536 x 768 | 698 x 400 | |
| Pinterest | 165 x 165 | | | 600 x 900 | | 600 x 900 |

Here's a trick if you can't get to my session. Go to [udemy.com](#) and learn all sorts of things for practically nothing in the privacy of your own home.



When Your Son Sends You a Book...

Because there are always piles of unread books sitting beside my bed, or on coffee tables, or resting imploringly on bookshelves, I sometimes can't remember how I came by them. There are just too many. The path to being read in my house is simple: new books go on the bottom of any pile. As I read the top one, it gets filed in the appropriate bookcase. Side bar: Books in my house get a Marilyn's librarian treatment. They're in groups by subject matter: all bird books on one shelf, cookbooks in cupboard in kitchen, art books in dining room on a few shelves, etc. Articles I read about various subjects get filed inside the related book.

The Invention of Nature got my juices going and I had to tell James, my oldest son. "Mom, I gave you that book." Well...now I've read it and I love it. Thanks to all of my sons who keep me well versed in new technology, reading, and the world in general. They inspire me to stay young.

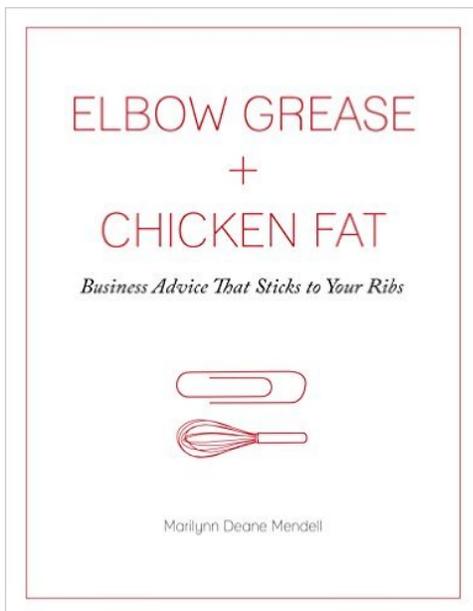
As many of my clients are in some way or another trying to make the built world a better place either by what constitutes well buildings vs. sick ones, or how landscape architecture can play a role in shaping the way we enjoy and view nature, this book fills an important niche.

I'm always fascinated with how the past influences our future or how we still haven't learned lessons, or why we choose to ignore warnings. See how Humboldt, 200 years ago, first talked about climate

change and the impact humans made/make on our environment. You'll be amazed at how many great thinkers worried about the same things we're still trying to fix today.

"**Andrea Wulf** makes an impassioned case for the reinstatement of the boundlessly energetic, perpetually curious, prolific polymath von Humboldt (1769 1859) as a key figure in the history of science. She marshals as evidence evocative descriptions of his expeditions measuring instruments in hand through the most brutal terrains of South America and Russia; delightful stories of his inspired interactions with other contemporary luminaries, including Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Thomas Jefferson, and Simon Bolivar; and demonstrations of his personal and intellectual influence on later seekers of truth in nature such as Charles Darwin, Henry David Thoreau, and Ernst Haeckel. But the greatest single idea Wulf credits von Humboldt with establishing is the interconnectedness of nature the animated, interactive forces of life he described as a "living whole" that bound organisms in a "net-like intricate fabric" rather than the mechanistic, taxonomic schema of his predecessors, from von Humboldt's early explanation of plant life in the Andes through his *Naturgemalde* to his encyclopedic work, *Cosmos*. Wulf also works hard to show that von Humboldt was a good person by modern standards, featuring his progressive, humanitarian ideas against oppression and slavery. Wulf's stories of wilderness adventure and academic exchange flow easily, and her affection for von Humboldt is contagious. Maps & illus." © Publishers Weekly

Recommended Reading



For those of you not familiar with my book I was once the best and largest off-premise caterer in Western New York. For years I have paired business acumen with my fabulous recipes to help cement business concepts for my clients and that teaching idea became the foundation for my book. The book conveys my story of how to achieve the American Dream; where anyone in this country can become whatever they want with hard work and a never-give-up attitude. Hence the title:

Please feel free to send me an email for a copy.
mmendell@wispinc.com

I'm in the process of writing and illustrating four children's books. Here's a new peek....





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