



hey everybody...  
Let's make  
a zine!  
WEST 23RD STREET & ELSEWHERE

VOLUME 2  
NUMBER 11

a family-friendly invitational zine

# ISSUE #8: ONE YEAR LATE

Last year, due to the pandemic, Zine Fest Houston was virtual and I ended up not producing a zine after seven consecutive years. We did make a fun video for the virtual fest but it was just not the same. This year I'm completing this zine only days before the in-person Zine Fest Houston 2021. Partially this is due to the fact that I've become an organizer with Zine Fest as it has been a lot of (fun) work getting everything ready. I have a newfound appreciation for those who came before me as organizers. Thankfully, I've gotten just enough contributions to round out a 20 page zine this year. My deepest thanks to all who contributed to this issue.

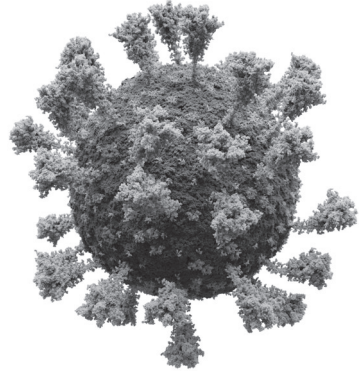
**Patrick Brooks**

*Editor*

*hey everybody... Let's make a zine!*

*A West 23rd Street Production*

*11/6/2021 • Houston, Texas*



Scientifically accurate atomic model of coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2). Each "ball" is an atom.

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Shane Patrick Boyle (1969-2017)

*Vivet in aeternum facundi Musa*

Cover photo by Maria Lurie

Sophia

My name is Sophia  
and in case you want to  
know I am something special  
every person should know  
I like playing Barbies  
if you don't wanna see  
of you want Darbey  
Just call me.

Yeah oh. now there's one thing  
you should know! Don't care  
if you go ha I like ha ha  
being serious hahaha and case  
you want to know I don't  
ha ha being serious...  
like  
because that's not where I  
go.



My name is Sophia  
And in case you want to know,  
I am something special  
Every person should know.  
I like playing Barbies  
If you don't wanna see.  
If you want Darbey, Just call me.

Yeah — oh

Now there's one thing you should know,  
Don't care if you go  
(ha) I like being serious (haha)  
And in case you want to know,  
I don't like (haha) being serious.  
Because that's not where I go.

## In Case You Want to Know

by Sophia Crawford-Vargas

video at <https://youtu.be/gibfcn4jawrq/>



# WHY DO I LIVE IN HOUSTON ANYWAY?

I found myself wondering recently: "Why do I live in Houston?" The reason I came to be here is that my folks retired from an oil company in Saudi Arabia and chose to live here, like many other former oil field workers. The weather was similar at least.

But why did I stay? I suppose I could have gone elsewhere, but I did not have any money to do so, nor any reasonable alternate city beckoning. I went to college here and made a bunch of life-long friends. I met my life-partner, built a modest IT career, bought a house and had a kid.

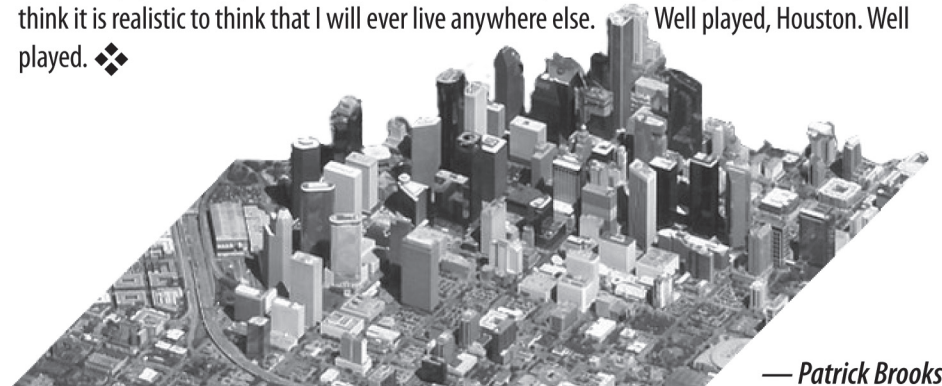
There was a turning point when I could have relocated to Austin, but we were taking care of my parents as they became increasingly ill and it did not seem like the rational move at the time. After they passed away, we raised our son here. He made many friends and enjoyed his school years. Houston is all he has known and he likes it. It's been wonderful raising him here.

Houston weather has never bothered me as much as it seems to other people. I like it hot. I could do without the mosquitos and the flooding. The bicycle paths have gradually been getting better.

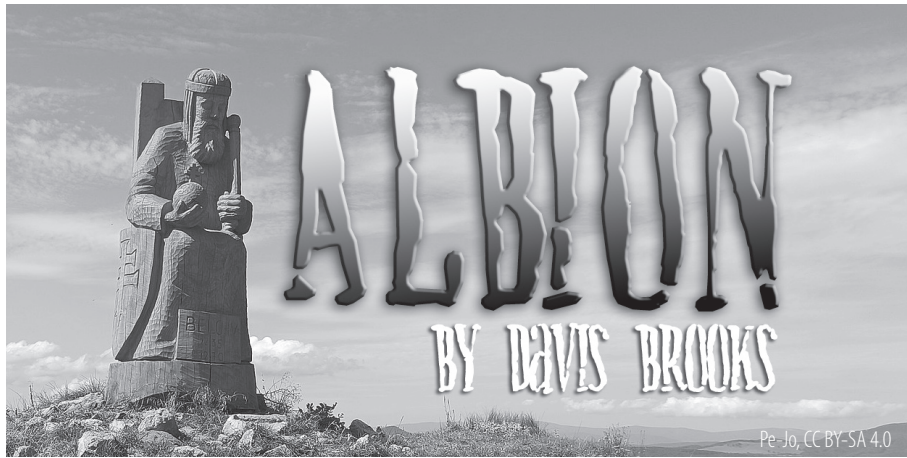
Houston has an amazing zine scene that I feel utterly at home in. Its art and film communities are extensive. There's something creative about this place that has always appealed to me.

In recent years, however, the congestion is bothering me. Our neighborhood is being overbuilt in townhouses and condominiums. The air quality could be a lot better. The politics as well.

Despite any gripes I may have with it, Houston is still my home. At my age (just turned 60) I don't think it is realistic to think that I will ever live anywhere else. Well played, Houston. Well played. ❖



— Patrick Brooks



Have you heard the tales  
Of fair Albion?  
A land nude beneath a starlit sky,  
Whose people lived  
With nothing between the sole and the earth.  
A land of liberty and prosperity  
Until  
The arrival of plague and pestilence  
A sickness which struck dead any who ventured outside  
The scholars urged the few  
Who confined themselves between floor and ceiling  
To harbor as many as they could  
Though this was not to be.  
Citing the words of long-dead men,  
They decreed that theirs was theirs alone  
And refused all who sought refuge.  
In few suns and few moons  
Fair Albion's ruin was complete.

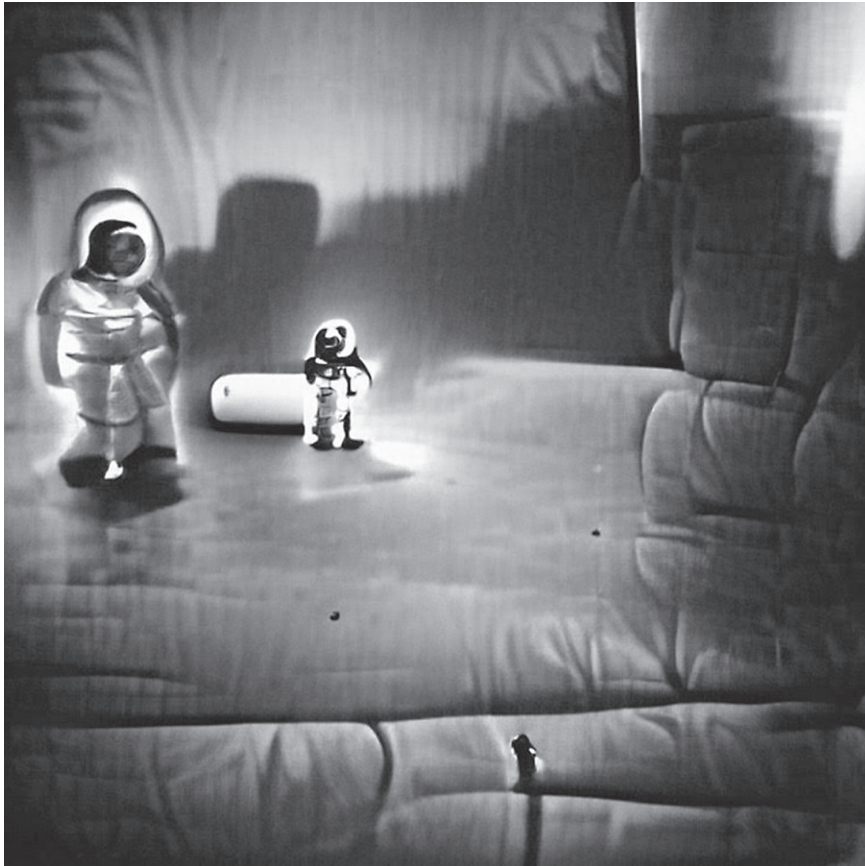
# LINUS

## The Good Dog



# Astronoir

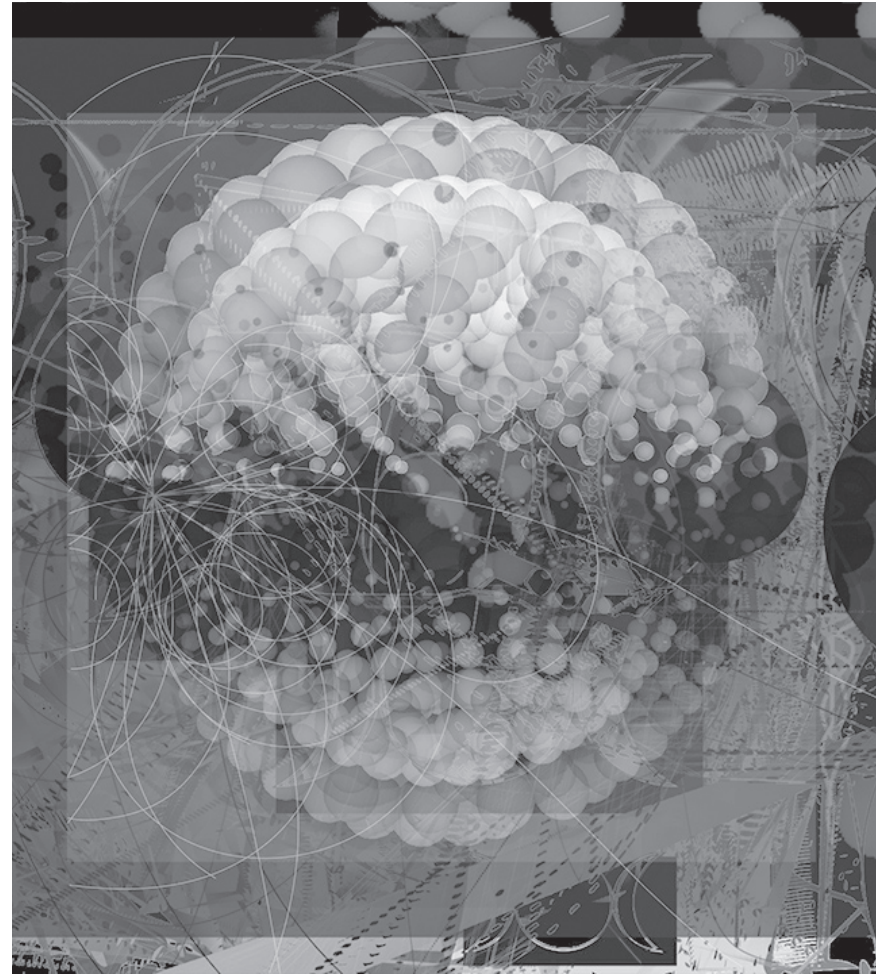
by Devonie Baker



From a series of images generated from artificial intelligence using the VQGAN+CLIP software, which creates artwork using only text prompts. For this image, the prompting text was "flickering light", "film noir", "lonely" and "cosmonaut".

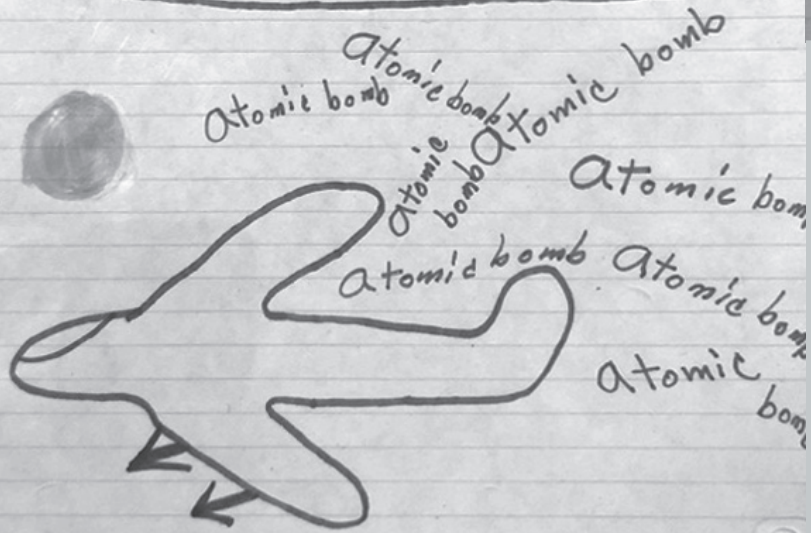
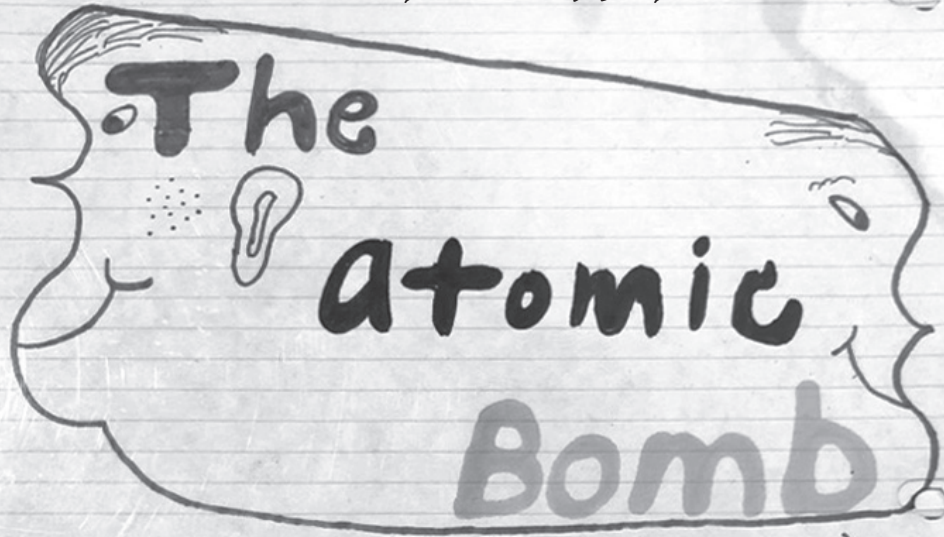
# Gravitational Waves: Number 1

by Nina Hays



# BLAST FROM THE PAST

An early 1970s school paper by Scott Stubler



By Scott

The Atom Bomb or the Atomic Bomb is not intended to be used for war purposes but if it is needed bad it shall be used with little hesitation. In the August of 1945 two Atomic bombs were dropped in Japan. The two Atomic bombs did so much damage because they killed many people and blew away so many homes and buildings that they brought an end to the war between the Americans and Germany and Japan. The bomb I'm talking about can be called two things the Atom bomb or the Atomic bomb. On the word Atomic bomb you will notice the first word is Atomic. Atomic me usually refers to a bomb made of Uranium or plutonium. Many people think that Albert Einstein invented the Atomic bomb but that is not true. The substance in which the bomb is made of is Uranium. Finding this substance takes effort and patience. There are only about two or three pounds of Uranium in a ton of the commonest kind of ore called Carnotite. The only countries with the Atomic bomb is France Russia Britain China and the United States. Right now there is enough hydrogen bombs to blow up the world. The only countries that have the hydrogen bomb is The United States France England Russia and China. There are enough of them stockpiled by the Soviet Union and United States to lay all of Europe and North America in gray ash.

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# Sleep

by Peggy McDonald

Sleep... I am not the only one. I didn't sleep. Exhausted. Sick. Arrhythmia. POTS. I was desperate. So I tried everything that even hinted to help me to sleep. The list of things I tried that helped, in order of efficacy for me, (everyone is different) and bread crumbs to find the details are as follows:

**RightSleep:** Vitamin D (tested as per instructions), B and Multi on a schedule. This program was written by Dr. Stasha Gominak, a neurologist. As an introduction, I recommend visiting her website and watching the webinars on her site. First on my recommend list to watch is the interview with Mike Mutzel with High Intensity Health. I got the book and am following it as closely as possible. You can do it on your own if you are the kind who reads instructions. This is the major missing piece for me. But it took the next step to really say I can, mostly, sleep again.

**Circadian Rhythm:** Dr. Satchin Panda, Ph.D. as set out in a simple but scientific way in his book The Circadian Code. I recommend getting the audiobook. You need to hear/read the whole thing, but in a nutshell: avoid blue light in late afternoon/evening (use orange glasses afternoon and evening any time blue light is around. (eg technology screens, TV, LED lights, headlights) Get warm colored light bulbs. get at least an hour of sun per day outside in the late afternoon. Eat in an 8 to 10 hour span during the day and stop eating at least 3 hours before bedtime.

In the same Circadian Code trail. Dr. Jack Kruse introduced me to sitting outside every day for at least a total of one hour (Dr. Kruse and I also wear orange/red glasses to protect from blue lit computer screens). This idea of Dr. Kruse was life/game changing. Dr. Kruse has lots of YouTubes and his website which I recommend you stalk. He covers lots of subjects, not all of which are directly related to sleep. Some of his ideas seem kind of out there but what do I know? I did not do any of Dr. Kruse's seminars. But the one hour outside plus Right Sleep were the keys to sleep kingdom for me (a kingdom now lit at night with a red night light). My Apple products have a night vision setting that cuts down on the blue light and a color function that makes the screen red, instead of blue. I use that function after noon each day and try to stay off screens in the evening after dark. It is a pain but it is worth it. There are apps that color correct laptops and android phones and tablets for red as well. I am not familiar with those except that I have heard there is such a thing. In order to program your Apple devices there are ample YouTube instructions.

**Pills and potions:** Melatonin has been very helpful. Some like the pills. I like the lozenges when I cannot go to sleep in 20 minutes. I find that if I take more than one 2.5mg a night it makes me dizzy next day. Gaia Herbs Sleep Thru at bedtime and when I wake up and cannot go back to sleep right away. Magnesium is, I believe, helpful. Too much magnesium at a time makes unhappy tummy but I like Magnesium Threonate as giving the most magnesium for the least blowback (for me). I also take Tryptophan at bedtime. Not sure it helps but, supposedly, cannot hurt. I hear some people like certain teas. I never noticed much help from that. Dr. Gominak has a take on prescription sleeping pills to whom I defer for that discussion.

**Meditation:** I have taken a course on meditation called Vipassana. For high blood pressure, anxiety and other issues calling for more calm, I highly recommend it. It is a 10 day residential course. They will not accept money until the end and then to the extent you got value. The website has the schedule and other information. Often I can calm my racing mind by just focusing on my breath as taught at Vipassana (called anapana). I also use guided meditations. My favorite are 30 guided meditations from Ashok Gupta. Gupta Program is one of two brain retraining programs I have tried. If I wake up in the night, these guided meditations would often put me back to sleep.

**CPAP:** When I consulted a sleep doctor, he prescribed a sleep study which showed I had sleep apnea which likely contributed to my heart issues. I was prescribed a BiPAP machine to sleep with. I do believe it does help and, at this point, is probably necessary but it is not the only answer.

**Earthing:** In order to learn about Earthing (British for grounding) I suggest the book Earthing. The Most Important Health Discovery Ever! By Clinton Ober, Stephen Sinatra M.D., et al. March 15, 2014. The idea is that since the invention of rubber soled shoes, our bodies do not contact the earth as they used to and allows positive charges to build up. Our bodies are not only chemical but also electrical. Every night I sleep with a wrist band that connects to a wire that goes out the window and is grounded through a metal stake in the ground. I swear it makes a difference. You can also just go barefoot on the ground.

**Colorpuncture Synopsis & Electrical Units:** Colorpuncture outcomes, like many things, are unique to the practitioner. They do have a Synopsis and Electrical Unit that has at least one program for sleep. Since it is a German company and since my unit is old now, it is called schlafen (German for sleep). When I first started trying to do something about my sleep I went to a colorpuncturist who introduced me to this machine. It is kind of pricey. At first I thought it really helped. It does not seem to do the same for me as it originally did. Is the machine not working. It is also somewhat expensive. I was desperate.

**MELT:** MELT is a kind of exercise/stretching done with either a foam roller or a set of small balls. I was first introduced to it because of lower back issues. 5 minutes a day, 3 days a week and the back issues are history. I like that because I am lazy. There are tons of YouTubes, including specific YouTubes for topics like "neck pain", "back pain", "knee pain", hip pain, etc. The inventor's name is Sue Hitzmann. She has a book called "The Melt Method" which is a good introduction to the science and steps. It has to do with loosening your fascia and getting back your "autopilot". It also, marginally for me, reportedly much more for others, helps with sleep. I presume that, if you have pain, MELT would address that pain and help sleep. That site has the products and more information. It really is amazing stuff for pain. For me anyway.

**Magnesium sulfate bath:** For me, especially in the winter, a soak in a tub of hot water with a cup or so of Epsom salts until the water cools really helps. Like I said, I am lazy so I should do this more than I do.

**Tapping:** Tapping's official name is Emotional Freedom Technique. Again. It is magic. It totally works to put me to sleep for a while. When I wake up and cannot go back to sleep I am too lazy to do it as often as I should. I keep laying there thinking "I'll go to sleep in a minute" instead of just getting up, doing some tapping so I can go to sleep again at least for a while. I have tapped mentally without getting up and I think it does help also. The method uses acupressure points, is easily learned for free and is amazingly effective for many people's pain. It was popularized by a man named Gary Craig. Nick Ortner is also a tapping guru. There are lots of YouTubes; search for EFT or emotional freedom technique. The websites have tons of free information and

tapalongs. I get nauseous all the time. It will calm my nausea for a while. It helps with pain. The effects are cumulative. You can multiply the effects by tapping with other people (Called "borrowing benefits").

**Reiki:** Reiki is a healing practice where a person is a conduit for the healing energy of the universe or God or higher power (however you verbalize the concept). There are three levels. I took all three levels. I do not know how someone raises kids without it. It is purely amazing. I can Reiki myself to sleep. My sleep tracker thinks that when I Reiki myself, I am in deep sleep, even though I know for a fact I am not. There are local teachers. Since Reiki is usually taught in person, the recent unpleasantness has made finding a teacher difficult. Perhaps there are some online resources. Go to Amazon or Barnes and Noble and search for Reiki for beginners. It may sound woo woo to you but you can feel the energy and feel it when it stops.

**Hygiene:** Most articles on sleep are about sleep hygiene. I will not go into detail here except to say light, temperature, sound, fresh air, no bugs (see below about the bugs) etc. are important. I have found that the most important part for me is going to bed at 9PM. Every. Single. Night. That is part of the circadian thing (see above).

**Digestive Issues:** If my digestion is funky, it is not good for my sleep. I have found this daily drink called "Greens First". Available online. More than anything else I have done for my stomach (and it has been in awful shape) this has helped heal it and keep my digestion on a pretty much even keel. It makes it easier for me to go to sleep and stay asleep if I don't lie in bed helplessly nauseous.

**Dodow and breathing:** Part of Gupta's program (see above) is breathing exercises. The most basic is to inhale for 7 seconds, hold for 4 seconds and exhale for 8 seconds. Over and over. It does help go to sleep. The Dodow (available online) is a little device that projects a spot on the ceiling that expands and contracts to direct your breathing. Like I said, I am lazy. I would rather lay there and count than drag out the little device and watch it for coaching. I presume if you would prefer the coaching, it could be useful.

**Sleep tracker:** The only real way to get some idea about what is working for you and what is not is to get a sleep tracker and keep records of what you do and what you do not do. I have found my two favorite apps are AutoSleep and Sleep Cycle. The catch 22 is that these trackers require Wifi to monitor your sleep. Hair of the dog. I have not done an exhaustive study of sleep trackers and there are many.

When I got the RightSleep and Circadian thing down (took about a month for it to take effect) I have been sleeping really well most nights with good deep sleep also. Not only sleep but deep sleep is essential for my health and well being. Hope it holds long term.

Although these things helped me, more or less, I do not have any relationship to any of these products. These are only my personal experiences that you can take or not for your own use. The only thing my sleep doctor wanted to talk about was the CPAP or BiPAP. I asked him if he had ever heard of Reiki or tapping, etc. and he said no. I would be interested in your experiences or if you have found something that worked for you that I have not tried. Contact me at: [pmcdonald@sitecoach.com](mailto:pmcdonald@sitecoach.com)

The last words of the day from my mother to her children. Nite. Nite. Sleep Tite. Bugs Bite. Holler.

# ADVENTURES IN SMALL-SCALE EPIDEMIOLOGY

by Robert Hughes & Kathy Brooks

## Case 1: The Virologist and the Veterinarian

**I**t began with the virologist. He awoke one morning to severe pain in his lower right back, radiating down his leg. He could use his right leg only with difficulty. After about a week, there was gradual improvement, with lessened, but still substantial, pain and aberration in his gait. His initial hypothesis was that he had strained his back lifting too heavy a weight, as he was working outside the day before the onset of pain. This hypothesis would eventually be rejected.

Thirteen days after the virologist's symptoms appeared, the veterinarian's son, the virologist's grandson, presented with a rash, primarily on his trunk. The boy, aged 9, had no other symptoms.

The virologist and the veterinarian considered a differential diagnosis of insect bites but discarded this. Mosquitos were a common nuisance in the environment, but the distribution of lesions, being primarily in areas covered by clothing, was not consistent with this cause. Bedbugs were considered, but there was no supporting evidence - no physical observation of their presence, no other household members affected, nor history of recent travel.

Infectious disease was considered next, particularly of viral origin, with the most likely candidate being chickenpox, caused by the varicella zoster virus (VZV). The child was up to date on his vaccinations, having received the two recommended chickenpox immunizations at 1 and 4 years old. The veterinarian reviewed information on the incidence of chickenpox infection occurring in immunized children and found that mild infection occurs in some vaccinated children, producing a condition known as "breakthrough chickenpox". Chickenpox was now the leading differential diagnosis.

The child was seen by his pediatrician, along with two neighbors who were physicians. All concurred that he had chickenpox. The veterinarian notified the boy's school of the diagnosis. The school did not report a history of other cases.

Following further review of VZV infection, the virologist developed a new hypothesis for the pain he had been experiencing: zoster sine herpete (shingles without rash). This is a condition in which an individual's latent VZV infection is activated, but without the formation of vesicles, and which can produce painful neuropathy and nerve damage. The virologist's symptoms were consistent with neuropathy and he had no vesicles.

At this point, the virologist hypothesized he was the probable source of his grandson's infection. His medical history supported this conclusion. He had chickenpox as a child and had an episode of classic shingles (with vesicles) when he was 50 to 60. That latter episode confirmed he was latently infected with VZV.

The dynamic of the family relationship provided evidence for exposure. The virologist was in close contact with his grandson on an almost daily basis: walking him home from school, helping him with his home-



work and fixing his dinner. Furthermore, the timeline was consistent, as the period between the time of infection and the appearance of symptoms is on average two weeks.

The resolution of both cases was uneventful. The boy's lesions crusted over and disappeared in a few days. He never felt ill. The virologist's symptoms took much longer, but his pain eventually resolved.

No information on transmission of virus from individuals with zoster sine herpette could be found. VZV is transmissible through respiratory secretions, as well as vesicular fluid, and VSV has been found in saliva of patients with shingles. Therefore it is possible that individuals with zoster sine herpette could shed virus in their saliva. No laboratory work on either the child nor the virologist was done to confirm the diagnoses. Still, the epidemiologic evidence is compelling.

### Sources

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2. Zhou, Junli et al. "Zoster sine herpette: a review." *The Korean journal of pain* vol. 33,3 (2020): 208-215. doi:10.3344/kjp.2020.33.3.208
3. Bloch, Karen C, and James G Johnson. "Varicella zoster virus transmission in the vaccine era: unmasking the role of herpes zoster." *The Journal of infectious diseases* vol. 205,9 (2012): 1331-3. doi:10.1093/infdis/jjs214

### Case 2

A boy developed an itchy rash on his trunk a few days following swimming in a river in springtime. He did not have any other symptoms and no other family members were affected. Prior to swimming, the boy had been canoeing with his family - all wore life jackets. After canoeing, the family swam in the river. The boy kept his life jacket on while swimming, but the rest of the family removed theirs. He continued to leave it on for a time after he got out of the water.

Based on the history, swimmer's itch was the presumptive diagnosis. Swimmer's itch is due to larvae of parasites, present in both fresh and saltwater, migrating from their intermediate host, generally a snail, to their definitive host, some bird and mammal species. When they enter an aberrant host, such as a human, an inflammatory reaction is triggered and the larvae die. This condition primarily occurs in summertime and more commonly in children, due to the fact that they often do not dry themselves off well following swimming. This gives the larvae, which are present in the water on the skin, opportunity to penetrate the skin. The fact that the boy left the wet life jacket on prevented his skin from drying, allowing the larvae to penetrate his skin.

The rash soon resolved without complication.

### Source

"Parasites - Cercarial Dermatitis (also known as Swimmer's Itch)." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov/parasites/swimmersitch/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/swimmersitch/index.html). Accessed 22 Dec. 2020.

## Peanut Butter Rice Krispies Free-Form Treats

by Kimberly Nelson

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup white Karo syrup
- 1 cup peanut butter
- 6 cups Rice Krispies (or a wee bit more)

In a large saucepan, melt sugar and syrup over high heat till about 3/4 of the mixture is bubbling. Stir in peanut butter. Stir in cereal.

One option is to form the mixture by rolling it into balls or filling a baking pan with the mix and cutting squares, but my family likes to simply transfer the finished mix onto parchment paper and enjoy free-form. The treats don't toughen up as much. Also, they're less tough if eaten warm.

The pan can be cleaned easily if about two cups of water is added; cover with lid and cook 10 minutes on medium heat.



# Skateboard Bro

by Dominic Carrigan



AND WE SKATEBOARDED FOR  
HOURS...

# THREE POEMS

by Anna V Phillips

One click. Two clicks. Buy!  
Internet shopping ~ Easy 😊  
Then my wallet sighs 😞

© Anna V Phillips February 2021

Floral cotton cloth  
sewn with care and attention,  
masks to wash and wear.

“Hello, how are you”  
“Just fine, keeping safe and well” -  
Her practised answer  
Can they hear her voice tremble?  
The phone hides her silent tears.

On, flicker, off, gone.  
Power cuts in raging storms  
beyond our control.

© Anna V Phillips March 2021

## No Mans Land

I got lost in No Mans Land,  
No lights or signs to lend a hand.

Scared and lonely I wondered around,  
Then stopped in my tracks at a strange new sound.

The shrubbery was thick and very lush,  
Hiding the rabbit who scampered past in a rush.

As I was lost in No Mans Land,  
I followed the rabbit, ending up on the sand.

The dunes were white and soft and warm,  
Finding the coastline, I followed it home.

© Anna V Phillips June 2021



# TWO POEMS

*by Hank Lee*

## **THREE**

Just a thought or three  
While waiting for a free vaccine:  
I was shot by an expensive handgun  
Which did not cost me money  
Went to the hospital, which  
Cost me plenty.  
But as I looked, I understood that I was in a Country, where I was 'free'.  
Sometimes I struggle with either being 'nice' or 'mice'  
Regardless of whatever I am: he or 'she'

Okay still be working  
on this (poem)  
Working, working....  
Waiting.

## **RENAISSANCE MAN - ALIVE (over)**

I yam what I yam, and it's all that I spam.  
Main May, maybe. ??man??  
"Hulking", "Hunting", "Hunkering"  
Arrows of kindness  
Otherwise quivered  
On the run, under the 'Rainbow' Bridge Sun,  
Saddle-up/put up however you want.  
Don't take affront.  
Peace be with you & Ma...ri...a  
Tunnel of thought & pensiveness  
reprehensible trans-train  
New creation/Vision-quest Man/  
Renaissance on wheat  
Cancel the tomato, lettuce & onion  
"STRIKE THE TENT"  
NO STATUE HERE, only a spear.