



# The Keynote Chronicle

*Humor News from Kent Rader,  
co-star of the Baby Boomer Comedy Show.*

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## *The Only Thing We Have To Fear Is Fear Itself*

I am so excited. After much anticipation, one of my favorite holidays is finally here: Labor Day. Sure, Thanksgiving and Christmas are great because of family time, but Labor Day means it is time to buy my new calendar.

Even though I have one on my computer, I love my paper one because I am a planner. I plan my day's activities every morning, my week's activities every Sunday, and my month's activities at the beginning of every month. Although it is probably a desperate and futile attempt to control my future, writing out my plans helps me prioritize activities most important to me. And if computer and paper calendars aren't enough, I carry my calendar in my head too. I am like Rain Man, a savant in knowing my schedule months in advance. "Kent, what are you doing on March 17, 2013?"

"I am performing a Baby Boomer Comedy Show in Venice, Florida."

My wife, Twyla, on the other hand, believes calendars are an instrument of the devil. At the beginning of every school year, Twyla resolves to use the calendar her school gives her, but by Labor Day, when I am joyously buying next year's, Twyla has already lost hers.

Twyla does not like having to be somewhere at a certain time, but, because she wants to be part of a society, she asks me to schedule and make sure she attends events she thinks are important. Earlier this summer she says, "Kent, my cousins Brenda and Sue want to go to a Royals' game. Would you get the tickets and call them?"

Twyla inherited this from her father. I'm leaving a hotel last week when I get a call from my father-in-law's doctor's office. In a panic, I ask, "Is there something wrong?"

The receptionist says, "He's fine, but he needs an appointment. When we called him, he said we'd need to call Twyla, who said we'd need to call you to schedule it."

As I'm buying my 2013 calendar, Twyla tells me, "You're wasting your money. According to the Mayans, the world is going to end on December 21, 2012."

"Yeah, where did you find a Mayan? They have been somewhat scarce over the last 1,100 years."

I am sure there are people scared the Mayan calendar predicts the end of the world on 12/21/12 (which is somewhat ominous when written numerically), but as I heard a Mayan expert say, the Mayans didn't predict their own demise in 910 A.D, so it is unlikely they were able to predict ours.

As far as I can see, Humans are the only animal who can take a current fact and envision how it will affect our future. This is handy when we see something that can hurt us and we adjust accordingly. Someone who has been drinking all night sees his inebriation may cause him to be dangerous behind the wheel of a car, so he takes a cab.

This goes awry when we see a situation in which we have little, if any, control. Then, we predict disastrous scenarios and become paralyzed by fear.

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In his book *Out of Crisis*, W.E. Deming said, “No one can perform his best unless he feels secure. Secure is Latin meaning ‘without fear’. Regardless of the nature of our fear, they all have one common denominator and that is impaired performance.”

And if you are not creative enough to think of something to be afraid of, turn on any news stations and they will be all too happy to help you. As my friend, Marian Kelly, who used to produce a news show, says, “If it bleeds, it leads.”

All over the news you see stories warning how healthcare reform is going to destroy American business, how the drought will cause food and water shortages, both Presidential candidates claim electing their opponent will be the end of our democracy (ironically, this same argument was used in America’s first contested Presidential election in 1796 between Thomas Jefferson and John Adams), and that Europe’s economic woes will throw our economy into a double-dip recession.

While all of these scenarios *may* come true, history tells us most of them *won’t*. Remember Saddam’s weapons of mass destruction? Most of the time when someone is trying to scare you, they are usually trying to sell you something.

On March 4, 1933 Franklin Roosevelt told a nation in the grips of the Great Depression (after seeing *The Grapes of Wrath* recently I can’t figure out what was so great about it), “This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself, nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.”

I believe today the only thing we have to fear is fear itself. When we turn off the television and lose our nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror, we find our performance naturally improves, and we are capable of the needed efforts to convert our recent retreat into our future advance.

I had a glimmer of hope at the end of July that Twyla was finally conforming to rest of the civilized world by using a calendar. She told me she would be starting schools soon. When I inquired if she had actually looked at a calendar, she dashed my hopes by saying, “No, I saw a commercial advertising Shark Week. It always falls during my first week of school.”

I wish you continued success in the future (even if the future is only three and a half months) and always remember laughter matters.



*Known as the world’s cleanest comedian and speaker, Kent Rader helps people learn and experience how laughter matters in reducing stress. A reformed accountant, Kent has written the stress reduction book titled Let It Go, Just Let It Go available at Amazon.com. Kent has been seen on Comcast’s Who’s Laughing Now and is the winner of the Branson Comedy Festival. Kent co-stars with Jan McInnis in The Baby Boomer Comedy Show, Clean Comedy For People Born Before Seat Belts ([www.babyboomercomedyshow.com](http://www.babyboomercomedyshow.com)).*

*Vinnie Martiniano of the New York HIMA had the following to say after Kent performed his new keynote, From Money to Funny, Business Lessons Learned On My Journey from Accounting to Comedy:*

*“Kent, your closing Keynote Address was the perfect ending to our 4-day annual conference! You remind us all that we had learned could most effectively be applied in a work environment less stressed with generous doses of humor. The stories of your work experiences in health facilities connected with the audience and gave us a chance to reflect on how similar situations we’ve faced might have turned out better if we hadn’t taken them so seriously. There were so many laugh-out-loud punchlines, that my face started hurting about half-way through your presentation. Your career change was a good decision since you are truly a funny comedian and commentator on today’s health care landscape. Please do not hesitate to use me for a reference in your future marketing efforts.”*

**For more information or a free DVD, please contact Kent at 405-209-3273 or email [kent@kentraderspeaks.com](mailto:kent@kentraderspeaks.com).**



# The Keynote Chronicle

*Humor News from Jan McInnis*  
*Co-Star of the Baby Boomer Comedy Show*

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## Communicating in a Perfect World

I just read that the latest tattoo “trend” for baby boomers is medical tattoos. Baby boomers are actually tattooing health instructions on their body, like “DNR” (Do Not Resuscitate) or “No CPR” so that if they drop dead on the sidewalk, the medical personnel will know what to do. I decided I’m going to tattoo PMSBO on my chest – that stands for *Put My Shirt Back On!* I’m in public! Okay, I probably won’t do that because I don’t like needles, but I bet my tattoo would get some attention!

Medical tattoos are just the latest rage in communication, in a time when we are inventing more and more ways to communicate. I texted a friend, but she didn’t return it because she said she hates texting and that I need to email her. I emailed another friend, and she told me to call her because she is never on email. I have yet another friend whom I called and of course got her voicemail, but she never returned the call. In fact, she acted like I was some sort of dinosaur for calling – and she responded to my voicemail through Facebook! I think I’ll just give up and write them all a letter: snail mail would definitely get their attention!

Despite all of these avenues of communication, getting our message across has never been harder, and we still haven’t found a way to perfectly communicate without error.

Take verbal communication. This should be the easiest, simplest way (theoretically) to converse, because you’re speaking directly to someone. And yet, this gets messed up all the time. I recently stopped by the store to pick up some laundry supplies, and I asked the saleswoman where the bleach was. She sent me down the cosmetics aisle! Hey lady, it’s for my whites, not my mustache! Since we’re all communicating from our own point of view, we interpret things through our own lens of experience, which sometimes leads to misinterpretation. And for the record I *don’t* have a mustache – but I’m guessing she does!

Email came along to compliment our verbal communications, but it has its own unique problems: mainly in the *volume* of messages. When email started out, I didn’t even think there was a need for it. I was working in the optics industry at the time (you know, for the people who build this internet stuff) but I thought email was kind of stupid and even told a co-worker “*Why would I email someone who works in the next office over when I can just go talk to them?*” Glad I wasn’t in charge of technology or we’d still be using stone tablets. I think email became really popular when people realized they never again had to have a face-to-face conversation with someone they didn’t like. Unfortunately the junk mail in our post office box followed us to email. I now pay a premium for my iPhone service to have instant access to email, just so I can learn that Sears has free shipping today only!

And to cut through all this spam, and make sure someone got your message, we began texting. It is succinct and quick—or it would be if I didn’t have to spend so much extra time explaining my texts. My friend sent me a text saying she’d

## Spotlight

### Jan’s Keynotes:

- *Finding the Funny in Communications* - Learn how to use humor in your business communications to connect with clients/coworkers, sell your product/idea/service, get people to listen to you and be memorable.
- *Finding the Funny in Change* - Learn to use humor during change to diffuse tense situations, kick off tough topics and facilitate communications.
- *Hilarious Hosting* - Keep your audience engaged and keep the program running smoothly on schedule with Jan as your emcee.
- *Cubicle Comedy* - Clean, customized comedy focusing on work, family and day-to-day life.

### A few of the upcoming groups Jan will be presenting this key-not to include:

- Kansas Health Care Engineers Association
- Colorado Health Care Association Risk Managers Association
- Kentucky Home Care Association

*Feel free to pass this newsletter along and refer me!*

like to meet up with me to go on a bike ride that afternoon. I immediately texted back “pervert”. . . I meant “perfect” but AutoCorrect, another “helpful” communication tool, changed my text. And some people among us are abusing the text privilege. My friend’s daughter sent 9,000 text messages in one month, and a lady in my audience said her son sent 10,000. I can’t comprehend that, because the math makes my head explode: 9,000 texts divided by 30 days in a month equals 300 a day divided by 18 waking hours equals 17 texts an hour divided by 60 minutes equals 3.5 texts a minute. There should be a competition for speed texting . . .oh wait, according to my Google research, there is! And the fastest texter gets like \$50,000. Wow, how pervert is that?

Then Facebook came through to save the day to help us communicate with everyone about everything. And as it turns out, we neither want nor need to know everything about everyone. I mean, I’ve enjoyed re-connecting with people. I found long lost friends whom I hadn’t spoken to in years. We got to be friends again and all was right with the world. Unfortunately, along with those good friends came the “other” friends. You know, the ex-boyfriend who weighs 300 pounds more than when I dated him and has a picture of himself sitting in the same bar we drank at 30+ years ago – yeah, he found me. I also get friend requests from people I don’t even know because I think they think there’s a grand prize when you reach 5,000 friends. “Junk mail” has made it to Facebook. And when you have a status change such as “in a relationship” to “single” do you want to let the entire nation know about it? Apparently you will if you don’t press the right button so that everyone you’ve ever known doesn’t see your status update. I understand people have divorced over status changes.

I was recently hiking Glacier National Park where there is no cell or internet service. It was nice to disconnect from everything, but a little hard to relax knowing I’d be hit with 200,000 messages when I got back “in range.”

I think what we need is not more ways to communicate, but ways to make sure our communications are more clear. I’ve decided my cat Rader is probably the best communicator of all because he only has two methods: pawing the air and drooling. When he wants to be petted he sits on his hind legs and waves his front paws in the air like he’s Marcel Marceau the famous mime trying to get out of a box. Then when you pet him, he drools to show that he likes it. Waving and drooling. . . too bad all communication isn’t this simple.



*Jan has shared her customized humor keynotes with thousands of associations and corporations. She is also the author of “Finding the Funny FAST; How To Create Quick Humor To Connect With Clients, Coworkers And Crowds,” and she was featured in the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post for her clean humor. From a recent client: “Hey Jan! Thanks for a great keynote speech and kick off to our annual convention. In all my 25 years of HIM (Health Information Management) experience, I’ve not seen a large group of HIM professionals walk out of a meeting with such smiles on their faces. Your presentation was witty and enjoyable!”*

**Baby Boomer Comedy Show; Clean Comedy For People Born Before Seatbelts, Safety Helmets, and Facebook** – Jan co-stars with Kent Rader in the Baby Boomer Comedy Show for theaters and private events around the country. This is a hilarious 90-minute laugh-fest, with clean humor on topics that the “boomer generation” can relate to - family, kids, work, do-it-yourself projects, dieting, aging and all. Check it out at [www.BabyBoomerComedyShow.com](http://www.BabyBoomerComedyShow.com) to see when they’re coming to your town, or contact them to book the show at your event!

**THE BABY BOOMER COMEDY SHOW IS APPEARING AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:**

- Fountain Inn Civic Center, Fountain Inn, SC, September 28
- Kaleidoscope Theater, Lynn Haven, FL, September 7 & 8
- Greenwood Community Theatre, Greenwood, SC, September 29
- Carlsbad Village Theatre, Carlsbad, CA, November 10

*“The Baby Boomer Comedy show was so enjoyed by our audience that we booked them to return right away. It brought in a whole new audience of entertainment lovers who had never seen our space before!”*

*- Anita Sleeman, Fountain Inn Civic Center*