

HAVE YOU EVER RECEIVED A PRIZE AND WHAT DID YOU DO WITH IT?

by Mari Lu McGinnis

The odds of living to age ninety are long, to be in reasonably good health also, is even chancier. In the lottery of gene distribution one needs to get the best of the allotment. The best that Mom, Dad and the Grands had to give. One also needs to avoid train, car and ship accidents, aircraft implosion, various indigenous germs, poisonous bugs, snake and dog bites. I'm just beginning. Nowadays there are stray bullets, fires, carbon monoxide poisoning and addictions of many dire and fatal kinds. Minefields of fatal or at least life shortening happenstances.

I guess I'm just lucky. Oh sure – so I'm not an alcoholic, I don't smoke, but once I fell down a full flight of basement stairs into my friends basement – I was wearing very dark sun glasses. I got up, went up the could have been fatal steps and had a cup of tea to recover. It wasn't my time, but I had the most colorful black, blue, pink and yellow eye that I've ever seen!

I also almost drowned swimming off Australia's Great Barrier Reef! Once in the mountains I dodged an elk while driving 1-70. I swerved just enough to miss. There was hair and blood on the rear bumper. I saw that later because I couldn't get out of the driver's side of the car. Deep drop off.

In my high school class of 263 there is no one left to talk to.

The prizes I've won are the sort one barely remembers – a centerpiece, a couple of bridge prizes, some bingos. As far as I'm concerned, though, I'm winning life's lottery. It isn't as though some of my tickets didn't turn out to be disappointments! Grievous ones. Loss is part of the payment for living a long life. If I had died thirty or forty years ago, I could have left grieving to others. Mixed with the wish that others could be here is the joy of loving and laughing with those that are here and enjoying all that goes into the jackpot of life.