

## Paying More and Getting Less

By Marilyn Reeves

Remember the good old days when it didn't cost you a dime to watch TV, other than your initial investment in a television set? We only had three channels, as I recall, but they offered quality programming such as *Sid Caesar*, *Dinah Shore*, *Armstrong Circle Theater*, *Carol Burnett*, *Dick Van Dyke*, and *The Ed Sullivan Show* ... just to name a few.

Nowadays, I'm spending money I can ill afford just for the privilege of watching TV. I do have a plethora of channels to choose from, out of which I find perhaps a half dozen programs that are actually worth watching each week.

Other than *America's Got Talent*, it's especially difficult for me to find something to watch during the summer months. Apparently the producers think everyone's brains are on vacation, because about all they offer are silly contests and game shows (*Jeopardy* notwithstanding).

I realize that I'm getting cranky in my old age as I pass over many of the hot new shows primarily aimed at the under-thirty-five generation. And I find that I'm no longer interested in most of the ones I used to watch. I stuck it out with *Gray's Anatomy* for six or seven years before finally giving it up as a bad habit. Same with *Modern Family*, which I used to think was funny, but now find the humor and the characters have worn themselves out. But I see they've won another Emmy nomination this year, so apparently it's just me.

Speaking of the Emmy's, if this year's crop of winners is anything like last year's, the only show I was rooting for was *This Is Us*. All the other nominees were from sources I don't have access to: HBO (I refuse to pay the extra), or Amazon or Netflix, produced for those who have newer, more sophisticated electronic systems than I do. I just have plain old TV. Although I do have Comcast's X-finity On Demand that offers a few more choices, like the old movies provided by TCM.

Otherwise, I find myself watching the Travel Channel a lot. I like *Expedition Unknown* with Josh Gates, who travels the world looking for the worst possible situations to get himself into – searching for lost treasure in underground caves, trekking across the burning desert seeking ancient ruins, or looking for mammoth remains in the frozen tundra of Iceland. I also enjoy *Mysteries at the Museum*, which features here-to-fore unknown little tidbits of history. Other than that, there's not much on my TV watching menu. Although, to be fair, I have yet to check out the one about hiding my *Turkey Neck* or *How to Tighten Crepy Skin*.

But there is hope! There's a new drama series called *The Sinner* starring Jessica Biel just out, which is showing promise. And who knows? When the new fall season starts up, there may be another one I'll like. Once in a while they still throw us old dogs a new bone.