



QUOTH THE MAVEN

BY BEVERLY KING POLLOCK

Coming, Ready or Not

The way I figure, it takes about six weeks to prepare for a five day trip. Longer if you count the time you spend looking for a woman to take care of the kids at home.

A private nurse you don't need for a son, 12 and a daughter, 15. But somebody with "saichel" you gotta have. So that she can interpret the 17 pages of instructions you think up.

Everything is life and death information. Like dates of garbage collection, when the milkman cometh, the laundry man, the repair man. Did you ever go away without your washing machine breaking down the day before?

And you have to tell The Woman about the dog. This is the hardest part because your dog thinks he's a people especially when it comes to walking on the new carpet without wiping his feet first (even though you warned him the carpet has to stay nice at least till November and the Bar Mitzvah).

Then there is the Telephone List. Naming neighbors who can be called on in time of crisis (like if a carpool replacement doesn't

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show). And the doctor. (Better make that plural because if your neighbor's kid gets sick and his parents can't be reached, then The Woman has to be able to reach the neighbors' doctors too.)

The same goes for dentists. Plus the drug-store, electrician, plumber, veterinarian, odd-repairs man, insurance agent, lawyer and the Rabbi. (Save this list for future reference.) See how well organized a gal can be!

Er, ah, yes. It's also a good idea to leave the phone and address of where you'll be staying.

If you have time to worry, remember: the hot water tank could act up. Or at least the belt on the furnace. And conceivably The Woman could get the flu. I know!

Shopping is the monumental task. Not only for clothes. (It takes double your wardrobe if you're going on a trip "back home.") Other places you need less stuff 'cause nobody else looks or cares.)

Food shopping for a five day trip -- about \$362.85 should do it. You buy stuff your kids love to eat, but mostly stock up on stuff they never tasted in hopes that somebody else may be able to teach them good eating habits.

The almost worst part of going away is the arranging of carpools. You mortgage your soul to pay back commitments. And the grief you cause!

The worst part is giving your place a complete housecleaning beforehand, when you're so busy packing and all. But you must. Because God forbid a neighbor should drop in while you're gone to borrow a monkey wrench and the basement isn't clean enough to eat off the floor -- you know what everybody would say!

Much as I want to go, that's how bad I want to stay. Great big li'l ole wedding in Atlanta, Georgia -- ready or not, heah I come!

TEL AVIV (WNS)--An Arab child was killed in Raffah when a grenade was tossed at an Israeli Army vehicle.



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