



THE HOLLIS FAMILY · NOVEMBER 2026

Mailbox Costumes, Leftover Pegs and Code Phrases

This month there is "a bag of 40 leftover wooden pegs that apparently go somewhere," a foam pancake costume with a sliding pat of butter, and a snowblower bought from a man bound for Phoenix. For November 2026, Dana Hollis, Marcus Hollis, Priya Hollis-Rao, Walt Hollis and June Abernathy all sent in answers.

Best Seen in Costume

Dana Hollis has an early favorite: "A kid on our street went as a mailbox."

Marcus Hollis found a rival at work: "White t-shirt, the words PAGE NOT FOUND, and he spent the whole night telling people he couldn't be located."

Priya Hollis-Rao offers a campus pick: "The best costume I actually saw was a girl at the campus party dressed as a 'Do Not Disturb' door hanger."

Walt Hollis kept it simple: "Some fellow in a parade went as a giant hot dog."

June Abernathy reports on her granddaughter Rosie: "At one house the man asked her what she was and she said 'breakfast,' very seriously, and he gave her a whole full-size Snickers."

The Moment They Stopped

Four people tried a repair on their own last month, and the moment each one stopped is where the real story lives.

Dana Hollis went solo: "I tried to put together the IKEA wardrobe for Priya's old room by myself while Marcus was at work." Her stopping point was very specific, down to the hardware: "When I gave up, there was one door on, one door leaning against the wall, and a bag of 40 leftover wooden pegs that apparently go somewhere."

Marcus Hollis started with total confidence: "The garbage disposal. I watched one YouTube video and decided I was a plumber." The ending had an audience: "When I gave up, I was lying on my back under the sink with a flashlight in my mouth and water on my shirt, and Dana walked in and said 'should I call someone' in a voice that was not really a question." Then came the invoice: "It was \$180 and took him eleven minutes."

Priya Hollis-Rao had a smaller target, but no better luck: "I tried to fix the zipper on my winter coat with pliers and a tutorial." It escalated quickly: "The zipper pull came off in my hand, and then the little slider shot off and went under the radiator." Her coat was left stranded: "I wore it like a poncho over my head for two days."

June Abernathy picked the most patient project: "I tried to re-cane the seat of my mother's old rocking chair." The damage spread beyond the chair: "When I gave up the seat had a hole the shape of Oklahoma in the middle and the bathtub had a brown ring that took longer to fix than the chair would have." As for the chair as it stands today, she gets the last word: "It is a very nice chair to look at."

Bargains by the Dollar

Walt Hollis saw the biggest gap: "The ones from the audiologist were going to be \$4,800." Then came Costco: "Costco did the test for free and I got a pair for \$1,499."

Dana Hollis turns to the kitchen: "Costco had the big cast iron dutch oven, the enamel one that looks like Le Creuset, for \$39.99."

Marcus Hollis went the secondhand route: "Used snowblower off Facebook Marketplace, \$150."

Priya Hollis-Rao beats everyone on price: "I got two passes to the Denver Art Museum for \$0, which beats the \$22 each." To copy her: "You reserve them on the Denver Public Library site the week before."

Advice Worth Repeating

Marcus Hollis got his from family: "My dad told me, 'Don't buy the extended warranty, buy a good flashlight.'"

Priya Hollis-Rao heard from her advisor: "My advisor told me, 'You don't have to love the major, you have to love one class a semester.'"

Walt Hollis got his from the doctor: "My doctor said, 'Walt, the stairs are your gym now.'" The fix was close to home: "So now I walk to the mailbox twice."

June Abernathy is the holdout: "My sister told me, 'June, you don't have to answer the phone just because it rings.'" Nothing has changed since: "I still answer every single time."

Read It Twice

What message landed on your phone last month that you had to read twice, who sent it, and what did you do next?

- **Dana Hollis:** "Walt texted me 'the eagle has landed' at 6:40 in the morning. No context."
- **Marcus Hollis:** "My boss sent 'Can you hop on a quick call' at 4:55 on a Friday. ... I signed up for napkins."
- **Priya Hollis-Rao:** "I listened to it twice because the last minute was him telling me he was proud of me for the midterm. I saved it."
- **Walt Hollis:** "The pharmacy sent me a text that said my prescription was 'ready for pickup' and then another one ten minutes later that said it was 'not ready.'"
- **June Abernathy:** "Dana sent me a picture of a dutch oven with no message at all. ... She just liked the pot."

This month leaves a wardrobe with one door on, a coat stuck halfway and somebody walking to the mailbox twice.



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