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*[Finches at the Fountain](#)*

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For the weekend...

*from Douglas E. Welch*

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Issue #28: June 17, 2022

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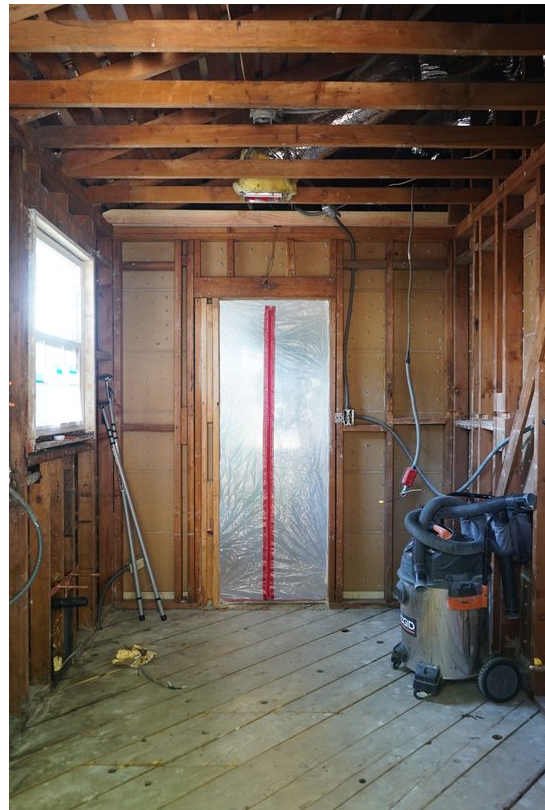
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### Join The Conversation On Discord.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, I have been running a Discord community for friends and family.

Click the link below to join today!

Join Our Community Discord Now!



*Our kitchen, before and today*

## Everything old is new again

We have lived in this house for 25 years and while we have done a small amount of remodeling and repair, we have never made any substantial changes to the kitchen we inherited. It was "good enough" and we made do. Kitchens can be one of the most



expensive rooms to remodel due to all the appliances, cabinets, electrical, plumbing, and flooring involved, so we just continued to get by with what we had.

## **A new kitchen**

That changed this week when we launched into a complete remodel of the kitchen down to the subfloor and studs. Oh boy, this is going to be a crazy few weeks. Being without a kitchen is one thing, but having an endless procession of people in your house is what always gives me the willies. All that, along with the day-to-day management with our general contractor (who you should hire if you need any remodeling done) has me feeling a bit fuzzy and worn out. I am sure I will settle in eventually, but for now, my butt is dragging.

## **Never a good time, but always a necessary one**

While it can be a bit crazy it is good to remember that there is often a time to do something even if you aren't the most prepared for it. For us, we have been doing what I call "retirement planning." While we have been saving for your retirement in terms of stock investments and such, we have also included investments in our house as part of that. It seems best to do that now, while we are still earning than trying to do it on a fixed income later. So, this year has included a completely new, modern, HVAC system, a new roof on the entire house, rafter repair, gutters (which we have never had), and now, the kitchen. Whew! It is a lot, but I am always reminding myself that these should be the last ones I should ever worry about installing. Everything after this is on Joe to take care of.

We were lucky with this house. Many friends upgraded to larger homes for larger families, but this house has suited us well. Three people easily fit here and two will fit even better once Joe moves out. He has been lucky to use this time to save and invest his salary for the future at an age much earlier than we ever did. He'll eventually find his own place, as most children do, but it has never been an issue with him hanging out here.

## **The Future Is Now**

Planning for your future can always seem a bit scary, but it is one of the best tasks you can ever undertake. We expect to spend many more years here and we cook at home far more than we order out. COVID changed that a bit, but we are transitioning back to our home cooking more and more as the weeks pass. I look forward to cooking in my new kitchen where outlets are plentiful, counter space is expanded, and cabinet space is adequate. This vision is what helps me get through each chaotic day. There is an end to the project and we just need to get there.

## **What will you do?**

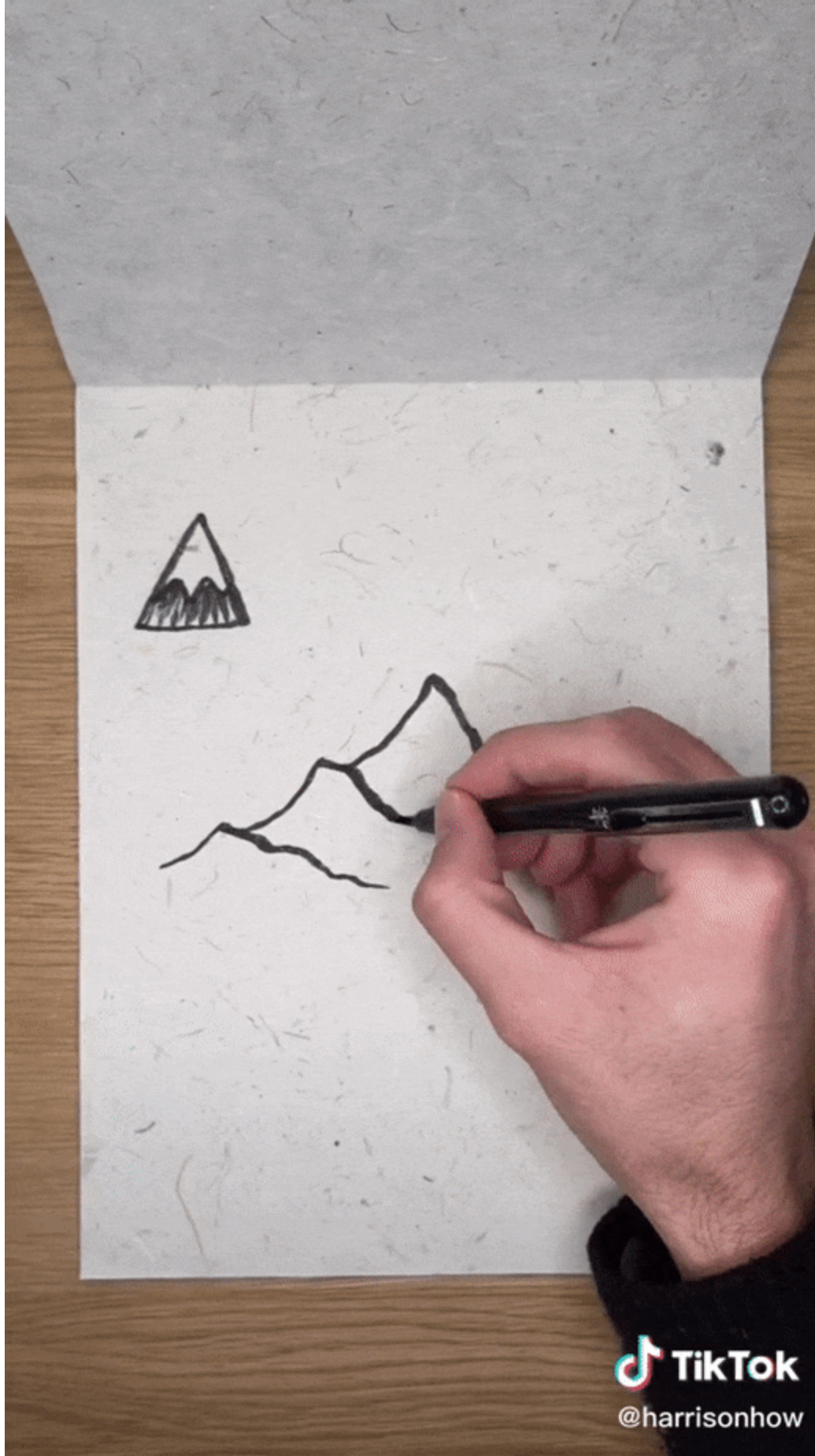
What planning could or should you be doing today? Is it time to get your life in a little more order? Is it time to do a little more "adulting?" I think the answer is always YES! Every step you take today for your future will pay off a hundredfold.

**Also, don't delay your happiness – even if it is just having a new oven or cooktop. Do it now while you are able to enjoy it for a good long time.**

**This goes for more than just kitchens, too.**

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# Video



*[How To Draw Mountains via HarrisonHow on TikTok](#)*



## Available Online for Free

*I love these books from Pixar and Disney, but they can be very expensive, so it is great to be able to leaf through it online.*  
– Douglas

Check it out!



## The Hidden Engineering Protecting Getty Art from Earthquakes

*via The Getty*

*The safety systems at the Getty have always fascinated me. I am constantly discovering mounting systems and such which are so subtle – as they should be – that they don't impact the enjoyment of the artwork at all.* – Douglas

Mountmakers, conservators, and engineers work together to secure works of art so discreetly, you may never notice their hard work!

If you've ever watched a vase or picture frame shatter after an accidental bump, you can imagine how devastating an



earthquake could be to an art museum.

Both the Getty Center and Getty Villa are located just a few miles from the Santa Monica, Sylmar, Inglewood, and Hollywood fault lines, and just over 40 miles from the San Andreas fault.

Our staff members have become experts in the field of museum earthquake safety. They've collaborated with cultural institutions from countries such as Greece and Italy to help protect art in earthquake zones. Other international efforts include the Getty Conservation Institute's 10-year conservation project to help stabilize earthen buildings in Peru. Here at home, we continue to improve our own seismic safety techniques; for example, after the 1994 Northridge earthquake hit the Getty Center while it was under construction, Getty engineers quickly developed improvements that influenced building codes and inspection practices across the industry.

[Read More](#)

## 12 Low-Maintenance Flowering Succulents

*via The Spruce*

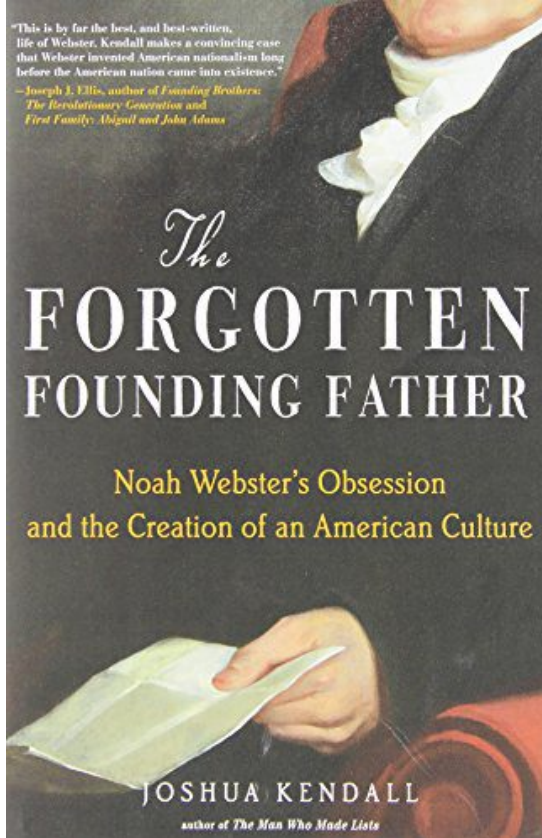
***We have planted a lot of succulents in the garden lately and even propagating our own from friends' and neighbors' gardens. These are the best plants for our drought-stricken gardens. – Douglas***

Gardeners often choose succulents because once established, they are drought-tolerant and need little maintenance. But there's another reason why they deserve a closer look: many succulent species and varieties are real eye-catchers.

Here is a list of succulents that stand out thanks to their attractive flowers. Some require a warm climate, others are cold-hardy and adaptable to a wide range of climates. (And unless otherwise noted, all of these succulents are perennials.)



[Read More](#)



# The Forgotten Founding Father: Noah Webster's Obsession and the Creation of an American Culture

*by Joshua Kendall*

Noah Webster's name is now synonymous with the dictionary he created, but his story is not nearly so ubiquitous. Now acclaimed author of *The Man Who Made Lists*, Joshua Kendall sheds new light on Webster's life, and his far-reaching influence in establishing the American nation.

Webster hobnobbed with various Founding Fathers and was a young confidant of George Washington and Ben Franklin. He started New York's first daily newspaper, predating Alexander Hamilton's *New York Post*. His "blue-backed speller" for schoolchildren sold millions of copies and influenced early copyright law. But perhaps most important, Webster was an ardent supporter of a unified, definitively American culture, distinct from the British, at a time when the United States of America were anything but unified—and his dictionary of American English is a testament to that.

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