

# Pat Byrnes

It may not take a rocket scientist to draw cartoons, but Detroit native Pat Byrnes erred on the side of caution by getting his Aerospace degree at the University of Notre Dame in 1981. He joined General Dynamics–Convair as the first pre-design engineer (the brainstorming guys) they had ever taken directly out of undergrad. Despite this privilege, he knew his calling was elsewhere and moved on. For a time, he honed his creative skills writing ad copy for big agencies like W. B. Doner in Detroit and J. Walter Thompson in Chicago. He scripted ads for everything from cheese to menstrual relief products, and won awards like the Addy and the Clio. During this time, he moonlighted with experimental comedy acts, to critical acclaim (and even notoriety) in Chicago's then crackling night club scene. He eventually left writing ads for reading them as a voiceover actor. Between auditions, he finally found time to answer his above-mentioned calling. Cartooning.

Since 1998, Pat has been a regular contributor to *The New Yorker*. He is also a staple in *Reader's Digest*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Barron's* and *America Magazine*. For three years, he created the syndicated comic strip, "Monkeyhouse." He has won one National Cartoonists Society "Silver Reuben" Award (out of nine nominations in various categories).



He has won awards for his sonnets and writes songs and even entire musicals on the side. And he used to paint when he had the time. His gag cartoons appeared for the first time in book form in *What Would Satan Do?* (Harry N. Abrams, 2005), and again in *Because I'm the Child Here and I Said So* (Andrews-McMeel, 2006). He illustrated *Eats Shoots & Leaves — Illustrated Edition* by Lynne Truss (Gotham 2008) and received a patent for the Smurks® index of emotional expression and iPhone app. He wrote and illustrated *Captain Dad: The Manly Art of Stay-at-Home Parenting* (Lyons Press, 2013) and the Captain Dad blog, praised by *The New York Times* as "part Dave Barry, part Erma Bombeck and all Pat Byrnes, illustrator, cartoonist and social commentator."

He is married to Lisa Madigan, who, in addition to being brilliant and charming, is also the Attorney General of the State of Illinois. They live a surprisingly quiet life with their delightful daughters, Rebecca and Lucy, on the banks of the Chicago River.

