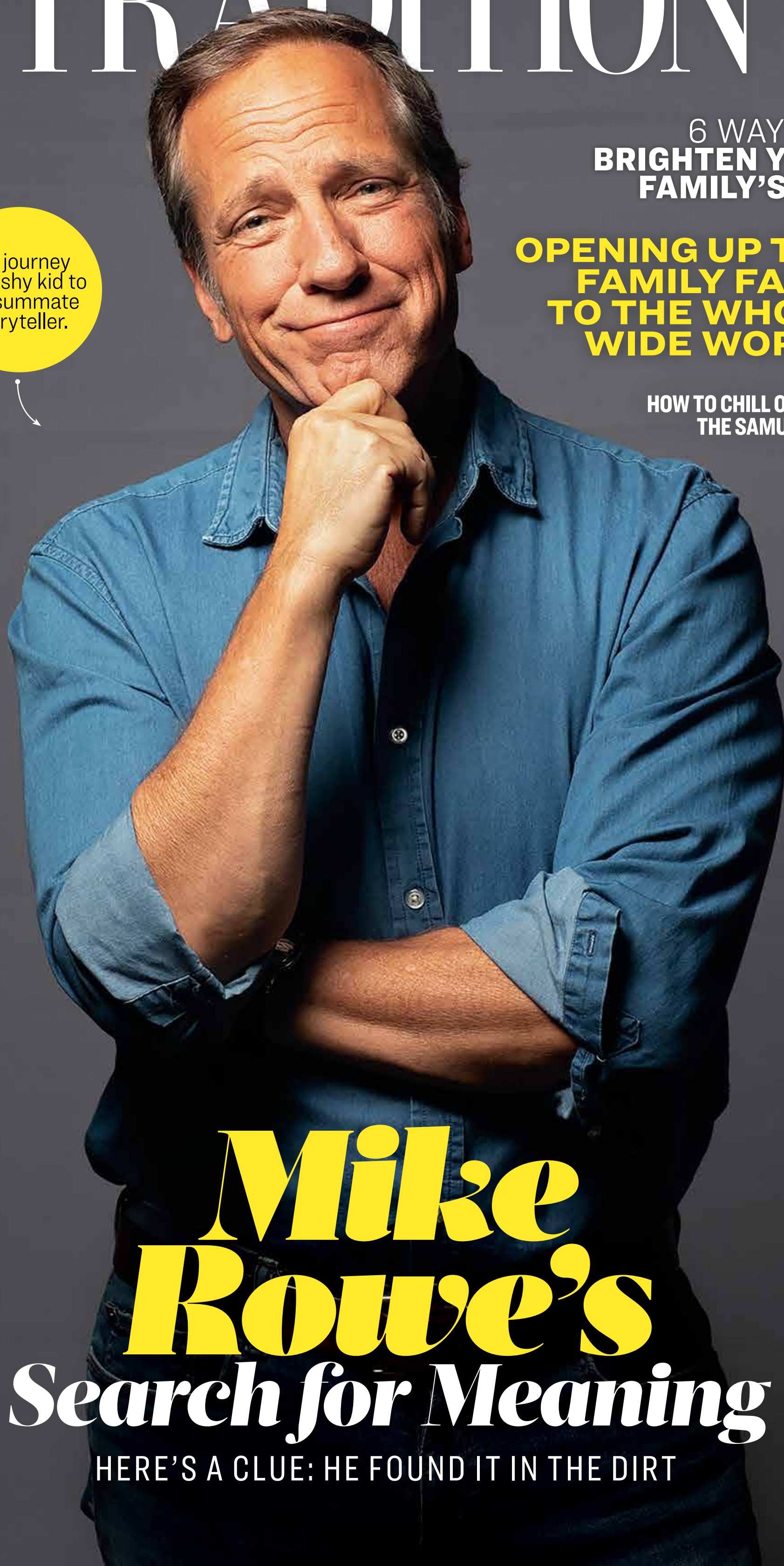


THE EPOCH TIMES LIFE & TRADITION



His journey from shy kid to consummate storyteller.

6 WAYS TO
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HERE'S A CLUE: HE FOUND IT IN THE DIRT

6 Ways to Brighten Your Family’s Day

BARBARA DANZA

If you're stuck in a rut, if the kids have been moody (or the parents have been moody), or you simply want to add more joy to your family's day, here are six simple gestures that are sure to put a smile on your family's faces.

Amp Up a Meal

Another bowl of cereal, another sandwich, another chicken dinner—if your meals have become predictable or monotonous, tweak them just a little to the delight of your family. Add colorful fruit slices as a topping for cereal, have lunch outside for an instant picnic, or serve dinner in the dining room on your fancy china.

By changing the presentation, the setting, or by adding a new ingredient to your regular standbys, you can easily make mealtime a surprising delight.

Laugh It Up

Schedules, chores, to-do lists, deadlines, responsibilities—lighten up, would ya? Sprinkle giggles and silliness throughout your day with the help of the corniest jokes and puns you can

find. Here are some examples:

- “When is a door not a door? When it’s ajar.”
 - “Why did the golfer wear two pairs of pants? In case he got a hole in one.”
 - “Why did the bicycle fall over? Because it was two tired.”
- Write them down on note cards or your family’s kitchen whiteboard, tell them at random times throughout the day, or keep a kid-friendly joke book lying around so that everyone can join in the fun.

Whether they elicit eye rolls or belly laughs, you’ll be sure to put a smile on the faces of your family members.

Drop the Routine

Routines can be truly beneficial for families. When things have been humming along consistently for a while, though, it can be really fun to toss the routine out the window and do something spontaneous.

Go out to dinner on a weeknight, play hooky from work and head to the beach, go for a walk after dinner instead of turning on the television, camp out in the living room, or have ice cream for dinner. Shake things up,



move things around, and insert new energy into the day-to-day.

Play With Their Toys

Watch your children rejoice when they discover that you’ve rearranged their toys in an unexpected way.

“What’s the pink bunny doing on the ceiling fan? Did your teddy bear build that block castle while you were sleeping? Is that Mr. Potato Head in the fridge!?”

Prepare for giggles when your kids find their favorite toys do-

ing unexpected things around the house.

Sing Silly Songs

“Mommy’s cooking dinner now, EIEIO,” instead of “Old MacDonald had a farm.” You see where this is going. “My kids are playing so nicely, doo dah, doo dah. It makes Mommy so happy, all the doo dah day.” My daughter’s personal favorite: “Everyday I’m snuggling,” followed by the running man.

Sing and dance your way throughout the day. Sure, they

may think you’ve lost it, but that’s part of the charm.

Surprise Someone Else

Activities that encourage compassion and thinking of others are winners on all fronts. Have your children mail some of their artwork to Grandma, help make a special dinner for Dad, or bring homemade food to a neighbor.

Helping them brighten someone else’s day may be the best way to brighten your family’s day.

SUMMER SKIN CARE ESSENTIALS

CHANNALY PHILIPP

Summertime: It means ice cream, the beach, and fun in the sun. It also brings its share of skin care woes. With so many products on the shelves, it can be hard to choose. Not to mention that the list of ingredients is a real alphabet soup!

For advice, I turned to Margot White, a longtime health educator and founder of online shop The Choosy Chick (TheChoosyChick.com). A wife and mom of four boys, White started her shop as a quest to carry health

and beauty products that are safe for the entire family and free of toxic ingredients. Given that cosmetic companies are not required to disclose safety information to the Food and Drug Administration, White’s mission has turned into a long journey of research. The good news, she says, is that many great products are much more effective than their counterparts that contain toxic ingredients.

Here are White’s recommendations for summer skin care, as well as a few personal favorites:



1. BADGER CLEAR ZINC SPF LOTION

The newly formulated Badger SPF 30 Clear Zinc Sunscreen Lotion is a lightweight, easy-to-apply, non-greasy sunscreen lotion. It blocks the sun’s harmful rays with clear zinc oxide, a specialized zinc oxide powder with high transparency and low whitening. A gentle base of aloe and sunflower oil makes it ideal for sensitive skin. Lab-approved hypoallergenic and noncomedogenic, it won’t clog pores.

2. MAGIC ORGANIC APOTHECARY DAILY CLEANSING RITUAL

The award-winning kit includes a 50 ml pot of their cult Green Balm, crammed with organic, healing yarrow. Yarrow is cleverly blended with a variety of nourishing, natural oils and nature’s antiseptic—tea tree oil. A super-soft bamboo face cloth is included for the ultimate cleansing experience. Bamboo fiber is naturally anti-bacterial, and apart from being luxuriously soft, it’s also one of the most eco-materials on the planet. It helps remove excess oil and impurities, and give your skin a deep, balancing cleanse that will remove traces of makeup—including stubborn eye makeup.

3. KIMBERLY SAYER ULTRALIGHT FACIAL MOISTURIZER WITH SPF

Kimberly Sayer’s best-selling, super-light, protective SPF day cream absorbs easily and won’t clog pores or cause breakouts. It’s made with natural and organic ingredients including lemon oil to detox the skin, minimize oil production, and help dry up acne. It contains organic, non-nano mineral sunblocks to protect the skin from harmful UV rays. Excellent to use prior to applying makeup, the product lasts a long time in the airless pump bottle.

4. RAW ELEMENTS PINK SHIMMER TINTED SPF LIP BALM

Made with organic sugar, pomegranate, and papaya to protect, moisturize, and provide a radiant, shimmering pop of pink to your lips! Made from certified all-natural, organic ingredients, and non-nano zinc oxide, this new water-resistant lip SPF provides UVA-UVB true broad-spectrum protection with a light pink tint and no whitening effect.

5. THE QUICK FLICK EYELINER WITH WING STAMP

Add an instant lift to your eyes with this super innovative 2019 Global Beauty Awards Winner, direct from Australia. Not a fan of wings, but looking for an eyeliner that lasts through the thick of it? You can still use this to easily create a solid line that won’t bleed, fade, crack, or run. Stamp and line in seconds for an instant, uplifting look to the eye. This best-selling favorite in Intense Black is world-famous for its hyper-pigmented formula that will stay all day. A favorite of makeup artist and beauty maven Huda Kattan. Made with natural ingredients, without synthetic dyes, PEGS or parabens, Quick Flick is vegan and cruelty-free.

6. BADGER FAIR TRADE ALOE

Badger’s Aloe Vera Gel is your antidote to cool and soothe irritated, sun-parched skin. It’s made with 96 percent pure, organic, fair trade aloe juice. It’s as close as you can get to breaking a leaf off an aloe plant! With its amazing moisturizing benefits, it delivers that feeling of instant relief we remember from our childhood days at the beach. Not sticky and no added scent—so good!

7. ECO TAN FACE TAN WATER

This award-winning Eco Tan Face Tan Water is a gradual liquid tanning toner created for face, neck, and décolletage. It builds to a beautiful glow, creates a youthful radiance, and even reduces the need to wear foundation. Its noncomedogenic formula means it will lock in moisture on your face without clogging your pores. The revolutionary formula contains no artificial colorants or orange dyes. Made with hyaluronic acid, one of the most effective hydrating ingredients for skin, and Vitamin C to even complexion and brighten skin tone. Its calming, hydrating, and antioxidant properties are great for all skin types even for rosacea, eczema, and acne-prone skin.

8. PATCH BAMBOO BANDAGE STRIPS

An Australian brand that crafts eco-friendly bamboo adhesive bandage strips designed for those with sensitive skin. They are made with 100 percent organic bamboo fiber with the added natural goodness of activated charcoal, aloe vera, and coconut oil. They take pride in using natural, organic, biodegradable, and sustainable resources historically proven to soothe symptoms while promoting wound recovery. Their products have won multiple awards for product excellence and eco-innovation.



Margot White, health educator and founder, The Choosy Chick.

Mike Rowe’s “The Way I Heard It” podcast is the top short-form podcast in America, and now he’s turning it into a book.



I got 10,000 letters and emails from people ... It just really struck me (that there was a hunger in the country to share stories of work.

Mike Rowe

Mike Rowe’s Search for Meaning

Here’s a clue: He found it in the dirt

CATHERINE YANG

Mike Rowe has spent his career telling other people’s stories, and he hadn’t planned to tell his own—at least not so soon. So when he was asked to write a memoir, he said, “No, I really don’t want to write a memoir. I haven’t done enough. I’m not old enough.” His book comes out this October. Rowe has certainly done a lot, and still manages to sum up his career briefly: Early on, there was a stint in opera; narrating science documentaries; getting fired from QVC. A turning point came in hosting the show “Somebody’s Gotta Do It,” which turned into “Dirty Jobs.” It continues to run but also turned into advocacy for the blue-collar trades with his foundation mikeroweWORKS.org. Now he’s also hosting “Returning the Favor,” which he tentatively calls a feel-good show, and a short-form podcast of curiosities, “The Way I Heard It,” which has now led to a book of the same title.

The book was supposed to be a collection of stories Rowe has told on his podcast, maybe with some commentary about those stories, but as Rowe started writing, the personal parts got more personal and took on a life of their own.

Despite the fact that he’s been writing all his life, and largely for fun, Rowe found the blank pages to be a different sort of challenge. Now he was forced to reckon with himself, past and present. “My mother—just got off the phone with her—you’ll be pleased to know, has read it, and aside from a bunch of typos, says it’s not at all embarrassing to either she or my father. So that’s fine,” Rowe said.

Finding Meaning

Rowe ascribes his early work-philosophy to Travis McGee, a pulp-fiction series protagonist whose motto was basically to live well, but live honestly, and think of your job as just the means to your next paycheck.

“It served me pretty well until I was 42,” Rowe said.

Until then, Rowe was doing the work of what he calls an impersonator. He got into the entertainment business because he found he could do a pretty good impression of a host and a singer, and later a narrator, when his voice changed and he could pass for someone older than he was.

“I was an inveterate freelancer,” he said. “I lived in hotels; I didn’t own anything. I had clothing deals with various stores that had deals with the networks. So I was doing a show for PBS. I was doing a show for American Airlines. And I was doing a show for Fox, all at the same time. And flying around the country and stopping in Eddie Bauer and getting, you know, that week’s allotment of

MIKE ROWE

Lives in: San Francisco

Occupations: TV host, writer, producer, actor, spokesman

Current Projects: web series “Returning the Favor” and podcast “The Way I Heard It”; the mikeroweWORKS Foundation, which awards scholarships to students pursuing careers in the skilled trades; author of the book “The Way I Heard It,” to be released Oct. 15, 2019.

clothing and wearing them and then giving them away on the way to the airport to the first homeless person who looked like he was my size. And so I was living. It was a fun life.”

Then one day, while living in San Francisco and hosting a show called “Evening Magazine,” his mother called him. It was about his grandfather’s health.

“This guy was my idol. He was my role model growing up, the kind of guy who could build a house without a blueprint,” Rowe said. He was actually the reason Rowe got into entertainment and had encouraged him to do the work he had skills for.

“He was dying, and my mother said, ‘Wouldn’t it be great if, before he died, he turned on the TV and saw you doing something that looked like work?’”

Rowe took this to heart, and dug in deep. “I started doing stories from the sewer,” Rowe said. He went into the sewers, to construction sites, and places where there were people willing to get their hands dirty. People liked it.

“I got 10,000 letters and emails from people. It’s not that they loved the show, it’s that they wanted me to know about their grandfather, or mother, or brother, uncle, cousin,” Rowe said. “It just really struck me that there was a hunger in the country to share stories of work.”

Halfway through this odyssey of sewage and soil—and perhaps this was no surprise to viewers who had followed Rowe through his projects—Rowe realized he had a project that really mattered to him.

“I guess it’s sort of a serendipitous, accidental search for meaning. And I found it in the dirt,” Rowe said.

Reconnecting

Rowe grew up with a musical mother and thespian father, and his grandparents, married 70 years, right next door—against a backdrop of probably a dozen acres of what must have seemed like deep, faraway woods.

“I thought I was Huck Finn!” Rowe said. He didn’t realize until he was maybe 12 that they really were only a few miles from the city.

He credits good fortune with meeting the people who helped turn him into the consummate storyteller he’s become.

He had a music teacher growing up, Mr. King, who cured Rowe of his stammer and got him out of his shell.

“I was a very shy kid, and he forced me onto the stage, showed me that you can make all kinds of choices as an actor, and that also reflected choices you can make as a person,” Rowe said. “And now that was a very important thing for me to figure out in high school.”

He had a rhetoric professor named Richard Vatz who changed the way he thought of the written word.

“I was very lucky,” Rowe said. “The influence of growing up with room to wander and explore, and a couple of great parents



Mike Rowe takes part in a roundtable discussion on Sept. 26, 2012, in Bedford Heights, Ohio.

MANDEL NGAN/AP/GETTY IMAGES

J. HENRY FAIR



Classical guitarist Sharon Isbin.

CLASSICAL STYLE

Classical Guitar Showstoppers

Eminent guitarist Sharon Isbin on Boccherini, Bach, and Baroque

CATHERINE YANG

Classical composer Luigi Boccherini was an Italian cellist, but he's also known for a number of guitar quintets, including one that features the famous Spanish dance "Fandango" movement.

"Audiences go nuts, because there is a pacing to the movement that is so skillful and builds in such a way, with moments of relaxation and release... there's an excitement about it, by the time it gets to the end people just leap to their feet because they've had this journey that is at once exotic, Spanish, and just really exciting," said the eminent classical guitarist Sha-

NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA, MELBOURNE



"Luigi Boccherini," circa 1764-1767.

J. HENRY FAIR



According to Isbin, her lengthy study of Bach formed a foundation for her understanding baroque music.

“By the time it gets to the end, people just leap to their feet because they’ve had this journey that is at once exotic, Spanish, and just really exciting.”

Sharon Isbin, classical guitarist, on Luigi Boccherini's "Fandango" movement

"One of the most attractive features of it is the slow middle movement," Isbin said. "The largo is a beautiful tune, people may or may not recognize but what gives me to be able to, in the style of baroque performance of the time, embellish it with my own vision when I do the repeats."

Isbin credits her journey in learning Bach as the foundation for her understanding baroque music.

"One of the important aspects of my own life and training was to have spent 10 years studying with the great Bach scholar and keyboard artist Rosalyn Tureck," Isbin said. Though Isbin is not a keyboardist and Tureck didn't play guitar, through their long collaboration, they eventually recorded a landmark edition of the Bach lute suites that employed original manuscripts and techniques.

"As a guitarist, some of the richest music that we can play are the Bach lute suites," Isbin said. There are four such surviving suites, not all written originally for lute.

ron Isbin, who can't imagine getting tired of this well-worn piece.

Isbin will perform, with others, the Boccherini Quintet No. 4 with the Calidore String Quartet at Alice Tully Hall at Manhattan's Lincoln Center on July 17. The program is part of the Chamber Music Society's Summer Evenings, and themed around the classical style.

The classical style is perhaps the most timeless, and still influences composers today. The program begins with Haydn and follows with composers writing in his style, such as Boccherini and then Schumann, a generation later.

Boccherini, a cellist, is sometimes credited with enhancing the cello's role in the string quartet form that Haydn invented. The Quintet No. 4 includes two other movements besides the "Fandango," which Boccherini pulled from different quintets.

"They are more classical in their character, in the opening—the pastore movement—and then the second movement is a real virtuosic display for the cellist in the string quartet," Isbin said.

The Vivaldi piece on the program is the popular Concerto in D major for Guitar and Strings, originally for lute. It was arranged by Emilio Pujol for Spanish guitar, by merging the violin and lute parts and adding viola parts, and revised by Isbin.

“As a guitarist, some of the richest music that we can play are the Bach lute suites.”

Sharon Isbin, classical guitarist

Isbin will perform with the Calidore String Quartet at Alice Tully Hall in New York City on July 17, 2019.



SOPHIE ZHAI

The Heartbeat of America Rolls On

J.H. WHITE

I'm one of these people who doesn't hear the lyrics when I first listen to music. It's the melody that hooks me, gets me humming. Then, if I really like the song, I'll find the lyrics and listen along, which adds another dimension.

"It's funny that you say that because I'm similar. I don't listen to the lyrics first," Brennan Mackey told me over the phone. He's the founder and lead singer of one of my favorite Americana bands, King Cardinal, based in Denver.

"I listen first to the melody, and then once that gets me, I'll dig a little deeper. [It's] funny, for the amount of time that I stress over lyrics, for it not to be the first thing I think about," he says.

I can't describe melodically what King Cardinal does, as I don't have the musical vocabulary or theory for it. But I can tell you how their music makes me feel. Their beautiful harmonies open my heart and draw tears to my eyes; the lyrics make the tears fall.

Their song "Chicago" takes me through that catharsis. It opens with a rhythmic banjo that re-

minds me of traveling, and the sultry vocals of the lead female singer, Tex (Texanna Dennie). Then Mackey joins for the chorus:

Follow me back to Chicago
I can sing your hallelujah
I could sing your troubles away ...

It's a song about love, but also longing. The acceptance that the relationship won't work out feels hard fought. But that's often how life works—that some events and people are hard to let go. Maybe that's why the song hits me hard.

"As you get older, you can look back and see different stages, different groups of people that you were with or places you lived, and try not to regret losing that, [and] be a little more in the moment," Mackey says.

King Cardinal's music is very relatable, very human. Their songs are big ideas, but equally personal. It's what I would hope from an Americana band—journeymen and women taking you across the landscape of their lives.

Land of the Free, Home of the Brave

America—it calls to the pioneer and to those tough enough to be courted by the romance of explo-



ANTHONY ISAAC

King Cardinal (L-R): Scott Roush (drums), Andrew Porter (bass), Texanna Dennie (vocals), Ben Waligoske (pedal steel), and the group's founder, Brennan Mackey (guitar/vocals).

ration. People move to America to take the risk of starting something new. As an artist, Mackey and his King Cardinal crew embody that spirit.

Mackey says that the Americana music genre is "such a catchall; it's basically that there's an acoustic guitar and a drum set." Its broad scope includes older country to indie folk. The genre, however, does have musical elements that are unique and personify the path of the traveler.

"There's the train beat ... that just

feels like you're moving, like you're on a train, you're traveling," he says. "Our music is perfect for being on the road."

"Gasoline," from King Cardinal's first album "Once a Giant," speaks to the beginning of Mackey's musical quest.

Where you going,
Who you gonna be
If you want fire,
I've got the gasoline

"I was trying to find myself," Mackey

King Cardinal's song "Trouble" speaks to the sentiment of forging one's own path, and that the challenges are still worth it.



SCOTT MCCORMICK

The founder of King Cardinal, Brennan Mackey.

says. He wrote the song about that period of doubt and growth he experienced after graduating college. "You get that first taste of independence," he says. "You get out of school, you've been doing this one thing for so long ... and then once you're done it's like, 'All right, figure it out.'"

Music had been a childhood pipe dream, but growing up, he didn't have friends who were musicians. After college, Mackey moved to Chicago, where he stumbled onto an open mic night. The guy who

ran it, along with another friend, encouraged Mackey to continue working on his craft.

"[They] really pushed me to start writing, then keep writing, and work on my performance," he says. He started going to an open mic every night, and five on Sundays.

Mackey tried to wrangle musicians to join a band with him. Though there was always verbal interest, nothing materialized.

"A lot of my life was having ideas and planning [but] never really executing," he says. "You can't really wait on other people ... I decided to just go out, and if there's something that I wanted to do, just do it."

Where you going,
Who you gonna be
If you want fire,
I've got the gasoline

Mackey recorded an album on his own, without a band. He then moved to Denver with his figurative gasoline.

"Once you're doing something, people want to be a part of it," he says. With a self-released record, "It wasn't just a nebulous idea."

From Craigslist, a pedal steel guitar player and bassist joined his

new band, and through one connection, the other members of King Cardinal organically fell into place.

Hardship and Joy

As a musical artist, Mackey's pioneering spirit has always been tested: His demons and doubts weren't just inside of him; society at large thinks being in a band is crazy. "All of my friends were going into their careers and putting their life together ... I didn't want to do that. I wanted to go in a different direction."

Even now, being a full-time musician can be a grind. The closest city to Denver is eight hours away, and the next one after that is another six hours away.

"It's definitely tough out here to be in a touring band," he says. King Cardinal's song "Trouble" speaks to the sentiment of forging one's own path, and that the challenges are still worth it.

Trouble come find me
Trouble come quick
Save me from this good life
Give me something to miss

A musician's life—with the hardships of touring, financial uncertainty, and

Bach himself transcribed music prolifically, and Isbin has an inkling that he would have been enthused to learn that his music has been continually transcribed for new instruments of the time.

"For him, the idea of transcription was something really magical and rich," she said. "That kind of training with Bach that I did with Dr. Tureck was very important when I would approach other baroque music and did influence my playing of Vivaldi."

For those who can't make the upcoming concert, Isbin has also recently recorded these two pieces with the Pacifica Quartet.

The Cedille-label record will be released in August, and also includes a string and guitar quintet by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, who was inspired by Boccherini.

"[He's] rarely ever been recorded," Isbin said. "It's a work by, again, an Italian composer who came by Spanish roots when his family fled the Spanish Inquisition from Spain to Italy, and then from there, Castelnuovo-Tedesco had to flee Italy with his family in 1939 from the Nazis, and that's when he came to the United States and settled in California."

Isbin has toured with Pacifica Quartet since 2016, since meeting them at the Aspen Music Festival where she has headed the guitar department for 26 years (she also heads the classical guitar program at Juilliard School, where her pupils have gone on to become the premier performers in their respective countries).

"Every orchestra that I play a concerto with, every string quartet, every singer, it's always going to be different because the collaboration and the interaction and exchange of creative, musical, and artistic ideas is really a very living experience," she said, "and one that happens in the moment. It's always influenced by the personalities of the musicians involved."

Her concert with Calidore Quartet on July 17 will be the first time she will play with the ensemble, and she's always thrilled to be able to perform favorite pieces with new collaborators.

"I think we're all going to have a lot of fun," Isbin said.

J.H. White is an arts, culture, and men's fashion journalist living in New York.

OPENING UP The Family Farm to the Whole Wide World

A 7th generation farm reinvents itself, giving guests a taste of the farming life

CATHERINE YANG

Drive a few hours north of gray New York City and you'll find yourself surrounded by the deep greens and blues of the Catskills. And here, surrounded by the mountains, is Hull-O Farms.

The Hulls run a seven-generation, 240-year-old family farm, one that welcomes visitors from as far away as South Africa and Hong Kong.

"I was born here," said farmer Frank Hull, who just turned 71. "When I was a child working here in the valley, we had 13 working farms. So, as far as I was concerned, growing up, the whole world was farming."

Hull was the only son, and showed cattle from ages 8 to 19. There was never any question that he would inherit the farm. But these were dairy farms, and though productive, over time, the prices were no longer sustainable.

"All the farms have gone but us," Frank said. "We're the end of it."

Life in Nature

Frank and Sherry Hull have been married 48 years this fall and run the farm

“When I was a child working here in the valley, we had 13 working farms. So, as far as I was concerned, growing up, the whole world was farming.”

Frank Hull, farmer

together. While farming has been Frank's entire life, Sherry was a city girl.

"I tell people, I happened to be dropped in paradise, because that's how it feels to me: This is paradise," Sherry said.

Sherry is from Syracuse, New York, and met Frank through a mutual friend in college.

"I was raised in a family where we loved each other and did things together. And when I moved here, they operated the farm as a family. They did chores together, they ate meals together, they went to church together," she said.

"And outside, they had these beautiful lush fields to look at. And further off, a little bit into the distance, they have these lovely Catskill Mountains that just surround and protect us, and, to me, it almost felt like I was coming home," Sherry said.

"Not like I had found my home, but I was coming home—like I was supposed to be here. That's how I felt."

She fell in love with the farm and the farmer, and never looked back.

But running a farm isn't easy work. You work practically around the clock, and there are no days off.

The Hull farm has changed many times over the years, with each generation finding different ways to keep the family business going.

"We worked really hard, but there were never any extra dollars," Frank said. But he had an idea.

In the 1930s, Frank's grandmother opened a boarding house, and Frank's father would go down to the barges to meet groups of people coming up from New York City and bring them up to the house, where they would stay for the summer.

So Frank suggested they open up the farmhouse for visitors to stay. People could learn about farming and spend time relaxing in nature.

Sherry actually wasn't so sure people would take to the idea. She thought maybe her rosy perception of the farm wouldn't be what everyone else thought of it.

She's never been more gratified to be proven wrong.

"The kind of people that are attracted to this kind of vacation are just wonderful, loving people who are family-oriented and grateful and appreciative," Sherry said. "And I could not have predicted it this way."

This is the 25th year that the Hulls have opened their home to others.

From One Family to Another

The Hulls remind us that though many of us live in the suburbs or in cities, it wasn't that long ago that most everyone lived on or near a farm. Farmers see themselves as stewards of the land, and there is a strong sense of family, community, and giving.



Sherry and Frank Hull at their 240-year-old family farm in the Catskills.



SAMIRA BOUADU/THE EPOCH TIMES



SAMIRA BOUADU/THE EPOCH TIMES



SAMIRA BOUADU/THE EPOCH TIMES

After early morning chores (and playing with the cats), guests are rewarded with a hearty pancake breakfast.



COURTESY OF HULL-O FARMS

In the summer, the children get a baby chick to hold when they first come in.

Running a farm means raising animals; here, there are pigs, dairy heifers, chickens, even red deer, and others. This means the animals need to be fed and cared for every day without exception. Everyone has to work together, and there's really no room for excuses. There's a natural respect for other living creatures, and a dedication to your personal responsibilities that are learned naturally here.

That stands in stark contrast to much of current life, in which we do a lot of throwing things away, Sherry said. The longevity of the farm, the inherent sustainability of the lifestyle, and the work ethic found here are impressive to a lot of people.

"Every family that comes here is in awe of how hard we work," Frank said. "That kind of blows them away, that we can do this seven days a week, year in and year out."

Frank himself was surprised to see that everyday things for him are a source of wonder for the guests.

"It's astounding, because they'll reach into a nest box and they'll come out with an egg that's warm, that a chicken just got off of, and they'd be enthralled that the egg is warm, because, of course, coming from the grocery store, all the eggs they've ever been able to handle were cold," Frank said.

"Those are things that are normal everyday stuff for us. But [for them], that's a real novelty," he said.

Visitors have chores to do every morning and afternoon, such as feeding the animals or piling a truck full of fresh-cut green grass for hay. Seeing it in person is eye-opening, and the connection made with the animals creates a memorable experience.

In the summer, the children get a baby

chick to hold when they first come in.

"We raise all our own laying chickens. I actually get the shipments from Pennsylvania every two to three weeks. I go right to the post office and I order them in March. And they'll come every two to three weeks, all summer long," Frank said. "This is all due to planning; nothing is by accident. I'm ordering these chicks in March that are actually coming in right on through August, and those are next year's brown egg layers. So you gotta raise them from the start."

"And of course, they've all got to be fed and cared for in the wintertime, even when they're not laying eggs. Everybody's got to have feed and fresh water every day, no matter what, no matter the weather. So it's really a love of dedication, for sure."

In addition to Frank and Sherry, one of their sons works on the farm full-time. The couple has yet to decide whether they will need to sell the farmland in order to retire, but financially it's very unlikely they will be able to pass on the farm.

Sherry says they don't take life lightly, and it's gratifying that their guests leave with an appreciation for what they do.

"We do this by choice and we live at this beautiful farm, and that's what we do to be able to live here," Sherry said. "I think that our guests leave here with understanding that we have a deep appreciation and respect and responsibility, that we don't take it lightly."

"And you can't take it lightly if you're going to hold on to it, because it requires a lot of tending to. When you have a farm you need to tend to it," she said.

Frank suggested they open up the farmhouse for visitors to stay. People could learn about farming and spend time relaxing in nature. Sherry actually wasn't so sure people would take to the idea.

The Hulls have always been very family- and community-minded, and big on giving. Sherry was raised in a home that always had lots of friends and family around, and there was always entertaining.

"So, it was in my nature. I was raised in that environment of wanting to share what we had with others," Sherry said. Being able to share her "slice of paradise with my guests" was a blessing.

"Probably the most special moment of my farm-vacation experience—and there's been lots of them—but when I really knew that this is what we were supposed to do. I had a little 10-year-old boy who came up to me," she said. "He said to me, 'Ms. Sherry, I think this just may be the best day of my life.'"

Connecting Globally
Visitors started finding the Hulls through word of mouth and a bit of local advertising, but they've since grown to welcome visitors from halfway around the world.

"I have an intense need to share with others what I find beautiful," Sherry said, and so her gratefulness for the continued success of the farm vacations has been twofold. She is able to offer these families a beautiful experience, and the vacations have helped keep their farm afloat.

Sherry and Frank started their website in 1996, with help from a son who was in college at the time.

"He said, 'Send me all the information and pictures of the farm,'" Sherry said. She was baffled. "I said, 'What is the World Wide Web?'"

The premises, too, have grown to accommodate vacationers. The Hulls started

with one guest house, the Rose. Then they opened the Austin, which is surrounded by trees. Then there was the Gifford, and the Great Room, a dining hall where the guests share meals. The accommodations are turnkey homes, which especially suit the large number of family visitors, many of which have small children.

"I will tell you, sometimes, there is not a native English speaking person at my dining table," Sherry said. "Children from completely different backgrounds will look at each other from across the table and make connections."

"You don't have a child who looks at another child and says, 'What kind of car do you drive? And how much money do you make, and who are your relatives?' What they say is, 'Let's go play,'" Sherry said.

"That's what I think that we should all do a little bit more often with each other: 'Let's just go have a good time together.'"

Children love taking part in the farm's chores.



COURTESY OF HULL-O FARMS

ALL PHOTOS BY FLW PROD LLC



Tyler Perez stars as Mark Smith, a player who resents sitting on the bench.

FILM REVIEW

WHEN WINNING ISN'T WORTH IT

Director Rob Smat's heartfelt football drama 'The Last Whistle' tackles the issue of cardiac conditions in sports

IAN KANE

The opening sequences of "The Last Whistle" are drizzled with pure Americana, as we see many of the sights, sounds, and symbols associated with the heartfelt and impassioned culture and traditions that surround high school football in Texas.

Football is an especially important sport in Texas. I can attest to that, having spent some time living in cities and towns in Texas during my military and civilian lives. Even after football season officially ends, Texans regularly get together for draft parties, intended for the following year, and even place bets on their favorite players and teams. Rob Smat, the writer and director of this new football drama, knows this all too well. A native of Texas (before moving to Los Angeles), Smat played football for four years, and you can feel that the film was a passion project throughout its hour-and-a-half running time.

Although infused with Smat's own insights into the game, the film touches on a much more important subject, which has received little attention—the risks associated with undetected heart conditions.

Actor Brad Leland (best known for his role as Buddy Garrity in "Friday Night Lights"), who plays high school football head coach Victor Trenton, knows a thing or two about

Texas football as well. He grew up in Lubbock before moving to Plano, both Texan football hubs. The only thing that prevented him from continuing his career was a serious injury.

"I grew up playing sports and had great coaches. Two of the coaches I had were tremendous and have stadiums in Plano named after them," said Leland, in an interview with MSN. "My whole life, I grew up a big sports fan but didn't get to play after high school because I tore my knee up."

Although Leland's injury derailed his budding football career, it put him on track for his other passion: acting. Indeed, soon after graduating from Texas Tech, he garnered praise as a talented film actor.

Surprising Intensity on the Field As the film opens, we are introduced to the gifted coach of a Texas high school team called The Saints. Coach Trenton has been deftly guiding his boys toward a state championship.

The rough-and-tumble aspect of the sport is emphasized early on, and you really get the sense that at the high school level, things are especially intense. These young men clashing with each other across rugged fields aren't going home to million-dollar mansions, engorged with all of the usual man-toys you see on episodes of "Cubs."

But denying that these goals aren't



Actor Brad Leland as football coach Victor Trenton, who must re-evaluate his life's goals, in "The Last Whistle."

part of many of these high-schoolers' dreams is pure folly. Sure, some might be there for the love of the game, but many of these kids are practicing to become successful, professional football players, and the film conveys this serious, no-holds-barred tonality perfectly.

The film's story is told from two very different perspectives that are tied to how things play out as the team advances. Coddled, yet gifted running back Benny Robinson (Fred Tolliver Jr.) has a truly promising future. He goes above and beyond what is required of him on the field and is the coach's star player.

At the opposite end of the spectrum is Mark Smith (played by Tyler Perez, "Code Black"). Smith is having problems performing for the team and as a result is relegated to being a bench rider. He has become embittered by his lack of play time and therefore tends to take things out on those around him, including

his friends and family.

The two young men's paths eventually come into conflict. I won't spoil it here, but one of the Saints' players dies on-field during a practice exercise. Understandably, the player's mother takes things especially hard. In the ensuing fallout from the death, she and most of the high school's faculty members unload much of their anger upon Coach Trenton. They believe that his victory-obsessed attitude is to blame.

Coach Trenton's solitary home life doesn't help at all, and even though he is a highly intelligent man filled with passion and drive, his stubbornness gets in his way. Even when his daughter Sarah (played by Sainty Nelsen, "Trolls: The Beat Goes On!") shows up and attempts to help him see things from a different perspective, he pushes her away. As a result, the crestfallen coach internalizes everything and this leads to matters spiraling out of control.

"The Last Whistle," then, is a film that touches on sensitive subjects in the sports world. Sure, we as humans are competitive creatures by nature, especially when it comes to sports. But at what cost? Does the safety of the players have to be placed on the sacrificial altar of the "win or go home" attitude? If so, how many deaths is an acceptable number?

Whatever the case may be, the cast and crew have truly altruistic intentions, which should be commended. Not only did they collaborate with the American Heart Association in the making of the film—in order to help raise awareness about over-stressing young athletes—but they also encourage parents to have their kids undergo thorough physical exams in order to detect heart conditions.

As seasoned-actor Leland put it in the MSN interview: "It will help prevent a lot of deaths in sports. This is out there and maybe there's something we can do to help prevent it next time, but any time a kid who's just trying to play has that happen, it's a sad thing."

Ian Kane is a filmmaker and author based out of Los Angeles. To see more, visit DreamFlightEnt.com

'The Last Whistle'

Director
Rob Smat
Starring
Brad Leland, Fred Tolliver Jr., Tyler Perez
Running Timex
1 hour, 27 minutes
Rated
PG
Release Date
June 28
★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Does the safety of the players have to be placed on the sacrificial altar of the 'win or go home' attitude?

WISDOM OF TRADITION

HOW TO CHILL OUT LIKE THE SAMURAI

These men of mettle had a surprisingly relaxed disposition

JOSHUA PHILIPP

Our inner character is reflected in our outer expression, and to improve everything from how we carry ourselves to even the look in our eyes, classical literature says that a person must first refine his or her character.

Among the better self-help guides of the past is a Japanese book for samurai written by a 17th-century Confucian scholar named Yamaga Soko. In his book "Way of the Knight," he explained that to make genuine improvements in outer appearance, a person must first look inward.

Calm the Mood, the Mind Will Follow

Soko gives a simple formula on how to refine yourself: Calm your mood, and your mind will follow.

"Because the mind depends on the mood, when your mood is calm, your mind is calm," he writes. "When your mood is agitated, then your mind is agitated."

"Since the mind and the mood are not in two separate states, there is no disparity between them. As the mood exteriorizes the agitation of the mind within, cultivating your disposition should be considered the basis of personal refinement and soundness of mind."

When people begin to get stressed, they often lose their ability to think clearly, and it's not uncommon that the resulting thoughts can make them unpleasant to be around. Yet, according to Soko, that stressed and disturbed state was something the samurai—or any person, and especially a man of mettle—should avoid.

"A man of mettle faces life-or-death situations, treading on naked blades, making swords and spears fly, evincing firm discipline, facing serious matters, and making important decisions—all this without disturbance or upset in voice or appearance," he wrote.

Yet, at the same time, having this tough and unflinching character doesn't mean that a person should be stern, cold, or unpleasant. Instead, Soko wrote that people should have an air of mellowness—a "relaxed" appearance, and "dignified manners."

"With a man of mettle being so bighearted



A photo of samurai in armor by Kusakabe Kimbei.

and high-minded, he will naturally have a certain mellowness about him. Mellowness implies depth and tolerance," he wrote. "It means keeping your virtues to yourself, covering your light, and not evincing anything extraordinary."

"When mellowness spontaneously manifests in your face, and the appearance of a humane man, a noble man, emerges in your interactions and associations with other people, you will be like sunny springtime, a blessing to all beings. This is the mellowness of a manly man."

Outer Appearances Reflect Inner Thoughts

Our facial expressions are often dead giveaways of what we're really thinking and feeling inside. And just correcting these outer expressions without fixing the issue at its root will rarely fool anyone for long.

"Appearances are the substance of the vessel into which natural and mind are placed by the natural order," Soko wrote. "When inner thoughts are improper, appearance is influenced by them, the manifestation being

outwardly evident. If you want to rectify your appearance, you have to correct and clarify what you think inside."

Soko said that in the past, noblemen often paid close attention to etiquette and outward appearance. He notes that in the ancient Chinese text "Classic on Manners," it says, "A noble man appears relaxed." Soko explained, "Relaxed means an unhurried, quietly deliberate manner."

"Since the manifestations of outward appearance are each induced by inward thoughts, when you examine and clarify your inner thoughts to correct them according to what's involved, your appearance will conform to this," he wrote.

Of course, this relationship goes both ways. As Soko notes, correcting one's outer appearance can help improve one's moods—one's thoughts and emotions—in the same way that improving mood can help correct one's outer appearance.

"Mentality is all internal, while interaction of physical activity with people and things, including looking and listening, is external," he writes. "The internal and external are

basically one, not separate.

"When manners are correct externally, moods are correct internally. When there is any external disarray, there is invariably an internal response to it."

Proper Manners for Every Occasion

At the same time, having the same outward expression isn't always proper. Soko cites the "Classic of Manners" to note that every occasion calls for its respective mood and behavior, and that as a matter of etiquette and respect for others, a person should try to act properly at each occasion.

He writes that if a person reflects on each situation accordingly, the correct mood and appearance should be obvious. "If you clarify external manners thoroughly and keep them in accord with their natural laws, the keys to psychological technique should naturally become clear."

Respect for Others

The idea of consideration and respect for others is also a key component in this. Soko refers to these as "dignified manners," and cites the 13th-century Chinese Confucian scholar Xu Wenzheng who said, "When dignified manners are outwardly correct, this is getting the general outline of comporting yourself respectfully."

When explaining how to apply these dignified manners in listening, looking, and speaking, Soko again cites the "Classic of Manners," stating, "Don't be disrespectful." It's a matter of putting these words into practice.

"Generally speaking, courtesy arises from the need of the individual's heart, with natural measures in regard to things, and the dignity of its expression inviolable," he said.

Achieving an unmoved state is of course easier said than done. This plays into similar principles in the stoic traditions of ancient Greece and Rome. It's that cool and naturally tough demeanor—yet lighthearted, relaxed, and able to think clearly under stress.

Soko said that a good person needs to first get rid of the "mood of neediness" and to also foster a mood that is "magnanimous and firm, able to expand beyond myriad things, undaunted by anything."

BOOK REVIEW

WHEN DOING LESS IS DOING MORE

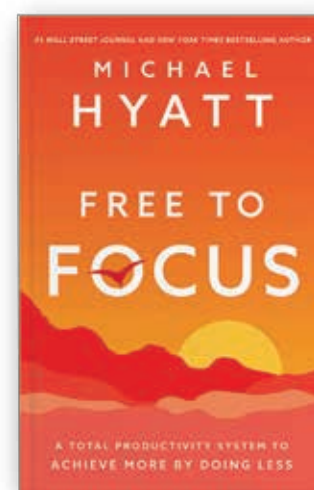
Why Michael Hyatt's 'Free to Focus' should be on every mom's bookshelf

BARBARA DANZA

This spring, leadership expert Michael Hyatt released his latest book, "Free to Focus, A Total Productivity System to Achieve More by Doing Less." Surely, Hyatt had entrepreneurs and business executives in mind when creating this guide to a distraction-free, meaningful life.

It's clear, however, that a much wider audience can benefit from this practical and insightful read. In fact, one group that likely is not considered part of the target market for this book is moms.

It's a book that should be on every mom's radar. Many moms, whether they are working moms or stay-at-home moms, play the role of household executive. They are in charge of overseeing all major projects and activities, managing schedules

**'Free to Focus'**

Author
Michael Hyatt
Publisher
Baker Books
Pages
256
Price
\$26.99

and finances, directing education and maintaining facilities, in addition to formulating big picture visions and goals for their families.

Much like corporate executives and small business owners (which some moms also are, of course), they dream of, as Hyatt puts it, "starting each day with clarity and ending with a sense of satisfaction, accomplishment, and energy to spare."

However, the same challenges that inflict their business counterparts prey on moms as well. Distractions from every possible source, including digital devices, other people, and oneself; the inability to say no to overcommitment; the inability to identify what matters most; the hesitance to delegate or drop commitments altogether; the lack of attention on energy and rest—all of

these get in the way of mothers' ability to focus on what's most meaningful in their lives, and their families' lives.

Practical Steps

"Free to Focus" walks the reader through the mistakes we all make and the elements in our lives that derail our focus on what matters most. It walks the reader through practical steps to eliminate the non-essentials and gain clarity.

This isn't a productivity book peppered with business jargon. It's accessible to anyone who would like to enjoy more freedom in their lives by pruning their garden (so to speak) significantly so that the most vibrant plants can thrive. Indeed, Hyatt calls for doing less.

The process Hyatt prescribes in "Free to Focus" is broken down into three simple steps: stop, cut, and act.

Stop

The first step, stop, calls for introspection. You first need to pause and reflect, according to Hyatt, on what you want, what activities can best help you get there, and how you'll efficiently manage your own energy to do so. A message I know many moms need to hear is found within this section—that rest, nutrition, exercise, healthy relationships, and even play are essential to rejuvenating your mind and body.

Cut

The second step, cut, calls on readers to "flex (their) 'no' muscle." Among other things, in this section, you'll learn how to say "no" well and how to leverage systems and rituals to introduce more automation in your productivity, along with the art of delegation.

Act

Once you've clarified what's important and eliminated, automated, or delegated any activity that you can, you should be left with the essential activity that you'll dedicate your focus to. The third step, act, shows you how to organize and plan your schedule to most effectively and manage various distractions. This section is chock-full of practical tips and advice to managing the stuff of life.

In all, if you're a mom who feels like you're running on an endlessly spinning hamster wheel, if you're stuck on "busy" at all times, or if you're consistently overwhelmed with life, you might just find the insights in "Free to Focus" to be the guide you need to a road that's less busy and more meaningful.



The high school football team The Saints in practice, in "The Last Whistle."

WISDOM OF TRADITION

IN THE GARDEN

MINDING OUR MANNERS

The Importance of Small Courtesies

JEFF MINICK

Good manners. Utter those words, and some of us probably think of the table, a napkin in the lap, chewing with our lips closed, and eating with a fork rather than with our fingers. Others, a little more antiquated, might envision giving up a seat on the subway to a pregnant woman, holding the door open for elderly man, or saying thank you to the young woman who helps us retrieve our carry-on luggage from the airplane's overhead compartment.



In "Why Manners Matter: The Case for Civilized Behavior in a Barbarous World," the delightfully named author Lucida Holdforth even found a few people who consider manners the affectation of snobs, who "immediately tag a defender of manners as (a) authoritarian and (b) nostalgic for a bigoted past."

Clearly, a broader definition of manners is in order. Near the beginning of "Why Manners Matter," Holdforth offers the succinct "manners are a civil mode of human interaction."

If that sounds a little technical or vague, we might turn to the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. If you don't want others bullying you, sneering at you, and shoving ahead of you through the library entrance, then you shouldn't do the same. To win respect, we offer respect. (Of course, if that respect is met with rudeness, then we must sometimes change course.)

My online dictionary offers this succinct definition: "good manners: polite or well-bred social behavior."

By that definition, most of us probably think of ourselves as possessed of good manners. We may also know someone who displays extraordinary manners. Thirty years ago, a friend of mine married a woman from Long Island. Because I knew few people at the wedding festivities, I had plenty of time to observe the other guests. One, in particular, a man in his mid-20s, struck me as a remarkable practitioner of civility. He made the rounds greeting guests, offered an arm to an elderly woman making her way to the exit, and knelt down to speak to small children. But his treatment of others extended beyond mere gestures. In some mysterious way, he communicated care and concern for all those present.

If that young man were a doctor, his bedside manner alone would win him the deep affection of his patients. So how do human beings acquire manners?

If we look back at that dictionary definition, we note the words "well-bred social behavior." Good manners, alas, are not part of human nature. Quite the contrary, in fact. Along with laws, manners came into being to curb instincts antithetical to society. Without the hedgerows of law and the customs of civility, we would daily be shooting one another dead in the streets, stealing our neighbor's goods, and elbowing our way through life under the banner of "devil take the hindmost."

No—unfortunately, we must be taught manners. Some guide must introduce us to the basic social graces.

Many children learn etiquette in the home. Some young adults receive instruction in good manners at certain universities, which now teach such topics as

table etiquette as part of their "adulting" courses. And of course, some never learn at all.

Our culture at large offers little instruction or support. It emphasizes rights over responsibilities, individual freedoms over requisite duties. At times, particularly in our media, it extols boorish behavior. Compare the Kennedy-Nixon debates to those of the last few presidential elections. During those first televised debates, we find no ad hominem attacks, no attempts at slander, no real slinging of mud. Those two men had their weaknesses of character, but they debated politics, not personalities. In that same era, profanity in the public square was almost unheard of. Today, of course, obscenities delivered over the air by celebrities and actors are commonplace.

"Ah repression," Holdforth laments at one point in her book. "So sadly undervalued in modern life."

When we lack manners, or when we lose control of ourselves, we lose what Holdforth describes as a key element of our personhood. She continues with this comment:

"There's a rebuke that's now out of fashion: 'Sir, you forget yourself!' It assumes that one's real self is not necessarily the base authentic creature. Rather, the real self is that artificial self, the thoughtful person who subscribes to higher standards of behavior. And it turns out that to be told you have forgotten yourself is actually something of a compliment—it assumes there's something valuable to remember."

Practicing good manners affords us the opportunity to ennoble others while at the same time endowing us with grace and dignity.

If that practice became more widespread, if homes and schools became hothouses for breeding politeness, good manners might then flower in our public life. Gone would be the radio show host who talks over his guests, the politician who rudely berates a man summoned to appear before a congressional committee, the actress who feels that somehow she has the right to curse a sitting president.

As Holdforth tells us, "As individuals and societies, we tread a delicate balance between order and freedom, personal liberty and social stability. Manners are a modest and effective means to help us resolve this complex equation."

Judith Martin, known as Miss Manners, seconds this idea: "Etiquette is all human social behavior. If you're a hermit on a mountain, you don't have to worry about etiquette; if somebody comes up the mountain, then you've got a problem. It matters because we want to live in reasonably harmonious communities."

The United States has more laws on the books than ever before, in part because of our loss of civility toward one another. We as individuals have the power to alter that situation. By extending small courtesies to our fellow citizens, by taking control of our interior selves, we can bring change, however slight, to the culture in which we live.

Manners maketh man, the old adage tells us.

True. Manners also maketh culture.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, North Carolina. Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Virginia. See JeffMinick.com to follow his blog.

ALEX74/SHUTTERSTOCK (TOP) POTAPOV ALEXANDER/SHUTTERSTOCK

All Things Green and Growing

CARDINALE MONTANO

"To mow or not to mow?" That is the question, and it clings like an unwelcome burr to the back of this otherwise pristine June day.

I sink down onto the slope and stretch out my legs, feet inadvertently pointing toward the mower, where it has been neatly parked under the deck and out of the rain for several weeks. I sense its silent satisfaction with that arrangement.

The sun runs gentle, equanimous fingers of light through grass grown too tall now for comfortable mowing, subsequently quashing the desire to argue anything really, at all.

I roll over onto my stomach. Chin to my hands, an entire world in and of itself opens up at eye level.

With all its intricate workings magnified at such close proximity, the only remaining argument I have left is with the idiom "like watching grass grow." I could not be less bored, doing exactly that.

In front of my nose, a silken-white dandelion seed-pod gracefully drifts downward, settling on the feathery ends of switchgrass, and lifting off again with a light gust of my exhalation. Glistening dew-drops succumb to the latter part of the morning and break apart, sliding in broken rhythm down various stem sheaths. Multiple tiny sweat bees dive into the depths of blue-eyed grass blossoms and reappear in an awkward, tail-end-first shuffle, their quivering bodies dusted with golden pollen.

Leaning in, a buttercup begs the age-old question, "Do you like butter?" I whisper back, "Oh yes, I do!" catching a caterpillar in mid-forward reach from his hind set of feet, off guard, with my answer. The slender length of his translucent green body ambitiously stretches to its limits, defying the law of balance. Groping blindly in mid-air, just shy of the next leaf.

An ant's antennae have appeared over the ridge of my forearm. They wave back and forth to taste, hear, and smell out the nature of this large imposition on its trail, hurried feet tickling my skin in their hasty retreat back down to safer ground. Stage left, as it were, in this theater of all things green and growing.

Through the thinner, upper ends of grass, the amethyst glow of phlox. A pale yellow butterfly's wings on white clover. Violets. Bristle grass. Petrichor. How apt, that the word to describe a scent so intrinsically

earthy should be pulled from the name of the fluid which coursed through the veins of Greek gods. I imagine them easily lured down by this feast of the senses, from the heights of their perch on Mount Olympus.

Vulnerable to human passion, forever wreaking havoc with mortals, making chaotic hay while the sun shone, as it were. And I picture the mower, tearing likewise through this peaceful, miniature, world like a meddling god on a nonetheless well-meant path of destruction. I am caught up in a "Horton Hears a Who" moment.

On a mission to purchase a trowel at the hardware store recently, I was perplexed by the variety of weed-killers lining the shelves of the garden aisle.

"Your lawn is out of control! There are weeds sprouting up everywhere!" warned

a line of advertisement. God forbid a particularly aggressive species of dandelion should suddenly rear its savage, golden head, teeth bared and claws exposed, to attack that precious plot of Kentucky bluegrass! Not to mention the gruesome threat of a particularly predatorial clump of crabgrass, stealthily stalking the finest of fescue, laying it all to waste in one fell swoop. Oh, the power of fear, the insidious planting of lawn-stigma!

In the more tranquil waking hour over a cup of tea, I contemplated the definition of "weed": "A wild plant growing where it is not wanted and in competition with cultivated plants." Indeed.

I opt to meet things halfway and mow only partially, leaving patches of tall growth in places where the wildflowers are thickest. A landscaper's version of a hairdresser's worst nightmare, and most decidedly not a Better Homes and Gardens moment.

But the busy pollinators are not burdened by vanity and thereby tirelessly continue with their earnest, dedicated work, so that humans have food to eat, and cleaner air to fill their lungs.

I sigh as I open the choke and pull the starter cord. And the mower is out of gas.

Cardinale Montano is a freelance writer living in West Stockbridge, Mass. She shares her creativity with good friends, family, and eager learners, and celebrates daily the blessings of nature in the beautiful Berkshires. She is the founder and designer at LineflaxAndRoving.com

JONAS WECKSCHMIED/UNSPLASH



To mow, or not to mow, that is the question.



FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

Thursday, July 11, 2019



Farewell to the Farm

by Robert Louis Stevenson

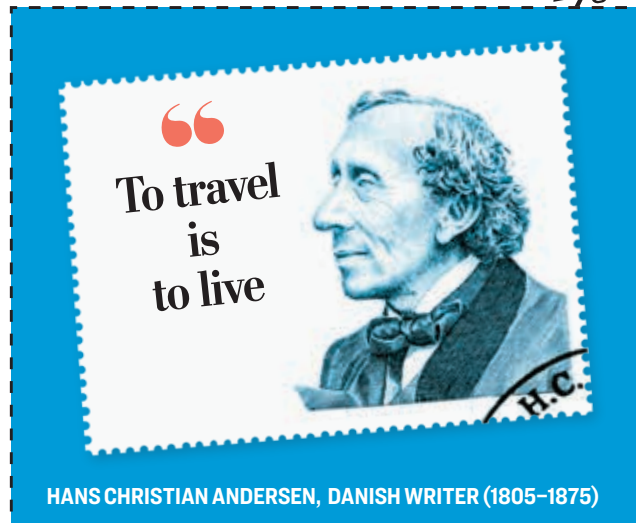
The coach is at the door at last; The eager children, mounting fast And kissing hands, in chorus sing: Good-bye, good-bye, to everything!

To house and garden, field and lawn, The meadow-gates we swung upon, To pump and stable, tree and swing, Good-bye, good-bye, to everything!

Crack goes the whip, and off we go; The trees and houses smaller grow; Last, round the woody turn we swing: Good-bye, good-bye, to everything!



BIRAVEN/SHUTTERSTOCK



To travel is to live

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN, DANISH WRITER (1805-1875)

OLGA POPOVA/SHUTTERSTOCK

WHAT GOES THROUGH TOWNS, UP HILLS, AND DOWN HILLS BUT NEVER MOVES?



PITTINGANGHAWA/SHUTTERSTOCK

By Aidan Danza, age 13

LONGEST ANIMAL MIGRATIONS

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

We humans like to take a vacation every once and a while. However, some would be surprised to know that animals take their own "vacations" that last a whole season (usually winter). While some animals take very short migrations or only migrate if they absolutely have to, others are full-on, long-distance migrants.

MONARCH BUTTERFLY

Monarch butterflies have one of the most amazing migrations out there. Since their migration can take six months, and monarch butterflies only live between two weeks and several months, they conduct their migration like a relay race. One generation of monarchs will leave from their breeding grounds in the north and have their babies along the way. Once the babies are grown, they continue on their parents' journey, who have by now died. This cycle repeats until the butterflies get to their wintering grounds in Mexico. In this way, it takes several generations of butterflies to make one migration round trip. Their migration can be a few thousand miles at most.

GRAY WHALE

Gray whales have the longest migration route of a mammal. One western gray whale migrated from Russia to Mexico, and back again. This makes a roundtrip total of 13,988 miles. This whale, named Varvara (the Russian equivalent of Barbara) did not hug the coast to orient herself, which suggests she knows the route. The previous record belonged to a Humpback whale that traveled 10,190 miles.



ARCTIC TERN

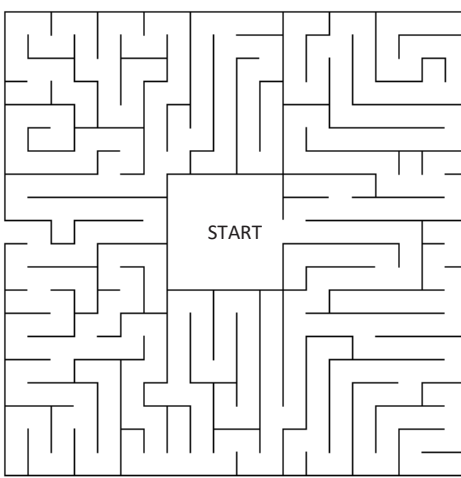
Arctic terns are marathon migrants. They migrate from Greenland all the way to Antarctica every year, with a 44,000-mile roundtrip! This migration is the longest of any animal in the world. Their migration to Antarctica is long. They set off from Greenland and stop off in the North Atlantic to feed for a month. After this, the terns set off again for the South. On the route back, they hop from Antarctica to Africa to South America to the Arctic. While this would seem to take up more time, they are actually avoiding flying into exhausting headwinds. They are following wind patterns, thereby having the wind at their back.

SOOTY SHEARWATERS

The sooty shearwater breeds in the South Pacific and South Atlantic oceans, where they begin to breed in October. They raise their young (including incubation) for a total of five months, and they set off for the Arctic in March. They reach the sub-arctic in June or July, and summer there before crossing the ocean and returning on the opposite side that they came. In this way, the Arctic tern and the sooty shearwater avoid ever seeing winter, instead migrating to each polar summer.



AMAZING ESCAPES!



USE THE FOUR NUMBERS IN THE CORNERS, AND THE OPERANDS (+, -, AND X) to build an equation to get the solution in the middle. There may be more than one "unique" solution but, there may also be "equivalent" solutions. For example: 6 + (7 X 3) + 1 = 28 and 1+ (7 X 3) + 6 = 28

Easy puzzle 1

4	7		
43			
3	5		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Easy 1
6 + 5 + 7 = 18

Medium puzzle 1

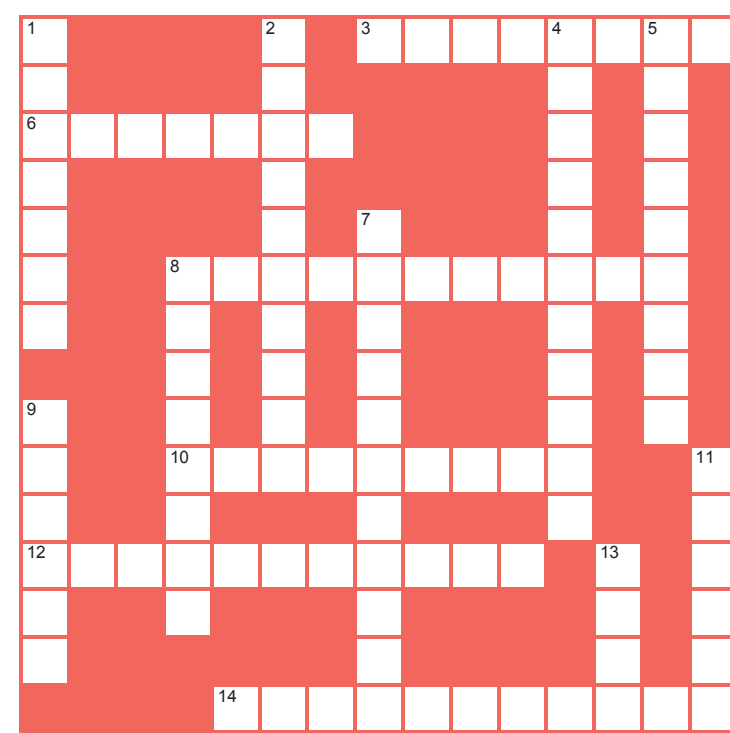
7	20		
30			
5	15		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Medium 1
02 - 91 + 9 x 7
9 - 2 x (91 - 02)

Hard puzzle 1

26	30		
63			
20	27		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Hard 1
02 - 92 + 72 + 06

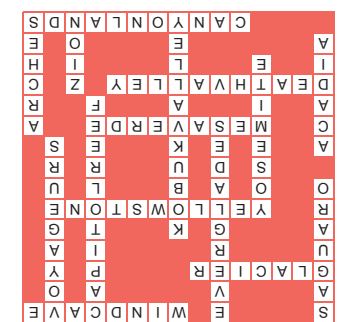


Down

- 1 Park named for a protected cactus (7)
- 2 Park with extensive marshlands in southern Florida (10)
- 4 It surrounds the Waterpocket Fold (11)
- 5 40% of this Minnesota park is water (9)
- 7 Arctic Park in northern Alaska (11)

Across

- 3 National Park near Mt. Rushmore (8)
- 6 Montana Park named for an Ice Age remnant (7)
- 8 The first national park (11)
- 10 Colorado cliff dwelling site (9)
- 12 The lowest point in America (11)
- 14 Colorado River park (11)



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Stan Krzyston, pastor



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