

# THE EPOCH TIMES LIFE & TRADITION



For boys, being abandoned by a father leaves a deep wound. Smithbaker is trying to fix that through mentoring programs.



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TURN AWAY  
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# 8 Simple Ways to Lift Your Spirits

BARBARA DANZA

Could you use a pick-me-up? A little smile? Some light-heartedness?

Lifting your spirit may be as simple as walking around the block or taking a hot shower. If you're looking to easily brighten your day, try one of these ideas.

## Name Your Favs

Keep a running list of your favorite things. Maybe it's the smell of fresh coffee brewing in the morning, the sounds of your children laughing, the way your pen writes, taking a dip in the pool... Whenever you think of something you truly love in your life, add it to the list. I keep mine on the last page of my journal so I can flip to it at any time, and either add more or read it and enjoy the simple abundance that can be found in life.

## Find Humor

However you like to consume your humor—a favorite

show, stand-up comedy, dad jokes, reading funny stories, newspaper comic strips, internet memes—just find what gets you laughing and dive in. Laughter is the best medicine, after all.

## Organize Something

Choose a very small, easy spot in your home to tidy up: an unmade bed, a cluttered side table, a messy drawer, or an entryway full of shoes. Take a few minutes to quickly straighten and then look back in admiration at what you've done. There's something about creating order out of chaos that just lifts the spirit.

## Take a Walk

Shoes on, walk out the door. Keep going. Go for a short walk or a long walk, but just walk. More of a bicycle rider? Go for a cruise. Moving your body outside is one of the simplest and easiest ways possible to get those endorphins pumping. Bonus points if you leave your phone at home.

## Phone a Friend

Pick up the phone and call a loved one. Connection is important. Call someone you haven't spoken to in a while, someone you know



ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK  
Moving your body outside is one of the simplest and easiest ways possible to get those endorphins pumping.

**Call someone you haven't spoken to in a while, someone you know could use a simple 'Hello. How are you?' You'll lift two spirits at once.**

could use a simple "Hello. How are you?" You'll lift two spirits at once.

## Buck Your Schedule

Sometimes you need to throw up your arms and do something different—if only for a day. Take a break, head into nature, clean your home, give yourself a spa day (even one at home), do whatever is rejuvenating and different. A little change can go a long way.

## Cleanse Yourself

I don't mean a dietary cleanse... I mean get in the tub or the shower and allow yourself to unwind with warm, relaxing water. Take as long as you want. It's amazing how your perspective can shift after a nice hot shower or bath.

## Let Go

More often than not the things that weigh down our spirits originate within us. Take a look inside and see if there is anything you can let go of. Things like expectations of others, anger, sadness, fear, or jealousy continue to do us harm as long as we choose to hold on to them. It may not be very easy, but if you can at least recognize those things in yourself, you're more than halfway there.



## A Real-Life Rapunzel

CATHERINE BOLTON

A mom in Fishers, Indiana, has been called the "real-life Rapunzel" thanks to her long and luscious locks, which measure 5 feet, 6 inches in length.

Andrea Stano, who grew up in Hawaii and Micronesia, has never been to a hairdresser for a formal haircut. Instead, she trims the ends of her long locks occasionally, while letting her strawberry-blond mane grow all the way down to her ankles.

She spends around 15 minutes a day applying a hair mask and washes her magnificent mane twice a week to keep it strong and healthy. Yet, the secret that keeps the hair truly healthy, she insists, is eating a spoonful of peanut butter every day.

"I truly believe this step keeps my hair healthy, and helps it to grow faster and thicker."

Stano turns heads with her fantastic head of hair, which is often braided into fancy styles not unlike the fairy tale princess Rapunzel.

"I grew up in Hawaii and in Micronesia where most women and girls have long hair but I have always loved keeping my hair long and healthy," she said.

"People are very kind and complimentary about my hair," she adds. "They admire how I have it braided, and when they ask how long it is, they are always shocked to hear it is ankle length."

She told Caters News that Rapunzel has definitely served as inspiration for her hair and the styles she tries out, which she says are part of the fun of having hair like she does.

"The possibilities are endless with long hair, and each day I think of how I will fix my hair today," she said. "I love to try out new braids and hairstyles and have posted pictures of hundreds of hairstyles on my blog."

Stano now lives in the United States with her husband Justin and their baby daughter Katie. Even now, though, you can see her in pictures with her gorgeous hair still woven up in intricate braids. She told Caters News



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF CATERS NEWS  
(Left) Andrea Stano grew up in Hawaii and Micronesia. (Right) Stano says eating a spoonful of peanut butter a day is her secret to keeping her hair healthy.

that she loves to think up new hairstyles, and that she's gotten the opportunity to meet new people around the world thanks to the blog she keeps to update people on the styles she's tried out.

"Long hair has given me opportunities to meet new friends around the world," she said. "I have many good friends now who I

first met through our mutual interest in long hair, and soon we became friends for other reasons.

"Some of my hair friends follow my missionary work in the islands, and sometimes they even send gifts for the children I work with. Long hair can bring us together even though we are far apart."

## Partially Blind, Deaf Dog, Now Adopted, Comforts Foster Animals

LORI C. SUMMERS

As a former foster dog, this partially blind and deaf dog knows how scary it is to be in a new place. So, it made its mission to comfort all the pets its owner rescues, gain their trust, and make them feel at ease in their stressful situation.

Sherio is a Maremma sheepdog and bulldog cross whose life hasn't been easy. It's partially blind and deaf to begin with. It has spent time in 12 different foster homes and two shelters, and was also adopted into four different families only to be returned just as many times due to its anxious behavior. When long-term foster rescuer Sheryl Smith heard about Sherio, she knew she was its best chance at a happy life.

"He was a handful, but everyone else had given up on him and we weren't prepared to do that too," Smith explained, The Dodo reported.



Sherio is partially blind and deaf.



Sherio's owner says, "Poor Tiny Tolley has no idea what just slapped her in the face." The dog, she noted, seemed very proud, though.



Even though it was permanently adopted into Smith's home back in 2018, the pooch still suffers from its previous traumas. "He still to this day cries in the car because he thinks he's being dropped off somewhere else," she shared.

In spite of its issues, this little

pup also has shown extraordinary character. According to Smith, who regularly rescues and fosters pets in need, Sherio made it its mission in life to make new arrivals feel safe.

"Just after his rescue, I rescued a pregnant dog who was too sick

to care for her pups, so Sherio climbed in with them and started cleaning them," she recalled. "He's done that with every rescue I take in. He will just sit patiently with the feral cats and kittens and bonds so strongly with them. They trust him before they trust me." Smith also cares for abused and neglected cats, an effort she supports through a GoFundMe page.

It was in January 2020 that Sherio became a viral hit for looking after a rescue kitty named Tiny Tolley. The owner posted some adorable photos on Facebook with the dog and the cat and a caption that read, "Poor Tiny Tolley has no idea what just slapped her in the face." The dog, she noted, seemed very proud, though.

While Tiny Tolley was sick and scared, the pooch refused to leave its side. It just stood by the kitten's kennel so that it would feel safe and secure. "Sherio never left her crate for a second," Smith said. "He knew

she was so sick and so scared and that she needed to be comforted." And to the owner, that shows she was right all along to adopt a dog everyone else had given up on. "His love and compassion for the other rescues is nothing short of amazing," Smith added.

Now, this incredible dog has its own Facebook page, where Smith regularly posts photos of its hilarious antics. The page delves further into the pup's inspiring story, and it's as heartwarming as it is touching. Smith has also faced many challenges caring for Sherio, including separation anxiety and aggression, but it has all been worth it in the end.

In spite of its partial blindness and deafness, the pooch even managed to learn tricks in sign language! "He's a hard dog and tests my patience, but I wouldn't give him up for the world," the woman writes at the end of a heartwarming Facebook post.



John Smithbaker with field buddy Justin after speaking to a group of men at a church in Mississippi.



The Fathers in the Field team with some supporters.



John Smithbaker is co-founder of the Colorado-based ministry Fathers in the Field.

## John Smithbaker

on Forgiveness, Fatherless Boys, and What That Has to Do With the Fate of the Nation

CATHERINE YANG

Being abandoned by a father leaves a soul-deep impression.

For John Smithbaker, he sought to mask the wound with perfectionism and achievement, grappling with a mental balance sheet that would prove he was worthy of recognition and affection. His sister went the other way, fleeing from and numbing the pain by running away from home, shirking responsibility, and turning to drugs and alcohol.

It can also be a combination of these coping mechanisms.

One of the biggest lies society tells these children—about 20 million of them—is that they're fine, and don't need a father to provide the things they think they're missing. Smithbaker says that often even comes from very well-meaning adults.

They don't realize that children hear this and think they need to suppress the hurt, which festers and manifests itself in myriad ways anyway.

"When you're young, you don't know how to define it or describe it but you're aware of it," said Smithbaker, co-founder of the Colorado-based ministry Fathers in the Field. "You have a deep sense of hurt and longing and blaming yourself for being fatherless, and you know that the cards are stacked against you because you're trying to navigate boyhood into manhood on your own."

"And the boiling point typically comes when adolescence happens, when all the hormones collide with being an adult."

It took Smithbaker 40 years to forgive his father.

## A Dark Road to Forgiveness

Smithbaker says those who cope like he did end up overprioritizing worldly success such as making money, and earning fame and glory. He's a successful Wyoming-based businessman and CEO of his own company, and adds that you can look at the great men of history and almost pick out the ones who didn't have a father and had everything to prove. But that tends to come at the cost of any healthy personal life, Smithbaker says, and the statistics back him up.

Without forgiveness, the wound continues to fester into adulthood, ending marriages and begetting more fatherlessness. Smithbaker says his own marriage was on the road to divorce. Married with children and wondering whether he would end up abandoning his family as well, Smithbaker said he didn't even realize he was looking for forgiveness until it found him.

He had been driving alone in the dark on a dirt road near home, when the anguish he felt caught up to him.

Smithbaker turned to God. "I know how to describe it now, but I didn't at the time," Smithbaker said. "But when I was on my hands and knees begging for forgiveness and seeing all my other horrible sins flash before me, me desiring forgiveness, I thought I was done. But then I heard my heavenly Father say to me, 'No, now you need to forgive your earthly father for leaving you.'"

He had gone through life refusing to forgive his father—every single day, and multiple times a day, because each time that hurt manifested itself, it was a sign of him refusing to forgive. And when



John Smithbaker (L) with mentor father Steve and field buddy Garren, showing off the boy's first turkey.

Smithbaker had that spiritual epiphany, he realized that his refusal to forgive was his deepest sin, and that God can't forgive one who doesn't forgive.

Knowing just how much he had been forgiven in the eyes of God, how could he not forgive?

"There's no way I could not forgive," he said.

**The forgiveness of your father for leaving you and your family is really at the center, at the core of healing this deep festering wound.**

John Smithbaker, co-founder, Fathers in the Field

That moment flipped the script in his head, sending him on a completely different path, and completely changing his relationship with his wife and children. He hadn't been particularly religious before then, but once he accepted God into his life, he wanted to start doing the right things.

Soon, the right people and know-how were swiftly brought into his life.

"The forgiveness of your father for leaving you and your family is really at the center, at the core of healing this deep festering wound," Smithbaker said.

His experience also taught him that it's a spiritual wound, and that's how it must be addressed.

"It's not an issue of manning up and being strong enough," he said. "It's about understanding how much you have been forgiven."

people tell us anymore because all that has been proven lies by people who are supposed to honor their word."

The mentors and boys meet four times a month for an outdoor activity, and it isn't until halfway through the second year that forgiveness is mentioned. There are sample scripts to help mentors broach the topic, and Smithbaker says by that point, the boys universally have pretty much the same response: they're listening.

**It took Smithbaker 40 years to forgive his father.**

When the mentor brings up forgiveness, they're taken aback because that's the one thing they've told themselves they will never do, but they're listening, and they want to hear why, even if they're not ready to forgive at that point.

By the end of the third year, the boys are encouraged to write a forgiveness letter to their biological fathers, even if it may be years before they actually write it, and they only ever deliver it to their church.

"Now, he knows the escape hatch to his fatherless prison," Smithbaker said. "And how not to be held bondage by this soul wound that controls every aspect of his life."

The whole purpose of Smithbaker's organization is to heal that father-wound, he said. "It's not to make good citizens—God will take care of that when the rest happens," Smithbaker said. "It does us no good to make productive citizens if their soul perishes in hell."

## The Greatest Underutilized Asset

Essentially every social ill can be linked to fatherless homes and the breakdown of the family, as Smithbaker learned when he started to do research in starting Fathers in the Field. The more he read, the more he found everything from crime and addiction to joblessness and promiscuity had the same root problem.

It's why Smithbaker thinks of the ministry as the "Great American Rescue Mission."

"If we can solve this we can turn our country around and put it on better footing again," Smithbaker said. "I always say we're at the front end of the tsunami, but it's coming down hard and we're starting the second generation of fatherlessness, because fatherlessness begets more fatherlessness, so we're going to really feel it this next generation."

Despite the statistics Smithbaker grapples with, he's optimistic that things will change. He has seen the tremendous impact of a one-on-one relationship on individual souls, and in the past 12 years, the organization has grown to work with almost 500 churches in 36 states, and has heard countless testimonials from boys and single mothers.

"It's not about the numbers, it's about the impact on the hearts and souls," Smithbaker said. Some churches have mentored one boy and others close to 100, and in the process, there are men realizing this is something they can do have a tremendous impact.

"The greatest underutilized asset in our country are godly men sitting the church wondering how they should be deployed," Smithbaker says. "They want to use God-given gifts to impact the soul, and use the passion God gave him, whatever it is: automotive, hunting, fishing, woodworking, photography, sports, whatever to invest in the life of another."

"It's just a really powerful dynamic that's going on in our country and really what's going to, I believe, make or break our country."

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF JOHN SMITHBAKER

# Day-by-Day: Making the Most of the Present

JEFF MINICK

Many of us turn off our televisions, close our computers or books, and wander off to bed at night dissatisfied, wondering why we accomplished so little that day. Having set ourselves goals that morning over coffee, here we are once again, worn thin and ready for sleep but discontented by what we have done and what we have left undone. As we drift off, we vow to embrace tomorrow, follow through on plans, and tackle projects great and small.

But that next day brings another repetition of frustration and a sense of failure. Time for a change.

We can enhance every day by making some small, painless alterations in our approach to the time given us. Here are a few simple suggestions to help you fall into sleep satisfied by your accomplishments.

## Make a To-Do List

Some people, including me, are great list-makers. We write down tomorrow's self-assignments before going to sleep or, like me, map out a rough schedule when we wake the following morning. In my case, it's a rare day when I scratch through all the items on my list—that scratching-through brings enormous satisfaction—and so I move the unmarked items to the next day's tasks.

For those of you who are hard on yourselves, who reach day's end feeling as if you have done little or nothing, try a different sort of list. Before you sleep, write down everything worthwhile you accomplished since getting out of bed: feeding the kids a wonderful supper, pitching an idea to your boss, going for a run, shopping for groceries, speaking to a broken-hearted friend for half an hour. You may be surprised to find your time is much more productive than you imagine.

## Avoid Procrastination

For some of us, this is a tough one. We are the ones who select the easy or pleasurable obligations and put aside the difficult ones. We enjoy getting our hands dirty in the garden, but meanwhile that pile of bills goes unattended on our kitchen

counter. We telephone a friend and chat for half an hour, but once again neglect calling our stepmother.

Not so long ago, I needed to make corrections to some Latin tests I had written for a homeschooling company. Every day "Latin tests" appeared on my list, and every day it reappeared on the next day's list. After about two weeks, I finally broke out the tests, opened my computer, and began making corrections.

That much-dreaded job took me about half an hour from start to finish.

And yes, I felt foolish for having dawdled for so long on so simple a project.

## Focus on the Task at Hand

When we concentrate on a job or chore, when we give ourselves fully to a task, we complete the work more easily and more efficiently than otherwise. Let's say you're mowing the lawn. You're

thirsty, you turn off the mower and get a glass of water from the kitchen, and you start back outside, but pause to see if you have any email. No mail, but you next decide to check out your favorite website and see what news has been posted since you looked an hour earlier. You then remember that you've forgotten to look at another favorite site, where you become entranced by several stories posted there.

When you close your laptop, an hour has passed, and it's raining. Avoid distraction and complete the mission.

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When we concentrate on a job or chore, when we give ourselves fully to a task, we complete the work more easily and more efficiently than otherwise.

groceries with the cash left in my wallet, sped back to the bank, and found the money was gone.

And here's the kicker: I left my change for the groceries in the machine at the store.

"Haste makes waste" took on a whole new meaning that day for me.

## Expect the Unexpected

For a good part of my life, I owned a homeschooling mail-order company and taught literature, history, and Latin to seminars of home-educated students. As a result, moms new to homeschooling sometimes asked me for advice. "Start every day at a given time," I would tell them. "If the school day is supposed to start at 9 a.m., start at 9 a.m. no matter what. Because many times something will happen and the day will fall apart, but at least you started on time."

## By girding ourselves for the extraordinary, we can often render it ordinary.

Allowing for the unexpected can bring calm and stability when the unforeseen arrives. You had grand plans to get together with friends for a Saturday hike when your elderly mom calls and

asks if you can take her to the pharmacy for some necessary medication. It's a Friday night, you're whipped out from a 60-hour workweek, and you want nothing more than a glass of wine, the sofa, and a good movie when your sister calls, weeping over the phone about the antics of her son, your beloved nephew who lately has become rebellious.

By girding ourselves for the extraordinary, we can often render it ordinary.

## Let Tomorrow Take Care of Tomorrow

All too often we fret about the future, wasting time and energy imagining disasters and difficulties that have yet to happen. Many of these calamities turn out to be less arduous than we'd anticipated, and a good number of them never take place at all.

If you go back to the title of this piece, you will notice that the last word is a double entendre. The present is the present. When we make it ours, we can unwrap that gift, engage its joys and sorrows, and live more fully.

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, N.C., Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See [Jeff-Minick.com](http://Jeff-Minick.com) to follow his blog.

# Why Children Turn Away From Their Parents

What to know about peer culture and what to do about it

MICHAEL COURTER

Being a good parent is hard, and it's harder now than it has ever been before. Some may say it's always been a challenge to be a good parent, and that children have not changed much over the years. It's true children have not changed, but the circumstances of parenting are different, including the increasing role of technology and the breakdown of the family. But there is one other, important culprit—and parents may be inviting that culprit right into their home.

In their tour-de-force parenting book "Hold On to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More Than Peers," Gordon Neufeld and Gabor Maté exorcise the role of peer culture in the lives of today's youth and how it affects our ability to parent our children.

Parents often encourage these relationships, seeing them as a healthy sign that their children can make friends. However, once children value their friends more than their family, they will adopt the culture of the peers, and you may be left wondering whatever happened to your sweet little boy or girl. This is not a natural developmental phase of childhood; it is a rejection of the values of the family, and the acceptance of the values of the peer culture.

One of the main sources of a parent's authority is the primary emotional bond that a child feels toward the people he is closest to. The child is emotionally dependent on the parent for comfort and closeness. When this bond is intact a child will look to a parent for guidance, direction, values, and education. This is the context that makes parenting possible.

## Peer Values Over the Family's Values

Peer orientation occurs when a child's emotional bond with their peers supersedes his bond with his parents. It is not a developmental phase—it can happen at any age as children develop friendships. Once a child's primary attachment is oriented toward his peers, he will consider them more important than his

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family on an emotional level.

Once a child's primary attachment is with his peers, it will replace his primary attachment to his parents. People are generally primed to attach to one group, or one tribe, at a time; they see others as outside of that group. Attaching to his peers means that their values become his values, and any attempt to impose your values will be met with rejection. What his peers want to do is more important to him than what you want him to do.

## Once children value their friends more than their family, they will adopt the culture of the peers.

Have you ever seen the emotional response of a child when you try to take away their phone, when it serves as the primary means of communication with their friends? If you try to set limits, you will be treated as an enemy that is stopping him from connecting with his primary emotional attachment and interfering with the goals of his group.

These peers do not value your child's well-being as much as you do. Your child may be exposed to bullying and other forms of excessive cruelty, alcohol and drug use, premature sexual activity, and other harmful influences. Yet, despite being harmed, your child may still feverishly seek out contact with their bullies because of how intensely the human mind values the importance of this primary emotional attachment.

The same thing can be seen in an abusive family setting. I used to work in the foster care system. No matter how bad a child's home life was, I never saw a child who would rather leave their family and go to a safe home. If your child attaches to his peers, he is essentially leaving you for an abusive home.

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## What You Can Do

The best way to avoid peer orientation, like most other things, is to prevent it from happening in the first place. This requires a lot of effort and attention focused on forming a deep, personal bond with your child.

Neufeld and Maté describe six progressive levels of attachment that people need to feel close and connected to each other: physical proximity, sameness or having things in common, feeling a sense of belonging and loyalty, feeling important to someone, positive or warm emotions, and finally, feeling truly known and understood.

If you and your child have this strong bond, it will be very difficult for their peers to compete because they aren't able to offer the same level of closeness. Peer orientation thrives in the void left by shaky attachment.

When disciplining and setting limits for children, create rules and set up external consequences that you communicate ahead of time. One frequent mistake I see parents make is to punish children by expressing irritation, annoyance, and anger at the child instead of implementing consequences. This may teach children a lesson, but also communicates to them that you don't like them, which undermines the attachment relationship you are trying to establish.

Learn who your children are spending time with. When they want to invite friends over, the primary activity should be focused on the friend visiting with the family, not just going off alone with your child. Get to know your children's friends and form a relationship with them too. Carefully notice when they seem to become too preoccupied with friends to the detriment of the family. If they do, intervene to stop it.

Also get to know the parents of your children's friends. Find out their values, and make sure they will support your efforts to maintain your values in their presence.

If your child is already going down the road to peer orientation, read the book "Hold On to Your Kids," referenced above. It will go into detail about peer orientation and what can be done about it.

If your child is far down the road of peer orientation and beginning to use drugs or alcohol, becoming involved in criminal activity or if they are experiencing severe bullying, take it very seriously. Drastic measures might need to be taken, such as moving schools, homeschooling, cutting off technology and contact, or moving away.

Michael Courter is a therapist and counselor who believes in the power of personal growth, repairing relationships, and following your dreams. He can be reached at [mc@CourterCounsel.com](mailto:mc@CourterCounsel.com)



A teacher collects supplies needed to continue remote teaching through the end of the school year at P.S. 124 Yung Wing School in New York on May 14, 2020.

# The CDC's Guidelines for Back-to-School Under COVID Sound Traumatizing

KERRY MCDONALD

When schools reopen in the US amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, they will be even more restrictive than they already were. Schools have long controlled students' movements and imposed constraints on where they can go, when, and with whom. With virus concerns, those controls will increase in quantity and intensity.

NPR recently proclaimed that "disruption from the pandemic constitutes an 'adverse childhood experience' for every American child." While many children are sad to be away from their friends and activities, being home with their family members for a prolonged period of time is hardly an "adverse childhood experience" for most American children.

Returning to schools with extreme virus control and social distancing measures, however, could very well be traumatic for many kids.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued its recommendations for school reopening, including encouraging daily temperature checks and/or symptom checking, face coverings for all staff and children over two, desks spaced six feet apart, staggered schedules, no cafeteria or playground use, installed partitions and physical barriers, no field trips, no toy sharing, and restrictions on outside visitors, including parents.

As images emerge from countries around the world that have reopened schools, US parents are getting a glimpse of what extreme social distancing measures could look like here, including the latest from Chinese schools in which social distancing "wings" are strapped onto children's backs to ensure that they stay far apart from each other. It's no wonder that a new RealClear opinion poll found that 40 percent of parents intend to choose homeschooling or virtual schooling for their children when the lockdowns end. And many European parents are refusing to send their children back to school.

These strict social distancing efforts at schools arise as more evidence suggests that children are largely spared from the dangers of COVID-19 infection. Even as concerns have risen recently over a Kawasaki-like inflammatory disease related to COVID-19 that has impacted some children, the risk appears minuscule. According to "The Wall Street Journal":

"A study in the journal *Lancet* last week reported 10 children with the inflam-

matory syndrome in Bergamo, Italy—the city with the highest rate of fatalities and infections—about 30 times higher than the normal incidence. Most were older and suffered more severe cardiac symptoms than those typically found with Kawasaki. But the authors also estimated that probably no more than 0.1% of children who had been exposed to the virus were affected. All hospitalized patients had been discharged, and the authors recommend treating patients with steroids to calm their immune system."

The Journal article goes on to state:

"During these times parents and doctors need to be especially vigilant. But as a society we also need to keep in mind that the risks to children from the coronavirus are small, especially relative to others. The Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity projects that children under 15 are 6.83 to 20.07 times more likely to die of the flu or pneumonia than coronavirus—assuming 150,000 COVID-19 fatalities in the U.S. this year—and 128 times more likely to die of an accident."

We should care deeply about children's health and safety, but like much about this pandemic, it's important to make sure that the response isn't more damaging than the virus itself. Many parents and educators are rightfully concerned about children's mental health during these lockdowns, but when lockdowns end and schools reopen, children's mental health could be worsened with extreme social distancing measures that remove any of the potentially enjoyable pieces of schooling, such as playground time, extracurriculars, and gathering with friends.

Stripped of these accessories that can often compensate for the more oppressive parts of conventional schooling, it's not surprising that some parents and students would choose to continue with homeschooling or virtual learning until the pandemic ends.

Kerry McDonald is a senior education fellow at FEE and author of "Un-schooled: Raising Curious, Well-Educated Children Outside the Conventional Classroom" (Chicago Review Press, 2019). Kerry holds a bachelor's in economics from Bowdoin College and a master's in education policy from Harvard University. She lives in Cambridge, Mass., with her husband and four children. This article originally appeared on FEE.org

# 99-Year-Old Veteran Beats COVID-19, Looks Forward to Golfing

MEILING LEE

It has been about three weeks since World War II veteran Max DeWeese returned home after recovering from COVID-19.

The 99-year-old war hero, who served 23 years in the Marine Corps and the Marine Corps Reserve, said the illness took him by surprise. His temperature was taken daily at his senior center, and the only symptoms he experienced were a sudden loss of appetite, and a loss of taste and smell.

"I live in independent living and they take my temperature every day, and it was in the 80s. I never thought anything about it," DeWeese said.

"I was throwing food up, I couldn't stand it, I couldn't eat. The director here said, 'Let's check your oxygen.'"

A pulse oximeter was then clipped to DeWeese's finger to measure his oxygen saturation level. "My oxygen was 84," said DeWeese. "I lost my wife to COPD and I knew that 84 was not good, so I called my doctor."

The following morning, DeWeese went to St. Luke's hospital, got tested for COVID-19, and was informed that that evening on April 10. "I don't know what would have happened if we hadn't done something about it," he said.

Good friend Paul Chapa supported DeWeese through his recovery and helped spread the word of his battle with the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) virus.

"I met Max about three years ago through another one of our FISH family members," said Chapa, who is chairman and president of Friends in Service of Heroes (FISH). "I talk to him pretty much every day because of this COVID thing. Max is incredibly sharp and very witty."

After a local news outlet featured DeWeese's story, people from around the country wrote him letters and sent cards wishing him well. "I can't thank enough the people that I don't even know, or have ever known, who have sent me notes of how they were praying for me and wishing me well," DeWeese said.

He attributes part of his recovery to the prayers and well-wishes from family, friends, and strangers. "With the support that I have gotten from the outside world, I don't think I could have failed to make it," he said.

"When you get that kind of support, you can fight back. You don't realize it, but you're going to fight."

What does he look forward to after his two weeks of quarantine? "As soon as I'm able to, become active again in everything I've been active in, including Meals on Wheels and golfing," DeWeese said.

He says he feels optimistic about improving his golf with the daily therapy he has been getting. "I could only hit the golf ball, no matter what club I used, about 100 or a little more yards," DeWeese said. "But I think that with a lot of this therapy I'm doing, I may be going up in my strength where I'm able to hit 110, maybe 115, so I'm encouraged."

Before contracting the CCP virus, DeWeese who still drives, said he did Meals on Wheels once a day, volunteered with FISH as well as other organizations, and played golf once a week.

DeWeese says he does not know where he gets the energy at his age, but felt it was important for him to be active. "I have found, to my opinion, whether it's right or wrong, that I'm a lot better off being busy than I am sitting around doing nothing much and watching television," he said.

Tracy Hipp, activities director at Silvercrest Deer Creek, told The Epoch Times that everyone at the senior center is delighted to have DeWeese back. "We just adore him," she said. "If anyone that was to get COVID-19 and beat it, we weren't surprised at all that it was him. We knew it was one of those things he'd come back from stronger than ever."

## Enlisting in the Marine Corps

In 1941, while at home during Christmas, DeWeese ran into his junior college chemistry professor, who suggested that he join the Marine Corps after learning DeWeese did not know what his plans were for the future.

"He said why don't you join the Marine Corps, so I did," DeWeese said. On Jan. 15, 1942, before his 21st birthday, he got on a train to San Diego to go to boot camp.

"I was just a young kid, I didn't know what to expect," DeWeese said. "I had no idea what the Marine Corps was or what any branches of the service were."

Almost seven months later, on Aug. 7, 1942, DeWeese would fight in his first battle in the Pacific Theater of World War II, the Battle of Guadal-



Max DeWeese (2nd R) in Washington, D.C. on May 13, 2017.

canal in the Solomon Islands. It was the first major offensive against the Japanese, who eventually were defeated and left in February 1943.

Guadalcanal is a tropical jungle, and many soldiers from both sides died of disease. "We had more people evacuated off Guadalcanal with malaria than we did with death," DeWeese said. "I had yellow jaundice. I had everything but malaria."

The next three battles that DeWeese fought in were the Battle of Tarawa, the Battle of Saipan, and the Battle of Tinian. He got injured in Tarawa and Saipan, and received a Purple Heart for each battle.

DeWeese was a rifleman for the first two battles before being transferred to the combat engineer battalion to be a flame thrower.

## Helping Veterans

Chapa says his organization is focused on helping veterans of all ages to "maintain their freedom and improve their quality of life" by doing simple acts like getting an N95 mask to a Vietnam veteran so he can go out to do his grocery shopping, or getting

“With the support that I have gotten from the outside world, I don't think I could have failed to make it.”

Max DeWeese,  
World War II veteran

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF PAUL CHAPA

a service dog for a veteran struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or a traumatic brain injury.

FISH has given away 29 service dogs so far. "We try to name our service dogs after our veterans," Chapa said. "That way, the veteran that is getting the dog gets to meet the veteran that the dog's named after, so they have this connection."

Chapa said there is a service dog named after DeWeese who was given to Aaron Bona, a Marine Corps veteran suffering from PTSD.

Chapa said that after meeting DeWeese, he better understood what the Greatest Generation meant. "He is selfless, he wears his patriotism on his sleeve, and he loves his country," Chapa said. "He'd be willing to do anything to continue serving."

He also says that it is important for him, and "the 99 percent of us that did not serve, to never forget the 1 percent."

"We owe our freedom, we owe the fact that we live in this great nation because of the people that are willing to make that sacrifice on behalf of us."



(L-R) Paul Chapa, Max DeWeese, and Aaron Bono with his service dog, Max.

# A Green Beret's Battle With Addiction

Teddy Lanier struggled with opioid addiction for 17 years. Now, he's sharing his story to help and inspire others.

ANDREW THOMAS

Opioid overdoses kill an average of 130 people daily, and addiction often starts with a legitimate prescription. One Green Beret became hooked to the euphoria that painkillers gave him, and spent 17 years addicted to opioids, alcohol, and other drugs. Now, he's sharing his story of recovery and hope.

Military culture has been a large part of Teddy Lanier's family, and many of his family members have served in the armed forces. While growing up, Lanier found himself in trouble every now and again, and lacked a sense of direction. "Not only did I need something different, but I wanted to leave. I wanted to get out of my hometown and out of North Carolina," Lanier said.

At age 19, he enlisted in the Army.

## Special Forces

Lanier served in the Army for 22 years, 12 of which were spent in special forces. Throughout his career, he performed three deployments to Afghanistan and two tours of duty in Iraq. His most rewarding memories include earning his Green Beret and the day his father came to his jump school graduation and pinned his own Airborne wings on Lanier's chest. What Lanier enjoyed most about special forces was the camaraderie of being on a team with likeminded individuals.

While Lanier was in language school, the Twin Towers fell. "It was literally 'game on' from the moment I left language school and got to my team, and just being in that close-knit brotherhood with some of the greatest Americans I ever had the pleasure to

work with," Lanier said.

Lanier was comfortable with doing whatever he had to do to complete the mission and return to his family. However, there was one particular experience where he had to take a life, and he struggled to comprehend the incident. As time went on he couldn't understand and handle the trauma, and coped by abusing drugs and alcohol.

"Eventually that got to a point where I knew I couldn't stop," Lanier recalled.



COURTESY OF WARRIORS HEART

“A guy like me, I get to a point that there's absolutely nothing I will not do to get that high.”

Teddy Lanier

## Addiction

Lanier's addiction to opiates began like many. He had ingested prescribed painkillers three times between 1989 and 1999 for injuries, and remembers each instance vividly because of the euphoria he experienced.

After that third experience, Lanier figured out how to manipulate the system to continue

to receive a painkiller prescription. He would spend the next 17 years battling severe opioid addiction and abusing numerous other illicit drugs.

"A guy like me, I get to a point that there's absolutely nothing I will not do to get that high. If I have to lie for it, I'm going to lie. If I have to steal for it, I'm going to steal. If I have to pay for it, I'm going to pay for it. If I've got to manipulate somebody, I'm going to manipulate somebody," Lanier said.

His addiction to drugs and alcohol led to marital problems, parenting issues, and financial stress. The addiction destroyed him physically, mentally, and spiritually. Upon retirement, his drug and alcohol use spiraled out of control. He began working as a contractor, but between contracts, he struggled.

Lanier couldn't handle everyday situations that most people face without drugs and alcohol. He felt like people didn't understand him and he didn't understand them. Simple activities like cutting the grass, home repairs, and checking the oil in his car required him to be under the influence.

"I literally did everything under the influence of drugs and alcohol for years," Lanier said.

## The Job

In February 2017, Lanier woke up and felt exhausted. He and his colleagues were doing some shooting instruction for special forces students that afternoon, and he couldn't pull the trigger. For the first time in his life, he couldn't do his job. He took his gun belt off and asked his colleagues for help.

"I was met with complete support and compassion in an envi-

ronment where a lot of times guys don't receive that due to the stigma that's attached to what I came forward about," Lanier explained.

Lanier learned about an organization called Warriors Heart, which treats veterans and first responders who are struggling with substance abuse, post-traumatic stress, and mild traumatic brain injuries. He picked up the phone and gave them a call. A friend and fellow special forces soldier named Tom Satterly put him in touch with an individual name Jeff Kolb, who ultimately became his sponsor and financed his treatment. Lanier entered treatment on April 16, 2017. He has been sober since April 20, 2017.

After a week in detox, Lanier pulled up to the gate at Warriors Heart. The first words he heard from the first person who greeted him were: "I'm glad you're here. Welcome home."

"For the first time in my life I finally felt like I was welcome," Lanier said. "That's not a direct reflection on any of my friends and

family, but internally I never felt like I was home for many years."

Lanier was assigned a substance abuse and trauma counselor. He knew the recovery process was going to be uncomfortable, but he also knew he had to put in the work to achieve sobriety. He had to talk about experiences and emotions he did not want to discuss, and could've left at any time. But once he started to learn why he was struggling with addiction he wanted to do more.

Now, Lanier is helping and inspiring others who are struggling with addiction by maintaining his own sobriety and sharing his own story. He participates in group therapy, volunteers at treatment centers, has established a support network, and is now on Warriors Heart Foundation's board of directors.

"In order for me to keep well, I have to help the next person. It's not because I've been told to do it. It's because I want to do it. It's something that I've learned to do," Lanier said.

TONY SHIVERS, STILL SMILING PHOTOGRAPHY



Lanier speaking at a conference. He struggled with an opioid addiction for 17 years.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF SIR DARIUS BROWN/BEAUX AND PAWS



Sir Darius Brown is an animal advocate and the founder of Beaux & Paws. He is now making masks for essential workers.



Brown donates this bowties to animal shelters in the hope that his bowties will help dogs and cats get adopted faster.



Brown makes bowties for people and their pets.

# Teen Who Sews Bow Ties to Help Animals Get Adopted Now Makes Masks for Essential Workers

ROBERT JAY WATSON

A 13-year-old boy from New Jersey who made headlines in the past for using his sewing talents to make bow ties to help animals get adopted is now applying those skills to create masks for essential workers amid the pandemic that has swept across the globe.

Sir Darius Brown, who hails from Newark, is an animal advocate and the founder of Beaux & Paws. On March 28, 2020, Darius announced on his Instagram account that he was working to help essential workers who are sacrificing their lives everyday amid the current crisis to provide by making face masks while soliciting help from his mother.

"Today I am working on creating surgical masks to donate since the hospitals have a shortage of masks. This first one came out great," he wrote. "Let's all work together, help out where we can, and especially practice social distancing so we can all get through this pandemic."

When Darius was just 2 years old, he was diagnosed with speech, comprehension, and fine-motor-skills delays. At the age of 8, Darius started to assist his older sister, Dazhai BrownShearz, in cutting fabric. He then got his hands on a sewing machine. In no time, he developed a passion for making bow ties. The teen then started his company, which has helped more than 200 dogs.

How did he get so successful? According to TODAY, the teen, who started to craft his own bow ties, wore them wherever he went.

"Literally everywhere I go, I wear a bow tie," he said. "It makes you look dapper and professional."

Those who noticed him would ask him where they could purchase those bow ties from, which then prompted him to start his own company, called Beaux & Paws, to make bow ties for people and their pets.

After Hurricanes Harvey and Irma struck in 2017, this animal lover found that many rescued dogs were transferred from Texas and Puerto Rico to the ASPCA in New York City to find forever homes, according to his website. So he wanted to do his part to help them.

He told The Dodo: "So I made bow ties for dogs and donated them to the shelter so the dogs could look cute, dapper, fashionable and be more noticeable so they could get adopted faster."

**He has donated countless bow ties to animal shelters and adoption centers in the United States and the United Kingdom so that dogs can find their forever homes.**

With so many needy animals pouring into shelters in the nation, the teen felt that it was the dogs and cats that needed him most. After visiting the adoption center, Darius told the BBC that he "realized that if dogs stay in the animal shelter for too long, then they could get euthanized, and that made me really sad."

After that, "I made it my mission to help as many dogs as I possibly can," he said. Since then, he has donated countless bow ties to animal shelters and adoption centers in the United States and the United Kingdom so that dogs can find their forever homes.

Darius donates regularly to the Mt. Pleasant Animal Shelter in East Hanover, New Jersey. The shelter also confirmed that the bow ties do make

a big difference for potential adopters. "One dog that had been here for over three years got adopted," said Monty, the manager of the animal shelter. "He gave the dogs a second chance is the way I've always looked at it."

As the news started to get about Darius's handmade bow ties for beautiful dogs in need of adoption, he began to get a lot of recognition from donors.

"The donations help a lot because we were just digging in our pockets, buying the fabric ourselves," his mom, Joy Brown, told TODAY.

This good Samaritan with a sewing machine who is helping animals in need to find a forever home one bow tie at a time has also been honored and won many accolades. Darius was named the "GoFund Me Kid Hero" of January 2020 and was a New Jersey State Honoree, receiving the 2020 Prudential Spirit of Community Award. Additionally, he has received the "Outstanding Achievement Award" from the WDIIB Conference, the President's Volunteer Service Award from the White House, and more, according to his website.

In 2019, Darius launched the "Pawsome mission," the goal of which was to "ship bow ties to and visit animal shelters in all 50 states." While visiting them, Darius would personally give them his bow ties and help in adoption events. However, an update from his GoFundMe page on April 30 read: "Unfortunately due to the Coronavirus Pandemic animal shelters are closed and no adoption events are being held."

He further added: "At this time my PAW-SOME MISSION is postponed ... I will continue to create bow ties for the shelters and will ship them until I can continue the PAW-SOME MISSION."

Now, Darius is focused on helping create face masks for essential workers. He said, "I will continue to use my skills to help support those in need."

# Homeschool Is So Much More Than This

BARBARA DANZA

**S**o you've gotten a taste of homeschool and you're thinking it's not so bad, or that it's actually pretty good, or maybe even that it's amazing and you're never turning back.

Well, let me tell you—if you think the pandemic-lockdown version of homeschool has redeeming qualities, you'll be blown away by normal-life homeschooling when we're all finally back in business.

For the families who are considering staying aboard the homeschool train, here are some ways it will get so much better.

## Field Trips

How many field trips do school kids take? One a year, if they're lucky? Well, homeschoolers can take as many field trips as their schedule and resources allow.

The amount of hands-on learning that can be achieved from heading out into the world and exploring is truly endless. Think museums, parks, businesses, natural landscapes of all sorts, zoos, aquariums, historical landmarks, theaters, farms, nature preserves, government offices, and community services. You can take a field trip as often as you like and tie the learning into your homeschool work as much or as little as you're compelled to.

Rather than being trapped behind a desk staring at the same four classroom walls for hours on end, homeschoolers spend way less time at home than you might imagine. They get out there, following their curiosities, gaining practical experience across a wide range of subjects, and inject a ton of joy into their day-to-day.

## The World Is Your Classroom

Even when not on a designated field trip, you can take the learning outside whenever the weather permits. Need to complete a math test? Do it at the park. Working on a nature study? Head out into nature with your books. Studying poetry? Get comfortable under a shady tree.

Even in inclement weather, you can set up a living room fort and work on your spelling list from there, or snuggle on the couch while you read about the next period of history you're diving into.

You choose the boundaries of your homeschool.

## Lunch Is a Picnic

Lunch is one of the most immediately obvious improvements when one goes from

school to homeschool. It can be made with healthy, fresh, wholesome ingredients or include delicious, fresh-baked treats. The preparation can be shared by teachers and students alike, and it will expand the array of life skills your children pick up as homeschoolers.

The cafeteria can be your kitchen table, your backyard table, the backseat of the car on the way to somewhere delightful, or a picnic table at the park. It can even be a local restaurant!

Compare this to the lunch experience at school. I mean, seriously.

## Co-ops

Some homeschoolers find value in joining what's known as a "co-op," which is simply a group of homeschooling families who work cooperatively toward some common homeschooling goals. It's a great way to meet other families who took the leap, in addition to sharing the load and enjoying different perspectives on various subjects.

## Extracurriculars

It becomes quite obvious when a family dives into homeschooling that kids are not going to need six hours every day to get their academics done. This leaves a lot more free time to explore individual interests. From sports to the arts to handy skills—parents can facilitate the resources their kids need to dive deep into the subjects that most light them up.

## You're in Charge

Perhaps the best aspect of homeschooling is the freedom you have to provide your children with the best possible education befitting each of their individual needs. No more one-size-fits-all curriculum, no more mediocre standards, no more ignoring—or misrepresenting—history and the arts, no more sucking the joy out of learning, no more adherence to bells, arbitrary rules, and standardized tests.

Your children can be free to follow their curiosity, to truly learn, to thrive, and to become who they are meant to be. As time goes on, you'll likely feel perhaps less like a traditional teacher and more like a director, a facilitator, a coordinator, and a fellow explorer.

If you're thinking of homeschooling for the long haul, I am cheering for you. You'll see for yourself that it gets so much better than this.

State University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Princeton, and Tufts University offer their own gap year programs for students who want to postpone their on-campus enrollment for a year, but not always for academic credit. These college-based programs can also include financial assistance when needed.

## 5. Gain Independence

It isn't necessary to stick with a formal gap year program or limit yourself to just one activity. In my 45 years of working with gap year students, I've found that some of the best gap year experiences are those that are self-designed.

If you create your own gap year experience, the most important thing to figure out is what you want to get out of it—be that work experience in a career you intend to pursue, learning a foreign language, doing community service, or gaining greater cultural or environmental awareness. Then it's a matter of creating experiences that lead to that goal.

One memorable example was a student from Oklahoma who spent the first four months of her gap year tending llamas at a monastery in North Dakota, the next four months working for a lawyer in Tulsa, and the last four volunteering at an orphanage in the Dominican Republic.

## Resources Available

While taking a gap year can often cost a lot of money, that doesn't mean the gap year experience is limited only to those who can afford it. Many of the more expensive gap year programs offer need-based financial aid.

It is also important to remember that many self-designed gap year experiences can cost very little, or even provide the opportunity to earn money through jobs or paid internships. Alternatively, it could involve doing volunteer work while living at home. For volunteer experiences away from home, sometimes students get their travel and living expenses covered. Service opportunities are often voluntary and there-

fore unpaid, but programs such as AmeriCorps' City Year provide stipends to cover room and board expenses.

For those who want to join an existing gap year program, there are plenty of opportunities that provide students with a wide range of domestic and international experiences, leadership opportunities, and less-formal learning environments. For example, you could check with the Gap Year Association for lists of accredited programs and its own research on the impact of taking a gap year. In addition, USA Gap Year Fairs sponsors fairs around the country in late winter where gap year programs provide information about their opportunities. There are also a number of accredited independent gap year consultants around the country who can provide expert advice on gap year experiences.

For high school seniors contemplating deferring enrollment in college until they can be assured of having the on-campus experience they envisioned, May and early June is the time to consider gap year opportunities and to inform the college admissions office of their desire to delay their enrollment. Not all colleges have the same gap year policies, however, and some are reviewing them in the context of the current pandemic. For these reasons, it is important to learn what a particular college's or university's policies are and to make sure you meet the deadlines to inform the institution of your plans.

Robert S. Claggett is the coordinator of the Gap Year Research Consortium at Colorado Springs, Colorado. This article was first published on *The Conversation*.



Some of the best gap year experiences are those that are self-designed. If you create your own gap year experience, the most important thing to figure out is what you want to get out of it.



**If you think the pandemic lockdown version of homeschool has redeeming qualities, you'll be blown away by normal life homeschooling.**

# 5 Reasons Students Should Consider Taking a Gap Year Now

ROBERT S. CLAGGETT

With many colleges and universities still deciding when to re-open their campuses after they were shuttered due to COVID-19, many high school seniors are thinking about taking a gap year. Putting off college during the pandemic might enable them to get the on-campus experience they desire in 2021 instead of going to school remotely this fall.

Traditionally, a gap year is a semester or year of learning through experience. It is typically taken after high school and before college or starting a career. However, some college students choose to take a gap year while they're still in college or before going to graduate school.

As the coordinator of a research group that examines the impact of taking a gap year, here are five ways that students will benefit from the gap year experience.

## 1. Avoid Burnout

Perhaps most importantly, given the pressure in many high schools to excel in school and extracurricular activities to gain admission to college, a gap year gives students the opportunity to do something completely different. Just taking that step off the treadmill can lead to new growth and self-discovery.

## 2. Gain Maturity

Taking a break from your formal education can contribute to a deeper appreciation of what the

purpose of school is really all about. This, in turn, allows students to begin college with a more mature and focused mindset.

A gap year can provide the opportunity to discover new areas of interest and even to completely reinvent yourself. One good example was a student who spent his gap year working as a fishing guide in Alaska. That experience led him to major in environmental resource management. Ultimately, he embarked on a career in nature conservation.

## 3. Boost Academic Performance

Could taking a break slow down a student's academic momentum? Actually, research conducted by an economist at Middlebury College—and replicated at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill—found the opposite is true. Not only did students who took a gap year perform, on average, better than those who did not, they actually performed better than would have been predicted, based on their academic credentials when they applied to college. For instance, the study found that the students who took a gap year earned GPAs that were .15 to .25 points higher than predicted.

## 4. Earn Academic Credit

At least one gap year program also provides the opportunity to be admitted to and earn academic credit at a variety of colleges. Other schools, such as Florida



Whether you're taking field trips or delving into your children's specific interests, homeschooling gives you the space and time to explore.



# FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

Week 22, 2020



## THE FIRST MEMORIAL DAY

**O**n May 30, 1868, three years after the end of the Civil War, an organization of Union veterans called the Grand Army of the Republic or GAR established Decoration Day. It was a day in which the graves of the war's fallen soldiers would be decorated.

In the following decades, Decoration Day gradually became known as Memorial Day. In 1968, Congress passed the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, which established Memorial Day as the last Monday in May—honoring all of those who lost their lives serving their country in the United States military; the change went into effect in 1971.

The Grand Army of the Republic badge. Authorized by the U.S. Congress to be worn on the uniform by Union Army veterans.



## A Brown Bird

by Oliver Mantyk, age 13, 8th grade Northern Academy of the Arts, Middletown, N.Y.

There was a small boy in a car  
Parked in a lot above a road  
There were many cars on the tar  
And fast the many cars bowed

The boy saw a little brown bird  
Sitting on the phone pole  
The little bird's song was absurd  
But life would take its toll

The small bird put to flight  
And very fast the bird did go  
A pity it did go, so low

And BOOM! The small bird collided  
The explosion of feathers subsided  
To reveal the bird was hit by a truck  
It's too bad, that's just luck

And then I see, a crow in a tree  
As he swooped to the carcass,  
he squawked in glee  
He picked up the body and sailed away  
And he picked the same pole to stay

The boy had a bitter tang on his tongue  
After observing this event  
He blinked away the tears that stung  
And he hoped to heaven the bird was sent

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK



## WHAT PART OF A FISH WEIGHS THE MOST?

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

**“**In winter I get up at night  
And dress by yellow candle-light.  
In summer quite the other way  
I have to go to bed by day.  
**”**

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850–1894)

NINA BUDAY/SHUTTERSTOCK

By Aidan Danza, age 13

# ANIMAL AVIATORS THAT AREN'T BIRDS

(PART II)

**B**irds are the true masters of the air. Most of the 10,000 bird species of the world fly, often spectacularly. Peregrine falcons have been clocked at more than 200 miles per hour; a speed our modern machines only achieved in the past 50 years.

However, birds are not alone in the skies. While most animals don't spend anywhere near the time in the air that birds do, some do visit the birds' domain.

## MALAYAN FLYING LEMUR

Malayan flying lemurs are one of two "flying lemurs." They vary in color, with small heads and large eyes and measure 12- to 17-inches long. Sometimes they have green patches on their fur that look like moss or lichen, aiding camouflage.

These animals live in Southeast Asia in large jungle trees. They're mostly nocturnal and make their homes in large tree holes.

Malayan flying lemurs aren't technically lemurs. In fact, scientists have had a difficult time classifying these animals, and have thought they might be bats, primates, or insectivores. Like most "flying" mammals, they have a flap of skin called a patagium that allows them to glide. They stretch out their limbs, pulling the patagium tight as they jump off of a high place.

## FLYING FISH

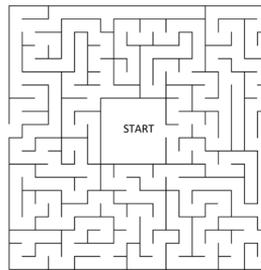
There are more than 40 species of flying fish! In order to fly, flying fish have enlarged pectoral (front) fins, tailed with a very large bottom part, and sometimes large pelvic (back) fins.

When they want to fly, they start paddling with their tail, achieve a speed of around 40 miles per hour, and rocket out

of the water. After that, they extend their fins, and fly. If the predator follows the flying fish while it's in flight, the flying fish can use the bottom lobe of their tail to start another paddle while still airborne and work up enough speed to take flight again. Like this, flying fish can glide for more than a quarter of a mile.

Back in the water, flying fish eat mostly plankton.

# 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:  $6 + (7 \times 3) + 1 = 28$  and  $1 + (7 \times 3) + 6 = 28$

Easy puzzle 1



Solution For Easy 1

$1 - 3 + 4 \times 8$

Medium puzzle 1



Solution for Medium 1

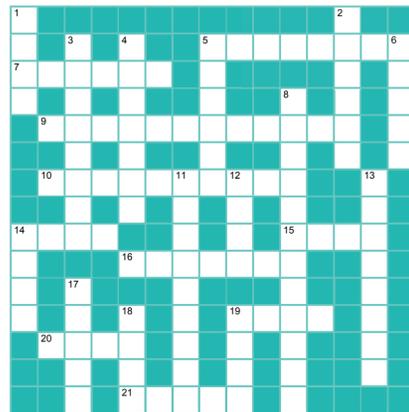
$2 \times (11 - 9) + 01$

Hard puzzle 1



Solution for Hard 1

$11 - 01 \times (91 - 22)$



## Down

- "Go fly a \_\_\_!" (4)
- Two piece bathing suit (6)
- "Home run" sport (8)
- Beach location (7)
- Summertime britches (6)
- Our planet (5)
- Sidewalk fireworks (12)
- Escapade (9)
- Campsite shelter (4)
- Where summer fun can be found (8)
- First month of summer (4)
- Lifeguard's workplace (5)
- Honey makers (4)
- It may be tied to a pier (4)

## Across

- Clear-skies forecast (8)
- Go places (6)
- Big word for "sweat" (12)
- It may get washed away by the waves (10)
- 4th of \_\_\_ fireworks! (4)
- Tom Sawyer's Mississippi vessel (4)
- Summertime drink (7)
- Two-wheeler (4)
- Fishing spot (4)
- "No \_\_\_!" ("Easy!") (5)



## Subscriber Resources Guide



# A media that puts you first

**H**ello, Epoch VIP—and welcome to this week’s issue of The Epoch Times!

We’re incredibly grateful that you’re holding this paper in your hands right now. In fact, that’s the moment most of us look forward to each week, whether we’re in the field reporting on the latest news or in the bullpen rushing late-night proofs to the presses.

All of our work is done with this fact in mind—the fact that every Thursday, a reader like you will pick up our paper and look both to be informed by the truth and inspired by tradition. It’s a fact that lets us take pride in the work we do, and also a fact that motivates us to push ourselves a little harder every day.

If this is your first time getting our paper

in the mail, that’s wonderful! As this will be the baseline for you to evaluate us by, we hope you can take a good look. From here on out, the hope is that you’ll find us becoming a better read with each week.

To that end, consider us always at your service. As an independent media, we’re not backed by any corporation or multimillion-dollar holding company, so you—our readers—are truly the people to whom we answer. We’re honored to have so many Americans depending on us as an honest window to the world, and it’s a duty we don’t take lightly.

Feel free to contact us for anything from issues with your subscription to a suggestion for a new column. Let our editors know if anything can be even more accurate. Use our social media to post new

ideas. Our ears are peeled: we’re trying to bring truth and tradition back into vogue again, and we’d love any help we can get.

Aside from “very informed person,” Epoch VIP has a second meaning for us. You are also indeed a very important person—not just to us, but to the rest of the nation. You’re a person who values honesty, freedom of thought and the goodness humanity has passed down from generation to generation since its oldest days. And for such a person, we’d gladly give our all.

Thank you for reading and for being a subscriber. Most of all, thank you for giving us hope that a media rooted in honesty can thrive in today’s society.

*In Truth and Tradition,*  
The Epoch Times

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