# THE EPOCH TIMES LIFE & Control of the control of th

Ruse, a lawyer,
has spent her
career fighting on
the national level
for the big issues
that affect family
and life.

THINKING ABOUT MOVING?

HERE'S WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND

Page 5

#### GOOD SAMARITAN

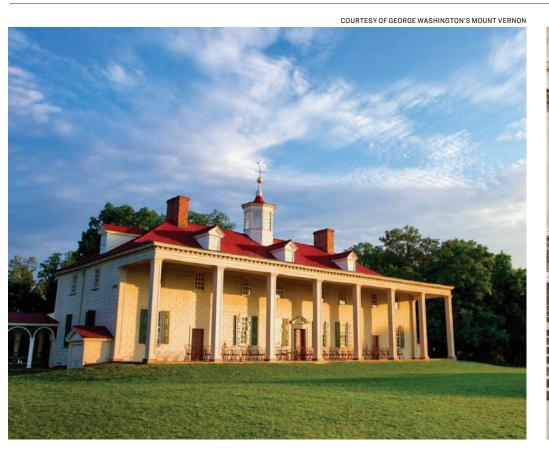
PROVIDES NEIGHBORLY ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE, FREE OF CHARGE

Page 6

Cathy Ruse

ON THE FIGHT PARENTS FACE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Page 3





# How to Plan a Birthday Trip Itinerary for a Loved One

(Left) The Mount Vernon Mansion, the home of George and Martha Washington, overlooks the Potomac River in Virginia.

(Right) Britain's leaders plotted the Allied route to victory during the Second World War from the Churchill War Rooms in London.

#### **RACHAEL DYMSKI**

e emerged from the Churchill War Rooms, squinting in the sunlight as we left 1945 behind and entered present-day London. "That was amazing," my husband said as he went over details of Churchill's documents, the Map Room, and the Transatlantic Telephone Room disguised as a private toilet. "The best part was that I didn't have to plan getting here at all."

He was right. Every year, for my husband's birthday, I plan him a surprise trip as his gift. He gets to show up and enjoy a mini-vacation tailored specifically for him, no preparation required.

I think one of the best things about birthdays is that they give us a chance to celebrate the people we love and the reasons why we love them. My husband Andrew loves to travel. He is always up to go anywhere. However, he hates to plan. He gets stressed out by the details of accommodation and travel arrangements. The number of places to go and things to do can overwhelm him to the point where planning a trip feels more stressful than fun.

A few years ago, I realized that one way I could celebrate him on his birthday was to to get away. take him somewhere he's always wanted I picked a secret destination I thought he would love, booked accommodations, and planned our itinerary. When his birthday finally arrived, I packed our bags in the car, handed him a hot coffee and a folder containing the location of his surprise destination: London.

I gave him details as the trip unfolded, so



The Map Room within the Churchill War Rooms

prise. He would find out where we were going to eat as we headed there, where we were staying only as we walked up to the Airbnb. Andrew was able to enjoy a vacation tailored specifically to him without planning a bit of it, and I got to be the one to plan an exciting surprise.

The trip was so much fun that it's become a yearly tradition for us. It's a wonderful way to give an experience as a gift, and Andrew loves knowing at least once a year much to pick from. he won't have to navigate car rentals or sift through hundreds of Airbnb options

If a birthday trip would make a great gift to go, but plan it all so he wouldn't have to. for someone you care about, here are a few tips to get your planning underway.

Plan a trip around what they love. Andrew loves history, so every trip I've done has been a historical destination. We've traveled to the monuments in Washington, D.C., to the French and Indian War Fort Necessity near Pittsburgh, to Dwight that each day and destination was a sur- D. Eisenhower's home at Gettysburg. Every trip we plan has some kind of historical element as the central theme. Does the person you're planning for love a certain type of food, or music, or climate? Picking something they love makes the trip feel

**Write out an itinerary.** One of the early birthday trips I planned for Andrew was a day trip to St. Malo, France, while we were staying with family in the English Channel Islands. I thought that we would just arrive on the ferry in the morning, walk around, and figure out what we wanted to do as we went. The combination of old, winding streets and our abysmal understanding of French made the city feel overwhelming, and we spent most of the morning just trying to orient ourselves.

I've solved this problem by creating a thorough itinerary. These itineraries are flexible—meant to serve more as a guide than a hard timeline. I put together sights and activities that are close in proximity to one another, and a couple of restaurants to choose from. This way I can offer a few choices without feeling like there is too

Add personal, memorable surprises. An- I didn't have to take my husband to the drew has read almost every biography that exists about George Washington. When we went to D.C., I knew that we had to visit Washington's home, Mount Vernon. We could have driven there, but I wanted to find a way to make our journey more memorable. I found the Potomac Riverboat Company, and realized we could travel via boat, almost straight from our Airbnb to Mount Vernon. It was such a fun, special surprise for Andrew. I also knew that he had never toured the Capitol, but

I wanted him to have a personalized experience. I contacted a friend who worked for a congressman, and she gave Andrew and me a private, behind-the-scenes tour.

As you think about how to plan a trip for someone you love, think about what extra things you could throw in that would really make the trip stand out.

You don't have to break the bank for it **to be special.** Some years, these birthday trips have taken up a significant amount of our yearly travel budget, but other years, I prefer to go smaller and stay closer to home. When we went to Pittsburgh last year, I cut costs by staying with friends rather than a hotel or Airbnb. One year, we visited a battlefield close to us Andrew had never seen, and I packed a picnic lunch of Andrew's favorite food—Italian subs and chocolate chip cookies—to enjoy while reading about the battle's history.

Far more special than an elaborate trip is showing that you know and care about the person you're planning for. Coming up with a few personalized ways to make the day or trip about the person you love will go a long way.

Churchill War Rooms for him to have a special birthday. But making the effort to plan such a surprise for him gave us both memories to enjoy for years to come.

Rachael Dymski is an author, florist, and mom to two little girls. She is currently writing a novel about the German occupation of the Channel Islands and blogs on her website, RachaelDvmski.com

## Back at It: Expert Tips for Re-Entry Into 'Normal' Life

#### **BARBARA DANZA**

As cases of COVID-19 decrease and communities are allowed to open back up, are you going to run straight out into the world, or might the transition back to normal be a little bit more complicated than that? As the dust settles on this un-

precedented time in history, the emotional and psychological impact that "staying at home" has had on many might be surprising to some and concerning to

I asked mental health expert Dr. Gregory Jantz for his advice in assuring a sure footing upon re-entry. He is the author of "Healing Depression for Life" and founder of The Center: A Place for Hope, a treatment facility for depression. Here's what he said.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Most of us have been live ing with some degree of "lockdown" for many weeks. Based on what you've observed, how are we doing? How has this impacted people's overall well-being? DR. GREGORY JANTZ: "Shelter at home" has turned quarantine into confine ment, and confinement has escalated all symptoms of anxiety and depression. In a certain subgroup we are

and it is predicted—and seemingly holding true at this point—that suicides in some states will be greater than death by coronavirus. Overall, we are not doing well. We are at a place

seeing significant despair,

of a mental health pandemic. And when you layer the financial stress on top of the present state of anxiety, we have a ticking time bomb.

The difficulty in transitioning back is that we don't know what "normal" is, or how to behave now. The pandemic has disrupted societal norms, so one of the things we're seeing, at times, are individuals making harsh judgments of others—for example, whether we should wear a mask or not.

THE EPOCH TIMES: How do you recommend individuals best prepare themselves for the transition back to normal? **DR. JANTZ:** I recommend individuals prepare for a transition, but don't see it

as "normal"—see it as "I'm adapting over time." We also need to allow for a great deal of social grace: we need to be slow to judge, and practice acceptance and kindness in a manner that we have not done before. Throttle back on judgment,

THE EPOCH TIMES: What advice do you have for parents aiming to ensure their children's well-being as we move

**DR. JANTZ:** We need to be careful that we are not continuing to impart our own fear about COVID-19 on to our children. Kids need to feel safe and secure—and they get that from those closest to them. What they also need now a sense of fun and enjoyment; they need to be allowed to go through normal developmental

THE EPOCH TIMES: What are some practical things families can do to take care of themselves as they navigate this

**DR. JANTZ:** We need to re-engage with physical activity outdoors: hiking, games, and things that we've avoidedlike throwing a ball back-and-forth!

Have a "Digital Detox Day" one day a week-no devices. Serve others. Consider volunteering in some capacity—for instance, soup kitch-

ens still need help. Take turns reading a chapter, each day, from a family-oriented book.



Consider volunteering. Places such as soup kitchens still need help, for example.

Pull out card games and other types of hands-on games. We set up a ping pong table, and do "brain breaks" because the kids are still studying online!

Quality sleep is important for all family members. There is a definite link between sleep patterns and depression, so if you improve sleep quality, depression levels will improve as well.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Overall, what do you believe are the keys to moving on with life in a healthy way?

**DR. JANTZ:** The key to moving forward is to allow for a period of change—we need time for this transition. This has been a significant trauma for us all, but we can move forward with a sense of strong community, and a reset in our relationships, if we allow time for this transition.

# CATHY RUSE

#### on the Fight Parents Face in Public Schools

#### **CATHERINE YANG**

athy Ruse says she'll never forget the first school board meeting she attended: a father got up to the podium with a piece of paper in his hand, and then started on a shocking, profanity-laden tirade.

It was bizarre and disruptive to the point that the chairwoman reached for the gavel to interrupt. But then the father stopped and explained that this was from the first page of the reading assignment his daughter was given.

"It was just a really stunning point that he made," Ruse said.

Ruse is a lawyer, and has spent her career fighting on the national level for the big issues that affect family and life. She was the spokesperson on human life issues for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, chief counsel on the Constitution subcommittee in the U.S. House of Representatives under U.S. Rep. Henry Hyde, and is a recognized expert on topics such as civil rights, pro-life issues, and religious freedom.

She's currently a senior fellow and the director of human dignity at the Family Research Council, a nonprofit research organization focused on family issues in public policy.

But it was more recently that Ruse turned her focus to local matters. When she heard that her local school board had voted to let boys use the girls' bathrooms, and vice versa, in public schools, "that got my attention," she said.

Ruse dug into the matter and discovered there was only one vote against the policy, and she wanted to know who that was. Ruse started going to her local Fairfax County board meetings in Northern Virginia.

She discovered that a politically charged, propaganda-filled, 70-hourper-student sex education curriculum in her local district was underway in classrooms (which parents are told once at the beginning of the year that it will be "family life education"). The meetings were horrific and telling. A board member would apologize for using "graphic terms," while confirming that eighthgraders were being taught about a variety of sexual acts, including the "how-to's," without any moral framework.

Motions to include teaching health risks of items on the curriculum (such as various contraceptives and hormonal and surgical transitioning) were rejected multiple times. Ruse saw desperate parents trying to advocate for their children and felt their deep frustration.

Not only that, but she realized public schools were turning students into ideologues en masse, dictating the culture of the next generation.

#### At the Expense of Education

Ruse's daughters attend a Catholic school, not the local public school, but what's happening in public schools affects the whole country. This becomes the philosophy of the society, courts, and government of the next generation. Plus, your tax dollars

fund these programs.

"The reality is, the majority of American kids are going to continue to be educated in public schools for the foreseeable future, even if there's a mass exodus and even if the lockdown is making parents rethink public education in the future," Ruse said.

"It's naive to think there is going to be no impact on the child going through and getting these messages for all these years, or no impact on the culture," Ruse said.

Ruse's local school district is more leftleaning than most, but public schools around the country face similar issues: their sex-ed courses, often outsourced, are being used as a way to indoctrinate children with tactics that are chillingly reminiscent of those used by propaganda arms of totalitarian regimes. Speech is ideologically restricted (for example, the terms "sex assigned at birth" are used instead of "biological sex"-making it a matter of choice versus biological reality) and dissent is met with shaming.

She added that the long hours dedicated to sex education come at a time when two-thirds of students aren't proficient readers and achievement levels continue to decline across the country.

The result is that these schools turn out ideologues who "don't know if they're male or female, but they have a lot of anger at our country. How is that going to turn out?" Ruse said.

There is a real and damaging effect on young minds that learn, beginning as early as kindergarten, that they may be in the wrong body and the remedy is drugs and surgery, and that they should expect to have many sexual partners, with the highest moral imperative being to get their consent ("building skills around consent mean moving beyond the 'how to say no' model," according to one lesson).

"It was such a bald-faced lie that is being taught to kids, that they could be born in the wrong body. Such a sinister ... it's so bad, I couldn't turn my gaze away," Ruse said.

#### Making Parents Aware

She recently put together a brochure of her findings (bit.ly/2XPojWK), with the intention of telling parents what really occurs in public schools. Many parents aren't aware, and some who have already dealt with tearful young children coming ing violated after some of these lessons.

"I'm reporting what I've seen and what I've heard because parents are in the dark," she said. "They assume sex ed is one thing—they don't know it's radically changed."

A recent study by the Institute for Research & Evaluation found that some of these sex-ed programs actually lead to increased sexual activity, number of partners, and experimentation by students, all of which are things students are told is healthy and normal in some lessons. "Not one parent I know shares that goal," Ruse said.

Ruse says the parents she's been in touch with aren't winning. Despite their impas-



Cathy Ruse is a senior fellow and the director of human dignity at the Family Research Council.

Ask for all

of the material

your child will

advance. That's

be taught, in

your right.

Cathy Ruse

boards continue to vote against them, and the lessons continue. "They're losing, but they're still fighting,"

sioned arguments and tearful stories,

"The most important piece of advice for parents: [You] must be very present [at] your school. Ask for all of the material your

child will be taught, in advance. That's your right. Make the school know that you are watching and are ready to act," Ruse Ruse advises parents to ground their

children by telling them about marriage and its moral or religious nature, and by inculcating their family values in matters of human sexuality and marriage, instead of leaving things to chance.

Some school districts have an option to opt out (possibly only at the beginning of the school year), but some don't. Ruse urges parents to find out what is actually in the lessons, rather than reading the summary (in one case, an "abstinence until marriage" lesson included zero references to marriage, but told students about the option of abstaining from sexual activity until their next monogamous partner), and to keep an eye on school calendars that are chock-full of awareness days and weeks that further indoctrination.

Ruse also wants to remind parents they aren't alone. The fight may be an uphill one, but to help your child resist cultural efforts to diminish and demean human dignity is a worthy one, and parents are children's first educators. The brochure ends with links to additional resources, including a universal opt-out letter and even schooling alternatives, and Ruse reminds that even if your kids are out of public school, the majority in the nation is not, and we should pay attention.

## Faced With Tragedy, Ski Racer Mikaela Shiffrin Chooses to Give Back

This year has been difficult for athletes but few have had a harder time than Olympic champion ski racer Mikaela Shiffrin.

In early February, her father Jeff passed away unexpectedly at the age of 65 following an accident at

On hearing the news, the twice gold medalist flew back to Colorado from Europe to be at his hospital bedside with her mother Eileen and brother Taylor when he passed.

She found the strength to return to the World Cup ski circuit in Sweden in March only for the season to be called off due to the pandemic.

As a result, the overall World Cup title, which she had held for three years, went to Italy's Federica Brignone and her slalom title, which she had won six times in the past seven years, went to rival Petra VIhova of Slovakia.

"It's one of those things that's almost impossible to process," the 25-year-old told Reuters in an interview from her home in Edwards, Colorado. "The human brain can only take

so much. It's built for survival and when something happens that you just can't process, it says, 'Alright, we're moving on'."

Her father, an anesthesiologist and ski racer in college, was more than just her biggest supporter, he was also the one keeping her professional life running smoothly.

"He was the CEO of Mikaela Shiffrin as a ski racer," she said, adding that he handled her finances and worked with her agent on a daily basis.

His death caused Mikaela's world to stop just as the pandemic forced the sports world into deep freeze, giving her and her family the opportunity to heal together.

She is staying fit thanks to her home gym and trying to keep her spirits up by playing guitar, singing, and dancing.

"We need positivity right now.

I need positivity right now," she

"My dad always used to say that when you smile, the act of smiling releases chemicals in your brain that make you happier.

"Sometimes when you're down, you have to 'fake it 'til you make

#### **Giving Back**

Confronted with the tragedy, Shiffrin has channeled her energy into charitable causes.

This month she performed a song as part of "Goggles for Docs," which provides ski goggles to health care workers.

She also recently joined the popular All-In Challenge charity auction.

The winning bidder will receive a raft of prizes including professional ski equipment plus VIP tickets and a "meet and greet" with Shiffrin at the Women's World Cup in Killington, Vermont, where she claimed four of her 66 World Cup race wins. Shiffrin, who is by nature a pri-

vocates for the better treatment of others and stamping out of bulvate person, has also taken on a leadership role alongside tennis player Madison Keys with Kind-

"I really identify with the kids out there who have an introverted personality in an extroverted world and are not sure how to navigate

> that," she said. Shiffrin said giving back has helped her keep grounded and

ness Wins, a foundation that ad-

grateful "You start to hear stories that are really upsetting but also really in-

spirational," she added. "Not only are you doing a good thing, which feels good, but it also helps you keep the perspective to

say, 'Hey, it could be worse."

By Rory Carroll From Reuters

Mikaela Shiffrin takes 2nd place at the Audi FIS Alpine Ski World Cup Women's Slalom on Jan. 4, 2020 in Zagreb, Croatia.

# With Harleys and Music, Couple Raises \$5 Million to Support Children's Charities

#### **LINDA KC REYNOLDS**

aising money to help his community was not on Ron Emard's radar or even a part of his plan. He was perfectly content riding his Harley and enjoying life; however, that changed in the '80s when he shifted gears and became one of the most involved and generous contributors to his community.

Ron, 76, doesn't believe that having a servant's heart is a choice. "I think it happens to you, it is a calling," he said while sitting in his office at Harley-Davidson. "If you see something that needs to be done or about it much, you're compelled and you do it. It's that simple.'

Answering that call, Ron and his wife, Yvette, have raised more than

Ron and Yvette Emard have raised \$5 million in support of over 1,000 children and 30 charities.

Gracefest, a Christian musical festival created by Yvette and Ron Emard in Palmdale, people during a two-day event featuring local and national headliners.



automotive sales led him to a general manager position at the North Hollywood Honda dealership from 1983 to 1995, and he then became managing partner of Robertson's Palmdale Honda in Palmdale, California, from 1995 to 2012. In 2004, he took on a second career while simultaneously

> erman. They are now co-owners. "Ron is one of the hardest workers I've ever met," said Kellerman, saying that Ron will be the first one to arrive at an event, setting up tents and tables, and the last one to leave, after all the cigarette butts and trash have been picked up. "He certainly

\$5 million in support of more than

30 local children's charities in their

Southern California community, the

Having a salesman's personality,

Ron said he has always enjoyed in-

teracting with people. His career in

running the Honda store as princi-

pal dealer at Antelope Valley Harley-

joining general manager Scott Kell-

Antelope Valley.

doesn't have to do that." Kellerman believes Ron's checkered past and huge heart have transformed him into such a unique, selfless, and humble person. "Ron has an amazing ability to bring all kinds of people and resources together to serve a common cause, all while having a great time. He is definitely

Volunteering and serving on many

boards is part of Ron's daily job. Organizing his own events, from dealership promotions to citywide events, he isn't one to wait for anything to be executed; he already has it done before anyone thinks to move. His philosophy: Never

complain unless you If I had to have a remedy to fix the situation. "If I had to atattribute tribute anything to my anything to success, it's that I sincerely try to be kind to everymy success, one; if that doesn't work it's that I it's OK. I smile and keep moving whether or not I sincerely try have their approval."

Both Ron and Yvette to be kind to became extremely busy in their community serveveryone. ing the ones who need it most. The power couple

Ron Emard

has helped thousands of children including those at the Painted Turtle Camp, Antelope Valley Saddle-Up Therapeutic Riding, The Child & Family Guidance Center, Royal Family KIDS Camp, and numerous schools and food shelters.

I'm just laboring under the correct glancing upward. "In my 20s, I had about a three-year fainting spell that I'm not proud of, but those life experiences often end up revealing what's most important.

He claimed it was the prayers of his momma that kept him out of prison. "We have lots of choices in life; what makes us or breaks us, is our response to those choices and then, taking responsibility for them." As he progressed along in his life, he decided it was time to return to the roots of his Christian faith and has never looked back.

#### Thunder on the Lot

In 1995, Emard founded a new classic car and motorcycle event, Thunder on the Lot, a two-day event that he originally hosted at the Honda dealership to draw traffic, raise funds for a charity, and create some

Little did he know that over the years it would become so enormously successful that it kept moving to larger venues and eventually filled the 100 acres at the Antelope Valley Fairgrounds. It wasn't unusual to see bike club members taking tickets next to Christians flipping burgers while fairgrounds staff poured beer. "We rarely had any trouble at all, we had excellent security and for the most part it was known as a family event," Emard said.

#### **GraceFest**

Thunder on the Lot ended in 2017, and in 2018 the Emards founded a new faith-based, nonprofit organization, Communities for Christ, inviting their community to pray, serve, give, and labor together. Their signature event, GraceFest, is an annual Christian music and message festival that takes place at the Palmdale Amphitheater in Palmdale, California. With A-level headliners plus na-

tional and local performers, the gathering draws about 7,000 people to the main event and

2,000 to the opening, the evening prior.

"When Ron said we were going to do another event, I thought, oh no!" laughed Yvette, "but when he said it was a Christian concert event, I said, in that case, let's do it!" The first festival gathered 1,200 people. "We just winged it and it was amazing, God's grace was all over it." Brian Littrell of the

Backstreet Boys, who was breaking out as a Christian solo artist, was at the debut.

"Brian was such a gracious performer, he even sang a few Backstreet Boys songs for his fans—it was really fun,"

she said. In the early days, Wil-

son Events handled the production and helped to build GraceFest; however, after becoming a member of the Christian Festival Association and having the opportunity to transfer production to Transparent "People say I'm lucky but I'm not, Productions, things really took off. Tim Tabor, owner of Transparent

> ducing more than 275 music events a year, including Fishfest, which sells out to a crowd of 15,000 every year in Irvine, California, and is now partners with Gracefest. "People who really get the whole Christian music scene are there to help and support in any way possible," explained Yvette. "It is amazing what we can all do when we gather together as one." Stepping out in faith, doing things

> they know they aren't capable of accomplishing on their own, has never deterred the Emards. No matter how many programs, fundraisers, and events they create, they continually learn as they go, acknowledging they could never do it without God's grace and the colossal support from friends and volunteers.

# Thinking About Moving? Here's What to Keep in Mind

A conversation with real estate expert Jeff Lichtenstein

#### **BARBARA DANZA**

THE EPOCH TIMES Week 24, 2020

he pandemic has forced many of us to rethink our ideas about work, school, and where we live. As we've sheltered in place for longer than anyone ever guessed possible, the importance of our homes has come to the fore.

Perhaps you've found yourself perusing real estate listings in less-crowded areas or in a location where you've always dreamed of living.

Is this a good time to think about a move? How is real estate being affected by all of this?

I asked Jeff Lichtenstein, a real estate expert and the president of Echo Fine Properties in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, these questions, and more. Here's what he said.

THE EPOCH TIMES: In the United States, the crisis has cast new light upon the states we choose to live in, the types of cities or small towns we settle into, and the way we live, school, and work. What new trends do you see emerging in real estate as a result? **JEFF LICHTENSTEIN:** Lots have learned that they can work from home. Businesses can save dollars and in some cases workers have been more productive from home. Overall there is definitely going to be a trend to work from home and in different more desirable locations.

People who have been on the fence or have thought about moving are now having serious discussions about this. Do you like to ski? Golf or boat yearround? Hate scraping ice off the car? You can now choose your lifestyle. Why live in a 13.3 percent or an 8 percent tax state when you can cut that out completely, especially as money has become more important. Low-density areas have also become more important.

This all points to movement to lower-tax states as that is now the same as what you earn. If a 13.3 percent tax state is paying \$50,000 and a zero percent tax state is offering \$45,0000, the better-paying job is the lower offer. Then mix in cost of living and lifestyle, and it's a whole competitive iob market without boundaries.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What key considerations should people take into account before choosing to move to, say, a smalle town or another state at this time? MR. LICHTENSTEIN: Does it fit long term? Is this just a short-term decision or a long one? Renting might be an option if you are on the fence. Try to visualize what happens if it doesn't work out.

Are you leaving family and friends

Is it your secret Never-Never Land? If you've always had a burning desire to move to an area, this might be your chance. As people reexamine everything, the realization that life is short and moving to where one wants should be considered. People generally wait until retirement and move in their 60s. Within a decade, health problems start to occur. Why not enjoy Montana or Santa Fe or Park City or Jupiter, Florida, right now? Talk to people. I'd encourage one to visit



the area. See if you like it. Drive around. Investigate. Look at the average monthly temperature. For instance, if one is moving to Florida, there is a big difference in temperatures north of Port St. Lucie. Do you like the west coast of Florida or the east coast? Once you visit an area for a few days you start to get a vibe.

**THE EPOCH TIMES:** What are the basic steps you recommend people follow in the relocation process? MR. LICHTENSTEIN: Understand your costs

of moving. Know your costs on the sell side and buy side—including moving, mortgage, and other costs. Shop and read up on the city you want

to go to first, community second, and Think about what you want in a home

and what is important for resale. For instance, single-family homes in the Palm Beach Gardens area that are CBS (concrete block structure) construction, open floor plans, remodeled, have a pool, master bedroom on the first floor along with a lake or golf view, and southern exposure will depreciate less in a bad market and turn faster.

Do your homework in picking a realtor. Read bios and look at realtor websites. Many "rating" websites are pay-to-play so you really don't see who is out there. See if you like their website, ask for references, and do a thorough interview with questions ready. Also, have them put in writing what they guarantee. We have a 57-point checkANDREW CABALLERO-REYNOLDS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGI

EVA MARIE UZCATEGUI/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

(Top) Seniors play golf at Leisureville, a senior community, in Pompano Beach, Fla., on March 12, 2020. (Above) A "For Sale"

sign is posted in front of

a house in Arlington, Va.,

on May 6, 2020.

list of what we guarantee each client when we list a property.

See their office in person or do a Zoom conference and include the broker. You want to see everything you are getting in writing and understand where they are generating buyers and how they are specifically marketing your home.

Know the rules of the area. An as-is contract might mean different things to different people. When purchasing a home in Florida it means that the buyer has a right to inspect within a default of 15 days (can be changed) and cancel at their sole discretion at no charge and for no reason. We have another contract where the buyer is locked in and the seller has to make repairs. We don't have on or about movable closing dates like in other states. Northerners come down and think they are signing a binder or can move the contract date. When in Rome, do as the Romans.

#### People who have been on the fence or have thought about moving are now having serious discussions about this.

Jeff Lichtenstein, president, Echo Fine Properties

How do the taxes work?

Pick a mortgage broker who has synergy with the realtor, who is local, and who can shop multiple carriers. National firms who don't know the area are usually trouble. Find a good local insurance company. Some national firms don't write in Florida for example.

Markets can vary wildly by region. Urban cities with a high density of people, colder climate, and higher tax environment are taking a dramatic hit. New York City, which has been a hub for international and financial jobs with a super-high cost of living and sky-high prices per square foot, will be in for a large adjustment.

Our area right now is actually more active and we are seeing a line up of pent-up demand at the same time. The northern Palm Beaches area is in a unique spot where all boxes are checked: no income tax state, lifestyle, ability to work remotely, infrastructure of culture, beach, golf, proximity to airport, weather, low-density population, less urban, and affordability.

When an earthquake occurs, the land settles differently. This virus is a massive earthquake and things are settling very

THE EPOCH TIMES: Generally speaking, do you think this is a good time to consider

MR. LICHTENSTEIN: Depends on you—it's such a personal situation. Yes, if it's a time for change. People are reevaluating everything. If you always wanted to be a nurse and can do it, then do it. I know

> in their job and decided to make a life change. If you move with a remote job and get laid off can you get another one? That's a good question to ask.

someone who was not happy

Consider renting. It's safest to buy a smaller home first or to rent.

# Dandelion Wars: Lessons Learned on the Battlefront

#### **JEFF MINICK**

Beginning around April Fools' Day—an appropriate mark on the calendar, given my mission—I decided to rid my daughter's lawn of dandelion flowers and the subsequent powder-puff balls. They were everywhere after I first cut the grass, bright yellow flowers and tufts of white seeds ready to be borne by the wind to breed more dandelions, and I'd had enough. My daughter and her husband are readying their house for possible sale, and a yard prickled with these pests might leave prospective buyers shaking their heads before they'd even set foot in the house.

From the very first day, I realized the difficulty of this fight. The yard consists of about an acre of grass, and I lacked the tools, the time, and

by the roots. Besides, a yard marred by patches of raw dirt would look as bad, or worse, than the dandelions.

the energy to dig these nuisances up

#### Total War

For the first week, I clipped the puffballs with a pair of scissors, stuffed them into a plastic bag, and tossed the plucked yellow heads of the dandelions on the grass. By the second week, the puffballs were no more, but the blooming dandelions remained as prolific as those mythological warriors who sprang from dragons' teeth sown in the earth. Except for days of heavy rain or when I mowed the lawn, mornings and evenings found me shambling around the grounds, bending and

plucking, bending and plucking. These adversaries surprised me by their rapid growth and their ubiqui-



ty. Take down 30 or 40 of these guys in mid-morning, rub your hands together with satisfaction, come back again in the late evening, and another dozen have leaped up to take their place. Even as I write these words, I can look through the front window of this house and see three of these intruders who slipped back into action after my morning patrol. And these hardy little soldiers

pop up in all kinds of soil, not just the fecund dirt of the yard, but in the cracked asphalt along the drive and a hard-as-stone patch of earth in the

Resolution, Action, and Recently, I realized that my war

**Resolution and action.** As noted in my Jan. 2 Epoch Times article, "Project Appreciation," I am not the best at keeping resolutions. I have stuck to the ones as described in the article, but otherwise such resolutions rarely click with me. I've even broken New Year's and Lenten resolutions on the very day I've made them. The dandelion resolution I have

kept. And keeping and putting into action resolutions leads us to an-**Habit.** "We are then what we re-

peatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit." Though usually attributed to Aristotle, this quote probably derives instead from a summation of Aristotle's thoughts on this subject in Will Durant's "The Story of Philosophy." After two months, picking dan-

delions has become a habit. I don't think about the task, but instead simply slip on my grubby shoes meant for yard work and wander the lawn extracting blossoms. That task, which usually takes less than 15 minutes—I have developed a keen eye for the enemy—is as much a part of my day as the first cup of coffee or strolling to the mailbox.

I wish I could amend some of my bad habits as easily as I acquired the habit of picking dandelions.

#### An Antidote to Lunacy

**Satisfaction and control.** When this crazy old world becomes even more mad than normal, as it has this spring with a virus sent us compliments of the Chinese Communist Party and now riots in American cities, simple tasks and easy pleasures may offset the depression brought on by larger crises. When I sit on the front porch or the deck

of this house in the evenings, the broad, dandelion-free lawn brings pleasure to the eye. I'll sip a drink, and at least for a few moments, feel as if all's right with the one acre of the world in which I play gardener and groundskeeper. In "12 Rules for Life," Jordan Pe-

terson titles one of those rules: "Set your house in perfect order before you criticize the world." That "perfect order" admonition may be impossible, but my dandelion war did make me think harder about a question: What if all of us tried to brighten the corner right where we are instead of changing the world? What if we worked harder to improve our lives, our relationships, our homes and property rather than using energy, most often wasted, debating events over which we have no control?

I have written articles about politics and pandemics, and may even offer a few insights into understanding these broad issues, but right now I have far more control over the dandelions



My dandelion war did make me think harder about a question: What if all of us tried to brighten the corner right where we are instead of changing the world? ALL IMAGES BY SHUTTERSTOCK

#### **Battles Lost and Won**

Winning the battles. For most of us, every day is a battle of some kind. We scrabble to make a living, we try to breathe life into relationships with a spouse, our children, or our friends, we face decisions that offer no clear path, no obvious right or wrong conse-

Sometimes the battles we can win, clear-cut conflicts that don't baffle us or leave us wondering about right and wrong, can ease our minds. We enter the fray without self-doubt or gnawing questions,

and complete our task. Thank you, dandelions.

Losing the war. I will win the dandelion battles, but someday the dandelions, no matter how many I pull, will win the war. Despite the hundreds of flowers I have yanked from the ground and tossed aside, the dandelions will keep on growing. And someday I, too, will be

yanked from life and tossed aside, buried in the earth and "pushing up daisies" as the saying goes—or in my case, pushing up dandelions. Death is one of nature's realities. The dandelions help me remember

It's 7 p.m. as I write these words, a beautiful evening in Virginia with light winds and a pale sunshine. The kids in this neighborhood are buzzing up and down the street on their ATVs, scooters, and bikes, the birds that provide the morning symphony have mostly gone quiet, and the sky is a sea of blue flecked by the spume of white and gray cumulus clouds. Time to pick some dandelions.

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 to follow his blog.

Walt Brinker has helped over 2,000 stranded motorists since 1980

#### **ANDREW THOMAS**

uring Christmastime in 1980, Walt Brinker was driving when he saw a woman whose car had broken down on the side of the road. Her hood was popped open, and her engine had stalled. He pulled over and gave her a jumpstart with his jumper cables, and got her car running. Since then, he's provided over 2,000 roadside assists to complete strangers—at no charge.

"I was so inspired by her relief and how good I felt that I said, 'Wow, I've got to do more of this.' That's where it all started right there," Brinker said.

Helping people whose cars had broken down on the road became his hobby. Over time, Brinker, 76, acquired the knowledge, experience, and tools to address a variety of car problems.

#### Roadside Assistance

A West Point graduate with a 23-year Army career, Brinker resides in Eastover, North Carolina, about 60 miles south of Raleigh. He has four sons, two daughters, and eight grandchildren. Three of his sons are currently serving in active duty in the Army.

After the Army, Brinker lived in Texas, working as a project controls engineer and manager. He would pull over to help a motorist in distress whenever time allowed. He would patrol interstate 10 on his way to and from work and while running errands in the Hous ton area. The most assists he's had in one day was helping 11 motorists.

After he moved to North Carolina in 2010, he began patrolling Interstate 95, which is only about three miles from his home. He takes a 55-mile route and averages about one assist per trip. Now that he's retired, he goes on even more regular patrols—about three times a week. Whenever he's out running errands and isn't on a deliberate patrol, he still manages to find at least one "customer" to help—free of charge.

#### **Memorable Assists**

Out of the over 2,000 assists Brinker has performed, some memorable experiences have stuck with him. In 2008, he was driving from Texas to Virginia, and on the way home, he spotted a car on the side of the road at 9 p.m. The car had a flat tire, and Brinker turned around and pulled over to help.

The man's jack was broken, and Brinker used his own jack to help him change the tire. When they finished, he discovered the man was a Marine. The





Items and tools Brinker carries in his car to help motorists.

This critical tool is a cheater bar (a 2 footlong piece of 1-inch steel pipe) to make up for the short handle of most lug wrenches, quadrupling the leverage to remove too-tight lug nuts.

man was with his wife and small child and said he was a little hesitant when Brinker pulled over in front of him. But as soon as he saw Brinker's Purple Heart license plate he felt at ease. They talked about the military for a few minutes, and Brinker gave him his card. He recommended they stop at a motel and get a new jack and spare tire before finishing their trip. About a half-hour later, he got a call from his wife, and she said, "I got a call from some Marine. He said to please tell you that he took your

"The funny part of the story was I got a card in the mail a week or so later thanking me for stopping for him," Brinker said. "At the bottom of the card he said, 'I'd never thought I'd say this, but Go Army.' For a Marine to say 'Go Army,' that's a big deal," Brinker said.

Brinker's most meaningful experience was in 2012. He was driving on Interstate 95 and pulled over for an African American preacher and his wife whose right rear tire was shredded. Initially, Brinker thought he would just change the tire. A highway patrolman pulled up offering to help, but Brinker said he'd take care of it. After he took off the tire, he realized the spare tire wouldn't



Walt Brinker has been helping motorists free of charge since 1980.

The three of them got into Brinker's car with the old tire, and they drove to a Walmart nearby, but it was closed. They continued to a Pep Boys that was open until 9 p.m., and it was their only chance to replace the tire that night. Fortunately, they were able to fix the tire and returned to the couple's car, and put the tire back on the car.

The experience stuck with Brinker because it occurred about a week after the George Zimmerman trial, which sparked many protests. But all they discussed during the three-hour trip was their families. When they were finished, the preacher told him he was going to share the experience with his church.

"That's probably the heaviest time I've ever had during an assist was when he told me that, and I realized, 'Hey, this is good stuff," Brinker said.

#### Road Advice

In Brinker's experience, the most common reason for car breakdowns is tire failures, mainly due to under-inflated or worn-out tires. When someone tries to change a tire, the lug nuts are often too tight to unscrew. That problem can be solved with a cheater bar, which gives one more leverage. The second most common problem is that the spare tire is too low on pressure to be used. Brinker carries a 12-volt compressor to reinflate the spare. If the tire has a puncture from a nail or other debris, he plugs the hole with a \$10 kit.

"Seventy-five percent of all the people I meet out there have got a tire issue, and my advice is to practice it in your driveway," Brinker said. "That's the single thing, be sure that the tires on your car are in good shape, and that you know how to change a tire."

The other 25 percent of breakdowns are due to being out of gas, overheated engines, minor electrical issues, or being locked out of the car. Brinker recommends carrying an empty onegallon gas can in the car to retrieve gas from the nearest station. If the car still won't start, it's normally because the gas has pooled in one part of the gas tank. Brinker will then employ his "rock the car method" by standing on the outside frame of the car and shaking the vehicle to distribute the gas in the tank.

If the engine overheats, the best thing to do is to let it cool first to avoid burning oneself before adding room-temperature water to the radiator before taking the car to a mechanic. (Make sure to use a a towel to remove the radiator cap in case it's hot.) For minor electrical issues when the car dies, half of the time it's due to a loose battery clamp. Tighten the clamp with a combination wrench, and you should be good to go. If you're unable to tighten the clamp, Brinker recommends using a paper clip between the clamp and the post to tighten everything up.

In order to get back into a locked car, Brinker recommends getting a nonchip copy of the key that will unlock the driver's door only, and keeping it in a magnetic box under the car. Once in the car, the driver can access a stashed spare key in the car that will start the

#### 3 Critical Items to Carry

When it comes to tools, Brinker stresses the importance of carrying three critical items: A lug wrench, a working jack, and a pair of jumper cables in addition to a viable spare tire. The magical fourth and fifth items are a towel to keep you clean and a tarp to keep you dry if it's wet outside. He also recommends leather work gloves to help protect your hands. If you have nothing else, he recommends carrying a tire pressure gauge to ensure the tires are properly inflated.

Brinker has included his insight and advice in his book "Roadside Survival: Low-Tech Solutions to Automobile Breakdowns," which was published in 2014. According to his own experience and research, he found that vehicle breakdowns are at least five times more likely to occur than car accidents. He believes breakdowns are actually closer to 20 times more likely to occur than crashes because the statistics for AAA

don't account for all breakdowns. Brinker's website, RoadsideSurvival. com, has three categories for individual drivers, driver's education, and law enforcement. It also features vignettes about his experiences on the road, and lessons to take away from each.

The motorists Brinker has helped have responded with tremendous gratitude. Not only does Brinker relish helping others, but his roadside assists also help him with his own moderate PTSD and depression. He finds his work truly

"I feel like a king. I'm one of the happiest clams you'll see," Brinker said.

# A Doctor's Journey From the Bayou to the Emergency Room

THE EPOCH TIMES Week 24, 2020

#### **ANDREW THOMAS**

Many of us have had interesting life trajectories, and couldn't have predicted where we are today. For Dr. Lorrie Metzler-Szabo, her journey started in rural Louisiana just outside New Orleans and took her to the emergency room in Orange County, California.

Metzler-Szabo looks back on her childhood fondly. She lived in St. Bernard Parish, just southeast of New Orleans Parish on the bayou, and grew up with a loving family in humble circumstances. She and her family had a cabin in Hopedale, which was only accessible by boat. There was no electricity and no running water, but she had some of her most memorable experiences out there.

From a very young age, she learned how fish for crabs and shrimp, and she and her family would cook pretty much everything they caught. One of her fondest memories was when her father gave her baby alligators to hold in her own hands. Whether they were fishing, cooking, or shooting, she was always taught to be self-reliant.

"I guess I got to see a lot of things that other children today really wouldn't see," Metzler-Szabo said.

#### News and Photography

When Metzler-Szabo was a young college student she won the Miss Louisiana competition in 1975. She relished the opportunity to meet new people and be a representative and spokeswoman for her state. She has always enjoyed competition, and set high goals for herself throughout her life.

Metzler-Szabo graduated from Loyola University in 1977 with a degree in communications and became a television news reporter. She found the profession both honorable and exciting, and thought of news reporting as a public service.

After working as a television reporter for a year, she made her first career pivot and opened her own photography business in New Orleans. She had started experimenting with photography while working as a reporter, and decided to take a professional leap. She got to work at the 1984 World Fair in New Orleans, and her most memorable assignment was covering the 1988 Republican National Convention.

"I really, really wanted that assignment. Boy, did I go after it. I mean, I was tenacious," Metzler-Szabo said.

Metzler-Szabo had the opportunity to cover Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush for 11 days at the convention. Despite being a Democrat at the time, she was honored to be hired for the gig solely based on her skills as a photographer. She enjoyed being around exciting people and vividly remembers the opening ceremony.

"It's something I'll never forget. Everybody in the whole Superdome was crying. It was just such a beautiful, wonderful, patriotic moment," Metzler-Szabo recalled.



#### **Never Too Late**

After working as a professional photographer for a decade, Metzler-Szabo made another big career change. Her first passion had always been biology, and she decided to go into medicine. She ultimately decided she wanted to become a doctor, but she had to go back to school to take her premed courses to get into medical school. Despite starting this career path at age 39, she found that she was more mature and a better student.

"People should never think it's too late to change careers or never think it's too late to pursue something that they really love or might want to do because they think age is a problem, because it is not," Metzler-Szabo

After a year and a half of pre-med courses, she applied to medical school and graduated on May 30, 1998. In 2005, she was finishing her residency when Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans. She had planned on pursuing a career in dermatology, but the city desperately needed emergency room doctors.

Metzler-Szabo never thought she would like working in the emergency room, but after her experience treating patients after the hurricane she discovered how much she enjoyed the work. She was a single mother



at the time, and juggled her parenting responsibilities with her schedule as a doctor.

Whenever she was able, she would take her

son with her to work. Throughout her career, Metzler-Szabo has had a rewarding experience. Not only has she been able to save lives, but she's also been able to connect with patients on an emotional level. Even when she was a photographer, if she saw someone struggling, she had a habit of trying to comfort them and empathize with them

"I've always been really sensitive to people's feelings in all aspects of my life," Metzler-Szabo said. Whenever patients in the emergency room feel scared and vulnerable, she feels like they could very easily be someone close to her and treats them as such. She tries to calm them down in any way she can, and is always honest with

"I start talking to them about them, and they like that," Metzler-Szabo said.

Metzler-Szabo has had a particularly challenging time recently. Every procedure has become more difficult and complex as a result of the pandemic, and an already difficult job has become even more stressful. However, it's been a rewarding time as well.

"I feel so honored to be able to help, especially at my age," Metzler-Szabo said



Lorrie Metzler-Szabo with her husband, Dean

Metzler-Szabo won the Miss Louisiana competition in 1975

Metzler-Szabo working in the emergency room at Chapman Global Medical Center in Orange County,

After working as a professional photographer for a decade, **Metzler-Szabo** made another big career change. She decided to go into medicine.

### Golden Retriever Sets World Record for Most Tennis Balls in Its Mouth

#### **ROBERT JAY WATSON**

Six-year-old dog Finley might look like a garden-variety golden retriever at first glance. However, this impressive pooch entered the Guinness Book of World Records this spring.

The accomplished retriever from Canandaigua, New York, set the record for "most tennis balls held in the mouth by a dog," according to Guinness World Records. Finley can carry six balls in its mouth at once. Its owners, Cherie and Rob Molloy, and their adult daughter Erin were naturally incredibly proud of their pup's accomplishment.

"The joy he brings to us is one thing," Finley's owner Cherie Molloy told Rochester's Democrat & Chronicle. "But he brings joy to people all over the world."

The Molloy family never set out to raise a record holder. When Erin Malloy brought Finley, then just a 10-week-old puppy, home from college, it took a while before



Finley has a passion for tennis balls.

they started to notice that the dog was crazy about tennis balls.

The family observed Finley fetching not old, Finley was already accomplishing near-record feats. "I look over and he's trotting over to me with four tennis balls in his mouth," Erin recalled.

From there, the family realized that if they kept throwing it more, Finley would somehow find a way to make space for popular tricks also involves fetching. them. Before long, it was besting the previous record holder, a dog from Texas that could hold five at a time, according to the Democrat & Chronicle.

It took a long time for Finley's owners to no humans required. get all the documentation done so that it could be officially awarded the record. "It's just so exciting," Erin Molloy told USA Today. "When I look at him I'm like, 'I want to squeeze you, I love you so much!"" When the family finally got the news from Guinness, after a year-long process, they threw Finley a party, including friends and a cake from a local bakery. "He got pretty excited when all of our neighbors were outside his front yard," Erin explained. "Obviously, he's staying humble, but I think he's pretty pumped."

Even before being officially awarded the Guinness record, Finley had already amassed quite a large following on social just one ball but as many as it could fit in media. Erin had created an Instagram its mouth at once, Erin said. At 2 years account for the dog and its antics, @finnyboymolloy.

Just by virtue of its amazing abilities, the dog has amassed a following of over 37,000 people. In addition to a feat of stuffing six tennis balls at a time in its mouth, one of Finley's most endearing and most

The trick involves getting on its back and holding a tennis ball in the air with its front legs, dropping it to the ground, and then pouncing on it—a game of fetch with

To those who wonder if Finley was put up to the task by its owners, a quick perusal of photos and videos reveal a onetrack mind: this dog was born to retrieve tennis balls. "We've never forced him to do any of that," Cherie shared.

While the record has brought Finley increased popularity, it hasn't changed the simple pleasures the dog enjoys. "He lives the life of a king," Cherie said, and pictures of Finley tearing into a giant cake made in its honor certainly seem to con-



Walt Brinker changes a tire at night.



Let the kids pick their own books, with some supervision, and pursue their various interests.

# Keep the Fire Burning: Consider Summer School

**JEFF MINICK** 

ummer's approaching, and if you're like most American parents, your children have spent the last few months getting their education in the home, either by distance learning or by materials and assignments provided by their school. You've helped guide them through reading and math lessons, you've to make our children happier. spent some time editing their compositions, you've encouraged them when they can't **Advantages for You** get online for their scheduled hour of video lessons in biology.

Some of those students, and perhaps you, can hardly wait until schools reopen. Others—some polls say 40 percent of quarantined families—are considering homeschooling full-time beginning in the fall.

Whatever your situation, let me encourage you to keep up some form of schooling at home throughout the summer.

#### **Summer Schooling**

My wife and I taught all four of our children them. at home. They received extra instruction in homeschool co-ops in elementary and middle school, attended special seminars—I taught several of these—in high school, and entered the dual enrollment program at our local community college, but until the last two years of secondary school, they did the bulk of their work

After a few years of experimentation, we found our school operated best by following The 3Rs: Reading, 'Riting, a modified schedule during the summer meeting for three days a week for a couple my family devised, as well as some used

of hours of academic instruction or else for an hour daily Monday through Friday.

There were several advantages in continuing school during the summer. It took the pressure off of us to complete all subjects in a given amount of time. It often allowed our children to advance more rapidly through spelling lessons or texts like the Saxon Math books. Finally, sticking to a routine seemed

In the case of parents who intend to return their children to private or public schools, this summer instruction will enhance their performance in the classroom. The students will return in the fall to their teachers and classmates knowing they have achieved not only what was assigned them, but have gone above and beyond those requirements.

On the other hand, parents attracted to homeschooling by their experience this spring won't lose the impetus and routine that learning at home has already brought

ing from the distance learning of another teacher to materials specifically designed for homeschooling, the transition will be easier if you ease into it instead of facing some new and different method of schooling in the fall.

So what does this summer homeschooling look like?

#### and 'Rithmetic

months. Usually, this schedule meant either Here are some of the ideas and projects

by other parents I have known. Let's assume you decide to spend one hour daily on instruction.

> **Reading.** Set aside a certain amount of time daily for reading. Do not label this reading as a part of "school." The idea is to grow lifelong readers, and making that activity part of the summer school day for some students is an instant turn-off.

> This is the time when the kids get to pick their own books, with some supervision, and pursue their various interests. Does 14-year-old William love sports? Head for your public library for back issues of "Sports Illustrated," which offers some excellent writing, or introduce him to the sports books in the adult section. Do horses enthrall your 10-year-old? Have the librarian introduce her to the classics in both the fiction and non-fiction equine categories.

> Have the older children read to their pre-school and kindergarten siblings. This makes better readers of big brother or big sister, and keeps their younger siblings en-

> **Writing.** This one is simple. For Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, have your children write journal entries for 15 minutes. Have them date each entry, and then write whatever they wish, with the proviso that you will occasionally read those entries. Encourage them to use proper grammar and spelling, but the main thrust of this exercise is to keep them writing. Someday their own children and grandchildren may enjoy perusing these journals.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, you might

ask them to write letters to friends, grandparents, and other relatives. From this exercise they derive two benefits: they are writng, and they are bringing a smile to others.

**Mathematics.** Have your young people spend a minimum of 15 minutes per day on math. They can review multiplication and division tables, advance in their textbooks, or choose from an array of math games on the computer. These drills and brieflessons will keep them sharp in math and will pay dividends in the fall when school resumes.

**Other subjects**. Your children have now spent 15 minutes on math and 15 minutes on writing. For science, history, geography, and other subjects, you have many options. If you are working from home or busy with household chores, go to YouTube and have the kids watch half an hour of a video about George Washington, elephants, earthquakes, or whatever other suitable topic draws their interest.

If you have the time and desire to teach them yourself, the "Core Knowledge Series" edited by E.D. Hirsch is an excellent tool for doing so. Each of the books in this series— "What Your Kindergartner Needs to Know," "What Your First Grader Needs to Know," and so on-provides instruction in all elementary school subjects, features many entertaining stories and folktales, includes some fine poems, and presents history and science in an approachable way.

#### **Parental Explorations** and Expectations

As parents close out the regular school year and enter the summer, it's also a great time for them to begin planning for the fall. Those who decide to re-enroll their children in a brick-and-mortar school might explore ways they can strengthen their education or help them in those subjects with which they are struggling. Those who decide to continue homeschooling can use this time to consider the many curricula and resources now available to home educators.

Summer with its slower pace also affords an excellent opportunity for parents to step back and view their children's education with a new pair of eyes. What are the goals of an education? What are the aims other than the mastery of academic subjects? What values do we want children to learn in school? What sort of adults do we wish our children to become?

Often, swept up in the demands and realities of daily life, we have little time for such questions. Now that you've had a taste of teaching, however, these questions are worth pondering. Whatever course you pursue when the school lockdown ends—a return to public or private school, or turning instead to homeschooling—summer affords a fine time for a deep, leisurely contempla-

"The more that you read," wrote Dr. Seuss, "the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." To which I add this line: "And summertime school will help make it be so."

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 JeffMinick.com to follow his blog.

# FOR KIDS ONLY THE EPOCH TIMES







n June 14, 1777, The United States Continental Congress adopted Francis Hopkinson's stars and stripes design as the national symbol. The resolution stated, "Resolved: that the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation." Of course, the thirteen stars and stripes represented the original thirteen colonies. Today's flag still commemorates the original thirteen in its stripes.

LJULIA/SHUTTERSTOCK

(PART II)

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCI

## BIRDS OF THE AMAZON RAINFOREST

wave o'er the

and the home

of the brave?

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY

land of the free

**KEEL-BILLED HOATZIN FOUCAN** This might be the strangest-looking bird in the This large toucan is the national bird of Belize. rainforest! It has a slate-gray back and a longish t is also one of the more colorful toucans: tail of the same color, a whitish underbelly, a blue Its back and belly are a maroon-black with face that is bare of feathers, red eyes, and a large, a slight sheen. Its face and chest are bright rufous crest not unlike a mohawk. It has other yellow (hence the nickname sulfur-breasted markings of all colors on its neck, back, belly oucan) and its bill is bright green with a and tail tip. Its disproportionately small head is mounted on a long neck. It nests in tree cavities where it lays 2-4 Hoatzin chicks are very vulnerable to predation, white eggs. Both parents care for the chicks, and to combat this they have an unusual way to incubating and feeding them. All toucans eat Amazon escape. They have claws protruding from the joint of fruit, however the keel-billed also eats bird rainforest is so the wing, which they use together with their feet to eggs and chicks, insects, lizards, and tree teeming with life climb to safety. If this doesn't work, they can drop off frogs. The enormous bill is very versatile, and of the tree into the water over which adult hoatzins that it is one of the few its length allows it to reach fruit in high places build their nests, and swim underwater to safety. that others cannot, while it is also used as a places on earth that could be Hoatzins eat predominantly leaves. Since their club to defend its territory. The serrated bill called an animal city. Birds digestive system cannot handle so many leaves, edge allows them to pick and grip fruit. To eat, the toucan will throw its head back and they have a symbiotic relationship with bacteria that are no exception—you will catch the fruit in its throat. The bill looks very helps them digest it. This bacteria is passed on from find the large, the small, the heavy, but it's constructed with a complex adults to young when the adult will regurgitate some colorful, the drab, and the framework, so that, while it is very strong, it is of their bacteria, in the form of a sticky substance, to weird all in the same forest. also very light.

# Should You Homeschool? 4 Questions to Help You Decide

#### **BARBARA DANZA**

Who could have predicted that a global pandemic would dramatically increase the broader adoption of homeschooling in society? Yet, right now many families are asking themselves the question: Should we homeschool?

If you're one of them, whatever has led you to this point, homeschool is an option worth considering. Here are some questions to ponder as you think this significant decision through.

#### 1. What Do You Know About **Homeschooling?**

You may have some ideas about what you think homeschooling is. Some of those ideas may be rooted in fact and some may be notions or stereotypes that don't actually hold true.

Dive into some research to discover what homeschooling really looks like in 2020. There are so many homeschooling parents on Instagram, YouTube, and Pinterest sharing their experiences and ideas. Take a look at how widely

world picture of what homeschooling actually is. If you know any homeschooling families personally, talk to them. Ask them about their experiences and how they came to become homeschoolers themselves. 2. What Do You Know About

the possibilities are, and get a real-

#### Teaching? Many parents are hesitant to at-

tempt homeschooling because they lack confidence in their ability to teach. Homeschooling doesn't call for the same type of teaching that traditional school does, however. What's more, if you consider all that your child learned before going off to school (walking, talking, eating, playing, maybe even recognizing letters and numbers and early writing, and the names of every dinosaur ever discovered), you'll see that you've got what it

takes to educate your child. It may be helpful to see yourself as a facilitator of learning rather than a teacher. Much of a teacher's training is focused on strategies for classroom management. In those experiences vary, how vast homeschool, you're providing

an environment in which your particular child can best learn. If you're supportive, resourceful, and dedicated to the task, you have everything you need. So, before you judge your ability

to teach your child, toss aside the picture of a traditional teacher in front of a classroom and dig into what teaching might look like in your home.

#### 3. Do You Know What Your **Children Are Being Taught** in School?

The current circumstances may have given you a glimpse at what was being covered in school this year. While academic mediocrity may not be too surprising, many parents who've done their research have been shocked to discover some of the content in science, history or social studies, and especially the health curriculum.

While you're considering other options, look into what's being taught to your children in school. It may be hard to find (or decipher) on your school district's website, which may be telling in



#### 4. Can You Give Homeschooling a Try for a Year?

Once you consider homeschool an option for your family, you'll be faced with a renewed sense of freedom and actual choice when it comes to your children's education. If you decide later that homeschool is not for you, you can always enroll your child back into public school.

So why not give it a try? To do so you need at least one year. The transition from traditional school to homeschool takes some getting used to. Most of us don't realize how ingrained the model of tra-

ditional school is in our minds. You likely are a product of a traditional school system yourself and it takes some time for a paradigm shift to take place.

everything

you need.

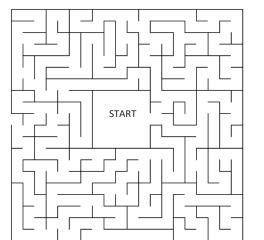
Can you struggle through some adjustment and tweak your lifestyle until you find a rhythm and routine that works for you and your family? Can you give it your all for the span of a year and then review your experience at

Rather than taking on the task of providing your child's entire education, why not just commit to one year? Has there ever been a better year to give this a go?



By John Phillip Sousa

it waves forever.



**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  $1 + (7 \times 3) + 6 = 28$ 

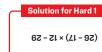


- Solution For Easy 1

9 - 9 × (7 + 4)

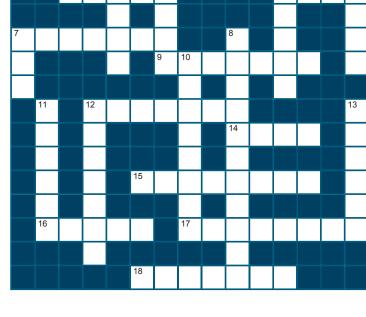


Solution for Medium 1 (18 + 14 - 20) × 1









#### Down 1 The "Star Spangled Banner" is our national \_\_\_\_\_ (6)

2 The number of stars on our flag today (5)

3 They rest on a field of blue (5)

4 The Bald Eagle is our national \_\_\_

7 We only \_\_\_\_ the flag during the day (3)

8 The stars on our flag (4-7)

10 Betsy Ross' flag had this many stars (8)

Roll out (6) 12 When we take down the flag (7)

13 Ornament at the top of the flagpole (6)



3 Military members \_\_\_\_ the flag (6) **5** To "raise" a flag on a ship (5)

Philip Sousa march) (7)

14 What your flag might fly on (4) **6** To show mourning, we fly the flag

15 Citizen of the USA (8) at half-\_\_\_ on naval vessels (4) **16** We \_\_\_\_ the flag at dusk (5) 17 The Stars and Stripes refers to our

\_\_\_\_ flag (8)

**18** This day always falls in June (7)

12 When we raise the flag (7)



# Honest Journalism is Always "Essential"

reetings, Epoch VIP, and welcome to your print edition of The Epoch Times!

This might be your first time actually meeting us in person, which is great! Not that our online edition isn't just as good, but there's nothing quite like the feel of a good old-fashioned newspaper in your hands over a cup of coffee—at least, in our opinion.

And don't worry; while we do have many opinions of our own, we do our best to put them in our editorial and op-ed sections where opinions belong. Our news reporting is reserved for facts that we can prove with credible sources, so that we can deliver you an accurate, unbiased, and comprehensive picture of what's going on in the world today.

We're believers in the idea that news reporting should inspire people of all different opinions to think independently and speak up, instead of being silenced in favor of a majority narrative.

That's why our job stops after we give you the facts: your reactions, emotions, and opinions are all your own. Maybe a report on injustice might sadden you, perhaps it might make you angry, perhaps you might want to do your own research and then decide. Maybe one of our lifestyle articles might make you laugh, or it might make you nostalgic. Maybe one of our mind and body articles will get you to think about life in a way you didn't before.

We don't know what your reaction will be, but what we do hope is that the paper in your hands inspires you to have an open, honest conversation—with your friends and family, with society, or even with us.

Tell us if you agree, let us know if you disagree, write a letter to our editors; we'd love to hear from you. For we believe that freedom of expression is the fire that forges a society's best ideas, and that principle is also what drives the kind of classic American journalism we want to restore to the limelight.

So let's bring back news that's accountable to its readers. Let's bring back the dialogue that comes with getting the paper in the morning. Let us know if we're putting our money where our mouth is, because we want to prove that "truth and tradition" isn't just a motto.

With you on our side, we hope to get even better at living out that motto every day.

In truth and tradition, The Epoch Times

#### **IMPORTANT REMINDER:**

**DELIVERY** 

Making sure you get the newspaper ON TIME is important to you and also to us. If you have any issues with your newspaper delivery, please read below and file delivery complaints without delay.

There are two ways to set up your account.

2. ACTIVATE/SET UP YOUR ACCOUNT

- Please click the link in your email, which you received after you signed up the subscription.
- Search "Activate account" at ReadEpoch.com/help and follow the steps.

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- We work with the USPS nationwide and disparities from place to place can exist. If you don't receive your print paper by Tuesday at latest, please contact us at **917-905-2080** and we will immediately investigate.
- 2. If you ever miss an issue of the paper, you will be granted a subscription extension for the missed issue(s).
- 3. Subscriptions, except for gift subscriptions, will automatically renew every term (monthly, quarterly, biannually or annually).
- 4. Read our complete FAQ at ReadEpoch.com/FAQ.
  - What are the fundamental differences between The Epoch Times and other
  - Why do I need to subscribe to The **Epoch Times?**
  - What are the cancellation and refund policies?
  - How much am I going to be charged after my one-month trial? And more...
- 5. Read the complete Terms and Conditions at ReadEpoch.com/Terms.
- Quickly and easily manage your account by logging in at TheEpochTimes.com. From there you can view or print your billing history, file delivery complaints and update the following information:
  - Shipping and billing addresses
  - Email address
  - Phone number



#### **COMMONLY USED RESOURCES**

#### **HELP CENTER**

Visit our newly launched Help Center at ReadEpoch.com/help to find answers to the most commonly asked questions. You can also find the Help Center buttons on TheEpochTimes.com homepage.

#### **CUSTOMER SERVICE HOTLINE**

917-905-2080

#### **CUSTOMER SERVICE BUSINESS HOURS**

Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. (EST) Saturday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. (EST)

#### **CUSTOMER SERVICE EMAIL**

subscribe@epochtimes.com

#### **SELF-SERVICE PORTAL**

Manage your subscription by logging in to your account at TheEpochTimes.com. Make subscription changes or update personal information by clicking on the "Log In" button in the page's upper right corner to enter your username and password. After login, click on the person icon to access your account.

Once logged in, you can additionally:

- · File delivery complaints
- Change subscription plans
- Update account information · Update payment information
- Refer a friend
- Request sample papers

#### **ADDITIONAL LINKS**

Subscription: ReadEpoch.com Referral Program: ReadEpoch.com/friends Gift a Subscription: ReadEpoch.com/gift **Donation:** SupportEpoch.com Sign a Petition: RejectCCP.com Online Shop: EpochShop.com Reader Community: EpochReaders.com

#### **MAILING ADDRESS**

**Subscription Department** The Epoch Times 229 W. 28th St., Fl. 7 New York, NY 10001



## THE EPOCH TIMES

TRUTH AND  $TRADITION \equiv$