

# THE EPOCH TIMES LIFE & TRADITION

## GRAND OLD FLAG

A SALUTE FOR THE  
FOURTH OF JULY

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As a young  
businessman, Mariotti  
got mugged by teenagers.  
It led him to teach high  
school students  
about the life-  
changing power of  
entrepreneurship.

# Steve Mariotti

CHANGING LIVES BY TEACHING ENTREPRENEURSHIP **Page 6**

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF ENCORE CREATIVITY FOR OLDER ADULTS UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE



# Musical Connection

A choral program for older adults is providing camaraderie and fun

**ANDREW THOMAS**

Encore Creativity for Older Adults, a choral organization, is providing seniors 55 and older with a creative outlet and the opportunity to make new friends.

Since live rehearsals have been canceled since March 12, 2020, Encore is offering a virtual summer course called Encore University, which will feature rehearsals as well as a variety of music classes. The show must go on, as they say.

Encore prides itself on its accessibility. No auditions are needed, and the ability to read music is not necessary. "We have empowered these people to do their best, and we have empowered these people to look forward to life. They come in and they're happy. Our singers are just happy," said Jeanne Kelly, the founder and creative director.

## How Encore Started

In 2001, Kelly, who has over 40 years of professional vocal experience, was hired to be the conductor in a study on creativity and aging. The purpose of this part of the study, which was funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Institutes of Health, was to observe the physical and psychological effects of singing on older adults.

For the study, health professionals interviewed older adults before and after they started singing for a year. Researchers discovered that after the first year of the study, the participants' overall health had improved. They took less medications, they had fewer hospitalizations, fewer doctors' visits, higher morale, and less depression. In addition, singing provided valuable exercise for an aging pair of lungs.

The study continued for another two

years, and the researchers kept adding participants. That's when Kelly decided she wanted to continue to work with older adults for the rest of her career. She had been a professional classical singer herself and had taught singing to older adults before.

"I decided something needs to happen that gives these older singers a challenge, that gives them respect, and that gives them an opportunity for teamwork," Kelly said.

## Older Singers

As a result, Kelly started the nonprofit organization Encore Creativity for Older Adults. In the beginning, Encore had three traditional choruses, but it rapidly grew to become the country's largest choral organization for adults age 55 and over. Now, there are about 1,400 singers in Maryland, Virginia, Washington D.C., and New York. There are now 22 different choruses, including six rock n' roll choruses, a chorus focused on the Great American Songbook, and a chorus for those with Alzheimer's and other types of dementia. The program has a 15-week semester structure where each choir rehearses for one and a half hours per week, followed by a live community concert at the end of the semester. All of the concerts are free.

"It gives the singers a chance to show the public that older adults can really sing. They can put on a great concert," Kelly said.

Sandra Quinn from College Park, Maryland, is just one of the many singers at Encore. Quinn, 68, is a professor at the University of Maryland and is the chair of the department of family science at the school of public health. Quinn signed up in 2014 after seeing an announcement at the Smithsonian and has not missed a semester since. She had a passion for



**(Left)** Jeanne Kelly is the founder and creative director at Encore Creativity for Older Adults. **(Right)** Sandra Quinn has been singing at Encore since 2014.



singing before Encore, but hadn't sung with a group since high school.

"In any given group there will be people who have been singing a long time, there will be people who read music well, and there will be total novices. Somehow, they move us in that 15-week period to where we need to go," Quinn said.

Quinn's experience at Encore has allowed her to forge new friendships and has given her the opportunity to interact with people she might not otherwise encounter.

"We socialize under normal circumstances, and it's not just one group. I have a couple of different kinds of groups that I socialize with," Quinn said. "It has bolstered my social network even outside the rehearsal hall."

Quinn said each week she leaves rehearsals happier and more relaxed. They have helped her live in the moment, given her a sense of camaraderie, and made her more confident. She is also constantly learning.

"When I would walk out of rehearsal, I felt so energized. I felt like a new woman," Quinn said.

## Summer School

On March 12, 2020, as a result of the pandemic, Encore had to stop all of its live rehearsals and eventually moved its rehearsals online via Zoom.

Kelly received numerous emails from singers saying how the virtual rehearsals helped them during the pandemic, especially the older adults who live alone.

Normally singers would attend one of Encore's sleep-away summer programs, but since this was not a possibility anymore, Kelly was determined to do something. The organization is now offering a virtual Encore University Summer School, which is open to all adults 55 and older. The summer school is six weeks long, and classes and rehearsals will be held via Zoom.

The courses include "Musical Masterworks," "Vocal Techniques," and "This Is Your Brain on Music." The summer school costs \$50 and includes all of the classes. Almost 600 singers have signed up for the summer school so far. The deadline to sign up is July 3, 2020, at [EncoreCreativity.org/programs/summer-programs](http://EncoreCreativity.org/programs/summer-programs)

Encore Creativity for Older Adults is the country's largest choral organization for adults age 55 and over.



Encore is offering a virtual six-week summer course starting on July 6, 2020.

# Returning to Your Best Habits

ALL PHOTOS BY UNSPLASH

**BARBARA DANZA**

Lockdown restrictions are easing, social interaction is expanding, and the external demands vying for our time are on the rise. The good habits we once relied upon to keep life humming along may have fallen by the wayside while we were "staying home."

To get back on track, summertime is the perfect season to ease into the habits that allow us to live healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives.

Here are a few tips to return to (or establish anew) your best habits.

steward of your resources? Do you see a purpose for your life? Big questions like these can point you toward the habits you'll want to work on.

**The key to establishing (or re-establishing) habits is to start small—tiny, even—and work on only one at a time.**

## Choose One

Once you're motivated with a firm understanding of the power of habits and a clear direction you want to steer your life in, it may be very tempting to try to make a lot of big changes all at once. Don't do it.

The key to establishing (or re-establishing) habits is to start small—tiny, even—and work on only one at a time.

Some habits will be more powerful than others. Charles Duhigg, author of "The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business," defines keystone habits as "small changes or habits that people introduce into their routines that unintentionally carry over into other aspects of their lives." Keystone habits, he says, "start a process that, over time, transforms everything."

In choosing which habit to start out with, consider which may have the greatest impact across different dimensions of your life. For example, developing a habit of a daily walk for improved fitness, may also increase the energy you have to work productively, improve your confidence and happiness in personal interactions, and may encourage you to reduce the amount of meals you eat outside your home, improving your monthly budget. That would make it a keystone habit.

## Study Habits

I'm not talking about your study habits. I'm recommending that you study habits. A famous quote by writer Will Durant, and commonly misattributed to Aristotle, says, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."

Indeed, habits are powerful. Understanding how habits form and the significant role they play in our lives can be both motivational and practical.

My favorite books about habits are "Atomic Habits: An Easy & Proven Way to Build Good Habits & Break Bad Ones" by James Clear and "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change" by Stephen R. Covey. I'd read the latter first.



Before picking on a habit to work on, make time for some introspection.

## Look in the Mirror

Before you decide which habits to work on, a little introspection is in order. Give yourself the time and space—away from distractions and technology—to think and journal about the different aspects of your life.

Consider how you're doing physically, mentally, and spiritually. How are your relationships, your home, your health, your finances, and your work in the world? Are you nurturing your talents and strengths? Are you acting as a responsible



A keystone habit, such as exercise, is one that impacts many aspects of your life.

## Be Kind to Yourself

Listen, we've all been through a rather traumatic period of time. Be patient with yourself as you take the steps toward increased activity, stimulation, and demands. It may be surprising how challenging you find the adjustment. Take it slow. Pick yourself up every time you fall. Do not give up no matter how long it takes, and be kind to yourself all along the way.

# Memorials Are More Than Stones

**RACHAEL DYMSKI**

I squinted at the stone memorial in the bright sun, trying to hold back my hair as the wind blew it around my face. My husband, daughter, and I had just pulled up to a small green building located behind the Thurleigh Airfield in Bedford, England.

Aside from the memorial I saw in the corner of the fenced lot, the field was empty.

But that small marker was why we had come; why we had driven out of our way from the Cotswolds to my grandmother's house in Kent to see it. This plaque, which read, "Always First: First U.S.A.A.F. Unit Over Germany," was the physical remnant of the stories my husband had grown up hearing about his grandfather's service in the war.

## 'Reich Wreckers'

Andrew's grandfather, Edmund "Ted" Deeter, served as an accountant in the 306th Bomb Group, known as the "Reich Wreckers," during World War II. In 1943, at the age of 22, Ted left his country for the first time to sail across the ocean on a military ship that slept people five high in bunks. He was stationed in Bedford for the next two years, where he experienced homesickness, victories, and deep personal losses.

Ted was a lover of history, and as Andrew grew up, he would take him to places such as Gettysburg and Valley Forge. He passed on to my husband his love of George Washington, the American Revolution, and the

**'It's so far from home,' Andrew said, after he had stared at the memorial for a solid two minutes. I understood what he meant.**

Edmund "Ted" Deeter Jr., served as an accountant in the 306th Bomb Group, known as the "Reich Wreckers," during World War II, circa 1943–45. ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF RACHAEL DYMSKI

Civil War. Ted loved to visit statues and memorials, to honor the places that paid tribute to those who had given to their country.

I met Ted when I was in college. After finding out my family was from England, he talked animatedly with me about cups of tea, double-decker buses, and the smell of the sea. I asked him if he would ever want to go back to Bedford. That's when I found out no one in his family had seen the place where he was stationed; the man who loved to visit memorials where history was made hadn't visited his own.

Ted had a tag on his license plate that referenced his time in the 306th Bomb Group. A few years before our trip, we came across letters that he had written to his mother during his time overseas, talking about the rations and the food he missed from home. Before his death, he and one of his sons had traveled to England, but Ted, like so many other soldiers, wasn't emotionally ready to revisit the place where he had watched so many friends leave on a mission and not return.

## Power of Place

I've walked past memorials my whole life. I've had picnics next to them, I've used them as a meeting place, I've walked by them and thought they were interesting. But I wasn't prepared for the way it would feel when you know the person for whom the memorial was erected.

The meaning changes entirely when the memorial is personal.

When I stood at this memorial that honors the 306th Bomb Group, one of its members being the man who played a vital role in my husband's life, that stone became a touchpoint of our family's story.

Memorials are a testament to the power of a place. The Thurleigh Airfield and its surrounding area looked entirely different than it had in the 1940s, but the memorial was a marker for who had been there, and what they had given. I looked around the green lawn wondering, how many memories were stored up here? How many people were changed because of their time at this airfield?

"It's so far from home," Andrew said, after he had stared at the memorial for a solid two minutes. I understood what he meant. We live in the same small town in Pennsylvania where his grandfather grew up. Most of his family has stayed in that area. To imagine his grandfather so far away from anything familiar at such a young age, fighting a war against a tyrannical power gave us a new insight into what so many men and women were willing to give up.

Since that day in the airfield, I look at memorials differently. I understand that they are place markers, but that to somebody, they are also deeply personal. They are a way honoring the value of a person's life, of thanking them for what they were willing to give up.

While Ted never saw the tribute to the 306th Bomb Group in person, it made Andrew and me so proud to know that it was there. The memorial honored the deep, painful sacrifice Ted chose to make for his country, and it honored the person he became after the war—the kind, thoughtful, family-oriented man he remained his whole life.

The memorial was a tangible testament to what we already knew: Edmund M. Deeter Jr. and the rest of the 306th Bomb Group lived those years with bravery and persistence, and our world today is better because of it.

Rachael Dymksi 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, [RachaelDymksi.com](http://RachaelDymksi.com)









THE  
EPOCH  
TIMES

TRUTH *and* TRADITION



# Preserving Our Values for the Next Generation

## Unimaginable Change

You know about the state of our nation.

Day after day, freedoms are taken from us. The words, and even the reputations, of our Founding Fathers are being twisted.

The concepts of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness have morphed into something working to silence and bind us.

What's more is that our nation is experiencing an erosion of family values, the desecration of morality—and most of all, the increasing dominance of socialist and communist factors in our government and broader society.

Our great nation, with its ideals of individual liberty and the freedom to build our own lives, is becoming “free” in name only and slowly being dragged down by the specter of communism.

At this rate, our grandchildren may grow up in a country that's far different from the America we knew.

## An Antidote

This potential future worries us. But it also drives us to work harder—because our work here at The Epoch Times is part of this poison's antidote.

Our society's demoralization comes down to one source: communist ideology in its myriad forms and with its ultimate goal of destroying human morality. When we as Americans clearly see and heartily reject this evil force, we can win this battle.

## Massive Challenges

For months, Americans faced the threat of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Virus. More

than 100,000 Americans lost their lives, while millions more lost their livelihoods. In a matter of weeks, our booming economy took a massive hit.

And before we were able to recover, the communist-extremist group Antifa took advantage of civil unrest. They began to incite violence, burning homes and small businesses across dozens of cities. These extremist movements now call for radical changes to America's legal system— including abolishing the police.

## The Root Cause

These happenings remind us that communism did not disappear with the fall of the Soviet Union. It's still alive today, and its aim is to silence people, crush our spirits and destroy the traditional values of our human society.

Despite having taken on different forms throughout the past century, communism's destructive nature never changes. Communism is a poison which aims to snuff out the best parts of humanity using any and all tactics: the ends always justify the means.

## The Epoch Way

We've lived through this before. Many of us here at The Epoch Times have been victims of communism and have witnessed firsthand how fear and ignorance are manipulated—turning good, decent people into willing slaves.

Our motto is “Truth and Tradition,” the opposite of communist thought. From our founding, we've stood against the lies, deceit and rejection of humankind's collective history that communism foments.

## A Bumpy Road

In 2000, soon after we began publishing, the Chinese Communist Party arrested, jailed and tortured 10 of our China-based journalists.

Over the years, our journalists have been shot at, threatened and imprisoned. Our offices have been robbed and even set on fire. They keep trying to silence us, but we will never be silenced.

Our journalists have the courage and fortitude to investigate and report stories that most media won't. And because we call into question the “established” narratives when facts don't seem to line up, we've been further attacked, demonetized and de-platformed by some giant tech companies, legacy news outlets and service providers.

So what we're doing is not simply reporting stories or conducting investigations.

We are holding the line.

And it's working. Despite major resistance, we've become the fastest-growing newspaper in the United States.

## The Honest News Renaissance

If you're looking for an honest source of news that brings you the facts and let you make up your own mind, then The Epoch Times is your best choice. Your subscription won't only bring honest news directly to your doorstep—it will also contribute to the revival of American journalism and help safeguard our freedoms for future generations.

*In Truth and Tradition,*  
The Epoch Times

## WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING



I enjoy reading **The Epoch Times** daily and share links, stories and “real news” updates whenever I can. Because of this, several friends and family members are now subscribers and have thanked me for sharing “real news” that is going on globally.

DELINDA FORSYTHE



The Epoch Times truly has a neutral stance on news events in comparison to large media companies and **enables me to create my own opinions about issues.**

CORBIN LUBIANSKI



I recommend the paper, usually on Twitter, and in person. **I never expected the wealth of articles on health, aging, parenting, communications, American history, and more.**

LINORE ROSE BURKARD



I saw a Facebook ad that pulled me in. I do not have a local paper that doesn't read like the whole thing is an opinion piece. Having true factual reporting and an opinion section for opinions is so refreshing. **I enjoy reading The Epoch Times as it shows me how a newspaper should be and I'm grateful for it.**

ABBY LONDON

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