

# THE EPOCH TIMES

# LIFE &

# TRADITION

CLARK YOUNG/UNSPLASH



## Self-Reliance: An American Virtue

JEFF MINICK

One chilly afternoon just after Thanksgiving, I stood in the crowded lot of my local auto repair shop in Front Royal, Virginia, watching the mechanic try to remove the metal caps from the pressure valves on my tires. He explained no one should have put such caps on these nozzles because they get stuck,

**We are to a great extent responsible for who and what we are.**

as they were now, and taking them off by force could damage the tires. He first used WD-40 and a wrench, then disappeared inside, returned with a blowtorch, gingerly heated one of the caps and valves, and tried the wrench again.

"Impressive," I said when the cap came off.

He glanced up at me. "I grew up on a farm near here back in the '70s. We didn't have much, and there wasn't much to be had

anyway. We got used to making do, which is how I learned some of these things."

This skilled man successfully removed all four metal caps, replaced them with plastic ones, and said, "Well, that saved you about \$400."

I thanked him and asked about the bill.

"No charge," he said, and when I protested, he waved me away.

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## 'Random Acts of Flowers' Brings Smiles to Patients

An organization delivers unsolicited flowers, kindness, and a dose of joy

ANDREW THOMAS

In a hectic world, small acts of kindness can make a significant impact on people's lives. For Larsen Jay of Knoxville, Tennessee, it was after a traumatic accident that he discovered the healing power of flowers.

One summer day in 2007, Jay was working on the roof of his workshop, tarp in hand, trying to fix a leak while his wife was out of town. He had been climbing up and down the ladder repeatedly, but as he ascended to the top for the 15th time, the ladder col-

lapsed. He plummeted face-first toward the concrete.

Jay broke his left arm, left wrist, right elbow, right femur, and nose, and suffered 10 skull fractures. Fortunately, he remained conscious and managed to use his cellphone to call 911. Two days later, he woke up in the intensive care unit frustrated, confused, and in immense pain. He could remember hearing screams, yells, and cries.

And then, on the third day, a bouquet of flowers was delivered to him.

To his surprise, the flowers kept coming. "When I started to dive into that hole of despair, there would be another round of bouquets that would come," Jay said.

**Healing Flowers**

At the end of his first week in the hospital, Jay started to go stir crazy. He eventually convinced his nurses and family to wheel him down the hall. When he left his room, he was struck by the sterile and lifeless atmosphere in the hospital. As he roamed the halls, he saw how many other patients were in rooms devoid of color and joy, unlike the "jungle of joy" floral atmosphere of his quarters.

"It smelled different. It looked different. It felt weird," Jay said.

Jay returned to his room and removed all of the cards that accompanied his flowers,

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JEFF MINICK/UNSPLASH  
AF IMAGES FOR FTD AND PROFIT FLOWERS

Random Acts of Flowers CEO Larsen Jay delivers the nonprofit's 100,000th bouquet to Joan Taylor, a senior in Chicago, on Nov. 12, 2015.

# Self-Reliance: An American Virtue

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The next week, I took him and his fellow employees three large tubs of cookies from our local grocery store.

And I mulled over what he'd said about growing up on that farm.

## Lessons From the Past

From our earliest history, self-reliance was a highly regarded American virtue.

We Americans embraced that virtue because the colonists, from their first days on this continent, could look only to themselves and their own resources for survival. For several centuries afterward, the men and women who settled this land, particularly the pioneers and outlaws, depended on their home-grown skill, their intelligence and common sense, and their neighbors to repair their wagons and buggies, to build their houses, to hunt and plant crops and put food on the table, to deliver babies, and to care for the sick. If they became desperate and needed charity, they looked to family and friends, or the local church, for assistance.

Think Pa and Ma Ingalls in the "Little House on the Prairie" books and television series. From the Appalachians to the Great Plains, millions of our ancestors made do with what they had, just like the Ingalls.

## The American Way

Writers like Ralph Waldo Emerson, James Fenimore Cooper, and Henry David Thoreau touted this idea of independence. In his essay "Self-Reliance," Emerson makes a strong case for non-conformity and individuality, and advises his readers to follow our own guiding stars. In Cooper's "The Last of the Mohicans," Natty Bumppo is the quintessential frontiersman, beholden to no one and living by his wits, his knowledge of the forest, and his long gun. In "Walden," Thoreau writes of his year living in the woods performing as many tasks as possible by his own hands.

Since then, our literature has promoted independence and toughness in the face of adversity. We find one classic example of such resilience in the novel by Charles Portis "True Grit," which Hollywood has twice made into a movie. Intent on avenging her father's murder, Mattie hires U.S. Marshal "Rooster" Cogburn to track down the killer and insists on accompanying him on this manhunt. Mattie proves to be a strong young woman capable of holding her own on this quest.

This American sense of independence and self-reliance also became a staple of our movies. Gary Cooper in "High Noon," Jimmy Stewart in "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington," Dorothy McGuire in "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn," John Wayne in his many Westerns: These and a thousand other films depicted Americans as a can-do people with grit.

## Teaching Self-Reliance

If we consider the matter, we realize that self-reliance is a major aim of education. We teach Johnny to tie his shoes, dress himself, read books, and eat with his fork and spoon and not his fingers. As he grows older, he learns to drive a car, change a tire, balance a checkbook, and a thousand other large and small tasks that will make him a grownup.

To push Johnny farther down the path to self-reliance, his mother and father insist he calls a coach or meets with a teacher to set appointments or clarify instructions. They encourage him to work outside the home during the summers or even after school, and to save his money for college or that car he wants to buy, thereby teaching not only self-reliance but delayed gratification as well. By word and by example, they familiarize him with the tools of logic and reason so that he'll be equipped to handle himself when he sets off into the world.

## The Costs of Neglecting Self-Reliance

Not all parents take this path, especially as their toddlers grow older. They become what some have called "helicopter parents,"



PHINEAS ADAMS/UNPLASH

If we consider the matter, we realize that self-reliance is a major aim of education.

**Our literature has promoted independence and toughness in the face of adversity.**

hovering over their children even after their children arrive in college, removing difficulties and paving the way for them, calling a professor, for example, after their daughter receives a B instead of an A on her English essay or approaching their son's employer about his problems at work.

Ironically, these attempts to help our children act as stumbling blocks on the way to self-reliance and maturity.

In our age, too, a diminished sense of self-reliance has brought us the dangers of big government. Where we ourselves once faced up to problems and difficulties or sought the help of others around us, many now automatically look to the government for such assistance. We want the government to educate our children, to care for us when we are sick, to give us money when we aren't working, and to confiscate money away from some people and give it to others.

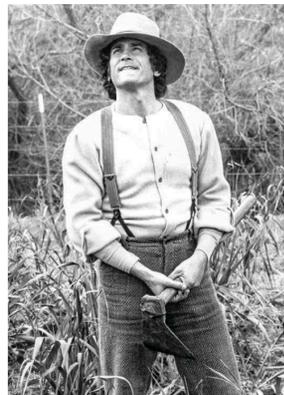
This long-term movement away from self-reliance, this bended-knee approach to our officials and politicians, gives more and more power to our politicians and bureaucrats. Our pandemic serves as the perfect example of this trend. Rather than treating their constituents like grownups, offering them suggestions as to how to remain safe, some of our mayors and governors have issued a series of edicts and restrictions treating those same citizens as if they were children. This approach has angered many people, but it derives in part from our abandonment of self-reliance and self-restraint.

## Limitations

Of course, none of us can play Robinson Crusoe all the time, and self-reliance shouldn't preclude receiving the help of others. Just as I needed that mechanic for my tires, others can help us shoulder our burdens.

After my wife's death, for example, friends and the parents of the students I was teaching helped me for months by bringing food to my family, caring for my 9-year-old son when I was teaching, and giving money to a college fund for my children I'd set up in my wife's memory. Could I have managed without that assistance? Probably. But my appreciation then and now for those people and what they gave me knows no bounds.

On another occasion, a group of parents raised a hefty sum of money to send me to Europe. When I told my daughter I felt uncomfortable accepting this gift and might refuse it, she said: "That's a sin. You're denying them the right to be charitable. Take the money and go to Europe, Papa." She was right and I was wrong. Given free



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Actor Michael Landon as Charles Ingalls in "Little House on the Prairie."

rein, self-reliance can become overweening pride.

## In Defense of Dignity

Published in 1898, William George Jordan's "Self-Control: Its Kingship and Majesty" is an old-time self-help book. In Chapter XIII, "The Dignity of Self-Reliance," Jordan writes: "The man who is self-reliant says ever, 'No one can realize my possibilities for me, but me; no one can make me good or evil but myself.' He works out his own salvation—financially, socially, mentally, physically, and morally."

That was good advice then, and it's good advice now, particularly given the times we live in and the arrival of a new year.

To paraphrase, we are to a great extent responsible for who and what we are. When we deny that proposition, we are in a sense denying our own humanity.

As we enter this new year, let's all resolve to become more self-reliant, for our good and for the good of our country.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminarians of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C. He is the author of two novels, "Amanda Bell" and "Dust on Their Wings," and two works of non-fiction, "Learning as I Go" and "Movies Make the Man." Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See [JeffMinick.com](http://JeffMinick.com) to follow his blog.

# 'Random Acts of Flowers' Brings Smiles to Patients

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and started loading as many as he could onto his wheelchair. The first room he visited was next door, which was one of the places he had heard the disconcerting noises coming from. The patient in the room was a woman who was clearly desperate and exhausted, and he could see it in her eyes. He gave her a large bouquet of flowers, and her reaction was palpable.

**“In this really ridiculous overcomplicated world that goes so fast and is so technology driven, it's the basics that drive humanity.”**

Larsen Jay, founder

"She went from those desperate, I'm done, pull-the-plug' eyes to full-on smiling, crying just tears of joy," Jay said.

When Jay went to the next room, he found a man who was taking care of his wife; she had suffered a fall. He told Jay about how he had been a gardener and described the plants that he had used to grow. Jay handed him one of the plants on his wheelchair.

Jay said that by giving the man something to take care of while he took care of his wife, it was as if he had his garden back.

## Kindness and Humanity

It would take 13 surgeries and three months in a wheelchair for Jay to begin to recover, and he spent a lot of time by himself. He kept thinking about the interactions he had with the patients in the hospital, and he also wanted to do something to honor the fact that he had survived his accident. He also dwelled on the fact that many of the patients he had met hadn't had anyone to support them.

Jay thought that there must be an organization or group that was delivering flowers to patients in need of an act of kindness. As he researched, he found that nobody was doing what he had done in the hospital in a formal way. One day, he began writing ideas down, and he came up with Random Acts of Flowers.

He and his wife officially founded the organization in 2008, a year to the date of his accident.

"In this really ridiculous overcomplicated world that goes so fast and is so technology-driven, it's the basics that drive humanity. It's not newsfeeds or technology. It is the core of humanity that is really the most important thing," Jay said.

## A Calling

Random Acts of Flowers would become Jay's calling and focus in life.

In July 2011, he encountered a nurse who asked him to deliver flowers to one of her patients. She told him there was a woman at the end of the hall who had been in the hospital for the last two weeks, and she didn't expect her to live another week.

Jay knocked on her door and popped his head into the room. He told her he had a delivery for her, but she told him that he must have the wrong room. She insisted that he had made a mistake, but he assured her that the roses he had brought were for her. When he handed her the bouquet, her entire aura had changed. Overwhelmed with joy, she grabbed his arm and told him that he was the first man who had ever given her flowers in her life.

This experience was what Jay described as his "a-ha moment," and afterward decided with his wife to leave their business and run Random Acts of Flowers on a full-time basis.

"The giving of flowers is one of the most universal gestures that cuts across all races, religions, income levels, disabilities—you name it, it doesn't matter," Jay said.

## Floral Connections

One of Jay's most memorable experiences was delivering floral arrangements at a senior care facility. One of the nurses he knew asked him to get the most fragrant flowers on the cart, and he sniffed around and found a bouquet.

Right before he entered the room, the nurse told him the patient was blind. When he walked into the room, the woman immediately sat up in her chair and exclaimed, "Those are Stargazer lilies!" She had been a gardener and identified them by their fragrance.

"We gave her her garden back. We gave her those memories back," Jay said.

Not only are Jay and Random Acts of Flowers bringing smiles to patients, but studies have shown that flowers have a positive medical effect on physical and mental health. They can reduce anxiety, lower blood pressure, and improve one's outlook on life.

Random Acts of Flowers doesn't pick who receives flowers. Local health care professionals are more familiar with their patients and know who is most in



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF RANDOM ACTS OF FLOWERS



Random Acts of Flowers has delivered 550,000 bouquets to date.



A volunteer offers a bouquet to a patient.



Random Acts of Flowers was founded in 2008.

need of a special delivery.

To date, Random Acts of Flowers has made 550,000 deliveries nationwide, and Jay has never met a recipient who didn't have a positive reaction to flowers. Jay likes to say that somebody's life can be changed by somebody else's garbage, and Random Acts of Flowers donates arrangements used in weddings and funerals, in addition to flowers that would otherwise have gone to waste. Volunteers put bouquets together by hand, and flowers that aren't suitable for donation are turned into compost.

"Instead of going to the garbage, we can turn it into smiles," Jay said.

## DEAR NEXT GENERATION:

# 'We need to keep the final destination in mind'

→ Advice from our readers to our young people

## Pass It On

I was a Camp Fire girl in 1965. When we met, we recited the Law of the Camp Fire Girls: "Worship God, Seek Beauty, Give Service, Pursue Knowledge, Be Trustworthy, Hold on to Health, Glorify Work, Be Happy." These verbs point to what is missing in today's world. Taking time to worship, seek, give, pursue, be, hold, and glorify is an honorable way to live.

Worshipping God puts Him above everything else. Reading and learning the truth from the Bible gives answers, direction, comfort, wisdom, and healing. It is our source.

Seeking beauty, not in ourselves but in those around us and in His creation, puts life in perspective. How many of you can create a rose, or give life to a baby?

Giving to others reminds us of our own blessings, which results in thankfulness. Many people think they "deserve" this or that. Commercialism often tell us to buy this or join an organization and get what we deserve. If anyone has traveled to other nations, they would see how blessed we are in America. Giving of our time, wealth, experience, and knowledge grows a spirit of



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Camp Fire girls at Sebago Lake, near South Casco, Maine, in this file photo.

gratitude in your own heart. The more you give the easier it becomes. Don't give to get something back. Give because it is the right thing to do.

Pursuing knowledge. Dig for the truth, verify your facts, don't gossip, learn from past mistakes, don't be afraid to make mistakes,

be willing to admit mistakes, and ask for forgiveness.

Be trustworthy, that says it all.

Hold on to health. Don't worship your body, worship the one who created your body, and be a good steward of His gift. Stewardship means you are taking care of something that belongs to someone else. Eat right, sleep well, play often, enjoy others, and avoid addictions to anything that steals your time, money, dignity, and health.

Glorify work. Promote, dignify, increase, boost, and celebrate work. It is a privilege to be able to work. Our work shouldn't overshadow all the other things in our life, but it should give us purpose to support our life. Whatever you do, do it as unto the Lord. Do your very best work no matter where you work.

Be happy. This is the end result of living by the Law of the Camp Fire girls. I see so many younger people, caught up in themselves, the world of the internet and cell phones, who are miserable. Turn off the electronics and seek to serve others. Not only will you be happy, but a deep sense of joy will fill your life.

Life is hard. It takes effort. Not everyone's life has a happy ending, like the movies. But when you decide to use the verbs worship, seek, give, pursue, be, hold, and glorify as the action words in your life, you will become

prosperous in God, beauty, service, knowledge, truth, health, and work. You will bring light to a dark world.

—Lucy A. Keller

Life is hard; the only way to make it easier is to work harder.

If you always tell the truth, you never have to remember anything.

Life always goes better when you do things God's way.

History didn't start when you were born. Virtual everything means you have nothing actual.

—Jeffery Dunn

**What advice would you like to give to the younger generations?**

We call on all of our readers to share the timeless values that define right and wrong, and pass the torch, if you will, through your wisdom and hard-earned experience. We feel that the passing down of this wisdom has diminished over time, and that only with a strong moral foundation can future generations thrive.

Send your advice, along with your full name, state, and contact information to [NextGeneration@epochtimes.com](mailto:NextGeneration@epochtimes.com) or mail it to:

Next Generation, The Epoch Times, 229 W. 28th St., Floor 7, New York, NY 10001



Although there are costs to neglecting self-reliance, it is also important to remember that others can help us shoulder our burdens.

MAKSYM TYMCHUK/UNPLASH

# Diamond in the Rough

How a rescue horse beat the odds and became a national competitor in equestrian triathlons

LOUISE BEVAN

A horse rescued from the brink of death eight years ago has undergone an extraordinary transformation.

Once orphaned, emaciated, and terrified of everything, the stallion now competes in equestrian triathlons and ranks fifth in the United States in the beginner division.

Crimson Clover was only 10 months old when found by the police. The horse was tied to a cinder block in the yard of a suspected meth lab in 2012, reported United States Equestrian Association (USEA).

Clover was taken in by the Georgia Department of Agriculture, which was unsure whether the horse would survive. But the stallion beat the odds.

The horse took part in an equine therapy program at a Georgia prison.

A year later, at 20 months old, Clover was found by caretakers to be "healthy enough" and was auctioned by the Georgia Department of Agriculture alongside nine other rescues in 2013, the USEA reported.

Clover's owner, Tiffany Stewart of Atlanta, attended the auction and was struck by the horse's story.

"No one wanted him. He was little, lanky, and had a huge head and ears," she told the USEA. "I thought he was adorable, so I decided to take him home."

Stewart, who owns a farm, always kept a stall open to foster horses with the Georgia



Owner Tiffany Stewart rides Clover.

**Crimson Clover was only 10 months old when found by the police. The horse was tied to a cinder block in the yard of a suspected meth lab in 2012.**

Equine Rescue League. She assumed that Clover would simply live on the farm in peace until the end, but with proper care, Clover began to display potential beyond Stewart's expectations.

A competitive rider, she enlisted the horse for expert training in preparation for entry into national equestrian triathlons, known as eventing. The now-blue-ribbon horse was Stewart's diamond in the rough.

"I fell in love with riding Clover," she said. Mary Bess Davis, the owner of Triple

Creek Eventing, was a pivotal player in Clover's transformation.

"At the time, I knew nothing about eventing, only that it was a sport for very brave people," Stewart said. "Mary Bess taught him to jump and taught me how to ride outside of an arena."

At the time of writing, Clover, with Stewart as rider, is ranked fifth in the U.S. equestrian triathlon Beginner Novice division.

Not only has Clover become a formidable competitor but is also thriving in a way that

no one dared dream possible.

For Stewart, owning a rescued horse, even though its breed is unknown, is "a badge of honor."

"There are a lot of horses that need homes and I don't think you should overlook a horse with a difficult past when finding your next horse," Stewart said.

"He goes into the ring thinking he is the fanciest horse at the show. He is like a dog in the barn and is everyone's favorite. He is a very sweet little horse!"

With care and training, Clover (C) has thrived.



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF TIFFANY STEWART

# A Caring Angel

Debbie Moorefield, who provides in-home care for seniors, is described as a cross between 'Energizer Bunny, Martha Stewart, and Mother Teresa'

ANDREW THOMAS

Many of our seniors require in-home care, and providing a comfortable and dignified environment can be an arduous responsibility that requires an immense amount of patience. It takes a particular type of person to care for someone who is in his or her later chapters of life. For years, Debbie Moorefield, 65, has taken on the task of caring for the elderly with enthusiasm and compassion.

For the last 17 years, she has worked with Visiting Angels, a provider of in-home care. She's cared for more than 225 seniors since 2003, working 12-hour shifts that have added up to a total of 45,000 hours. Often, she stays with a senior for several years following his or her diagnosis. Her dedication has earned her the organization's title of "Caregiver of the Year."

**Dignity for Seniors**

Moorefield cares for the elderly for years at a time and often up until their last day. But before being a caregiver, her role often begins as a companion. When her seniors do get to the point where they need constant care, she does everything she can to ensure that they are comfortable every day.

"We just transition from one level of caregiving to a more challenging and advanced form of caregiving," Moorefield said.

Sometimes her clients are in immense pain, and her compassion and gentleness make all the difference. Her work also requires patience.

"Every patient is different. Some are appreciative. Some are not, but I somehow manage to earn their trust," she said.

In one instance, Moorefield, who was caring for an elderly German woman, became locked out of the house. She yelled and tried to get the senior's attention, sure that the senior would let her in. But her patient was suffering from vascular dementia and was

unaware of her absence.

Moorefield had to get creative to get back inside. She got a ladder and went around the side of the house, climbed up, and cut a hole through a screen window before climbing in. Once she got inside, the elderly woman, not realizing that Moorefield had been locked out, asked her where she had been.

Moorefield took care of her until she passed away, giving her manicures and listening to Elvis with her.

"We're there to meet every need that we're humanly able to give them," Moorefield said.

**Care and Comfort**

Moorefield hesitates to use the word "challenge," but says that her biggest responsibility is making sure her clients are comfortable. She tries to alleviate their pressure sores, keep them hydrated, and create a pleasant atmosphere by playing music. When she finds out what they like to eat, she strives to accommodate them. She tries to anticipate their needs and is always looking for ways to assist her clients with their daily lives by performing tasks such as laundry, before she's asked. She's also hands-on and isn't reluctant to physically move the seniors she works with when necessary.

"I'm just there to be a blessing, to give them quality of life as they're making their journey," Moorefield said.

Sometimes patients with dementia are confused and frightened, and will take out their emotions on Moorefield. Nevertheless, she maintains her patience despite being called nasty names or having a fist raised at her. Instead, she has the ability to redirect those emotions and adjust the senior's train of thought.

She also strives to connect with her seniors on an emotional level. Moorefield asks them about themselves and their fam-

ilies, and she makes sure to communicate that she's happy to be a part of their care.

"I'm pretty perceptive, and I'm such a people-person that it doesn't take me long to figure out what makes them tick," Moorefield said.

**Lessons Learned**

The pandemic has understandably impacted the way Moorefield conducts her work. She doesn't bring up the topic in conversation because she doesn't want to upset her seniors. However, when it is mentioned she makes sure to show the seniors she works with that she's taking every precautionary measure to help them feel safe.

Moorefield has also learned valuable lessons from the many seniors she's cared for, and she feels that her work has made her a better human being. Discovering the virtue of patience has been critical to her success with the elderly. She's learned how to be empathetic, and knows that eventually, she may be in similar circumstances later on in life. So she strives to make them feel valued and works to build their self-esteem.

Moorefield's faith is what drove her to provide end-of-life care for the elderly, and she has often been involved in senior ministries.

"I try to make them feel as special and beautiful as they are. They are God's creations," Moorefield said.

Mary Kay Brodnan, a manager at Visiting Angels, says that the most important qualities in a caregiver are compassion, reliability, flexibility, and initiative, which is why she nominated Moorefield for the organization's "Caregiver of the Year" award. Brodnan described Moorefield as a "cross between the Energizer Bunny, Martha Stewart, and Mother Teresa," and stressed how this combination of traits earned her the title this past fall.

"She has touched families' lives," Brodnan said.



SCREENSHOT/GOOGLE MAPS

# From Gang Member to Missouri's Teacher of the Year

LOUISE BEVAN

A former gang member who left his troubled childhood behind with the help of his educators has been named Missouri's 2021 Teacher of the Year.

Darrion Cockrell has taught physical education at Crestwood Elementary in St. Louis since 2014. The father of one refers to his job as "the best job in the world," in stark contrast to his traumatic start in life.

"I have had the unique opportunity to live life on both ends of the spectrum," he said in his acceptance speech this fall.

Cockrell, who is known by his students as "Mr. DC," was born to a mother with a substance abuse problem who had two children by the age of 16. His father was murdered when he was 4 years old, and Cockrell was in and out of the foster care system after turning 6.

He hated school, believing he was "born to fail," and became a member of the six-deuce-87 Kitchen Crip gang at the tender age of 10.

Desperate for a way out, Cockrell turned to his middle school teachers for support. "I had a lot of struggles and a lot of hurdles, and if not for those educators, I would not be here today," he said.



(Above) Crestwood Elementary School in St. Louis, Mo.

(Left) Darrion Cockrell, Missouri's 2021 Teacher of the Year.

Unbeknown to Cockrell, members of the faculty lobbied court on his behalf, getting him removed from his dangerous neighborhood and placed in a boys' home. In seventh grade, Cockrell was formally adopted by his football coach and his wife.

His self-worth, perspective, and prospects improved radically. Cockrell even followed in his adoptive father's footsteps when choosing a career.

During the virtual Teacher of the Year presentation, addressing other educators, Cockrell said: "All it takes is one person."

"Why not let it be you who makes that positive impact in the lives of our students?"

Margie Vandeven, the state's commissioner of education, praised Cockrell on CNN for "[guiding] his students towards long-term physical and mental wellness," adding, "The connections he has established will impact Crestwood children for years to come."

"His story shows every kid that anything is possible," Crestwood assistant principal Kit Norton told KMOV4.

With myriad life lessons behind him, Cockrell teaches more than physical fitness. He "builds healthy hearts," imparting the confidence, compassion, and drive to help his own students overcome the obstacles that life will throw at them.

DEAR JUNE

On Family and Relationships



# Looking for Polite Ways to Cut Off a Conversation

Dear June,

I am wondering if you can offer some advice to respectfully shorten long-winded phone calls. My daughter is a veterinarian, married to a great husband, and with a wonderful 18-month-old daughter. At the clinic, the veterinarian must (and should) call clients with a daily update on their patient at the clinic. The only time for these calls is generally once the clinic is closed for the evening. The problem is: getting trapped on the phone with long-winded clients who are hard to cut off, making it difficult for her to get home with less than a 13+ hour workday. I have a similar problem as an artist with art clients. I find myself getting trapped on the phone listening to long client stories.

We value courtesy and politeness, but long-winded clients are hard to cut off politely. Are there some good catchphrases or strategies to use so conversations can be reined in and kept from straying off-topic? And still let clients feel they are being heard and are valued, and their concerns validated? We have both wondered, on numerous occasions, exactly how the head veterinarian can manage to keep these update conversations short, concise, and polite. He's a master at the five-minute call.

We don't want to be rude, but we have lives, too. For both my daughter and myself, being caught on the phone for long periods of time greatly impacts our productivity and creativity, and cuts into time for other, more important endeavors. Any ideas are greatly appreciated! Thanks from two gals seeking "polite phone cut-offs!"

Polite Listeners

→ Dear Polite Listeners,

First of all, I would keep doing what you are doing in terms of not asking leading questions and staying on topic. Perhaps your daughter is able to give updates without asking questions?

My technique suggestions are very basic: Can your daughter listen to the five-minute-call master to learn phrases he uses to conduct client calls? These will probably offer a good blueprint for her calls.

If the conversation does devolve, I would use a very simple, honest cutoff phrase such as: "(Customer name), I'm sorry to interrupt, but I need to wrap this up."

The actual words are not as important as a respectful tone and firm conviction. It may help to practice in front of a mirror until you find a phrase that feels natural and that you can say with confidence.

I think there is a human dynamic whereby people who talk a lot (which is an emotional release for them) can sense people who are kind and willing to listen. So you may have to change something a bit deeper in your attitude toward client conversations—develop a firmer kindness.

In your question, it struck me that you are very conscious about being polite, which is, of course, good and important and the right way to conduct human interactions. However, politeness needs to be tempered.

For example, while it may be polite to listen to clients, on another level it is not responsible if in so doing you neglect other important duties.

Your daughter has a great deal of responsibility at the moment—she must care for her animal patients, and her family most certainly needs her care, too!

I would say her responsibilities as a vet do not include any obligation to listen to clients beyond what is directly helpful for improving her care of the animals. For those clients who are not willing to listen, I don't think you need to concern yourself with making them

feel heard, valued, or validated, because they are not seeking your input.

It may feel awkward or even a bit rude to cut people off, but it is also the most caring and responsible thing to do when you keep the big picture in mind. I think reflecting on this big picture—on what your duties truly are—will help firm up your resolve, and it is the strength of resolve behind your polite words that gives them power.

Sincerely, June

Dear June,

I am seeking a new perspective. I am a 56-year-old man. I have never been on a date or had a girlfriend. I have always been rejected, not always nicely, when approaching. I have been on a couple dating sites, but the two women who responded to me only were interested in my income, so I stopped using the apps. I pay attention to online creators for current info on dating, and it is all very negative. Most of what they say is, men are being abused by women and government for financial support and many women get married just to get divorced to take the guy for his resources. All I hear, and my history, makes me want to give up and just be alone. What do you think you would do if you were me?

Forever Alone

→ Dear Alone,

I think it is true that segments of our society are currently in a very bad state and some women have skewed values. However, this does not mean you won't ever find a woman of merit—but the quest to find her may be arduous.

If I were you, I would start by asking myself what I really wanted. It is OK to choose a single life; this will, of course, be more lonely, but it can also be satisfying and worthwhile if you focus on helping others or giving in some way.

If you do want a partner, then you may have to accept some new challenges and prepare yourself for some failure and rejection.

At the most superficial level, I would suggest using a higher-end dating service, if you can afford it, as they will screen better and attract more committed women.

More fundamentally, the basis for any healthy relationship is the willingness to acknowledge our weaknesses and work to improve them. This is a process you can start now by assessing your strengths and shortcomings, which might impact a future relationship.

Although we now hear a lot about women's empowerment and strength, most women still actually want a man who is stronger than they are. This does not mean you need to be an alpha male, extrovert, or athlete, but certain masculine qualities are appreciated.

Below I quote two paragraphs from the book "Man of Steel and Velvet" by Aubrey Andelin because I think they give a picture of manhood that has been lost in today's culture, and some examples of qualities worth striving for:

"A man of steel is a masculine man. He is aggressive, determined, decisive, and independent. He learns efficiency in the affairs of a man's world, demanding quotas of himself in reaching an objective. He is competent in a task, fearless and courageous in the face of difficulty, and master of a situation. He has deep convictions and steadfastly holds to these convictions. He sets high goals for himself, goals which require dedication and patience. He is not afraid of strain and diligence. He rejects softness and timidity. When he has made a decision based upon the best of his judgment, he is unbendable as a piece of steel. These qualities of masculinity set him apart from women and children and weaker members of his own sex."

"The velvet qualities include a man's gentleness, his tenderness, kindness, generosity, and patience. He is devoted to the care and protection of women and children. He understands and respects their gentle nature and recognizes it as a complement to his manliness. He is chivalrous, attentive, and respectful to the gender sex and has an ability to love with tenderness. He has, in addition, an enthusiastic and youthful attitude of optimism which defies the press of years. Humility is also a part of the velvet, subduing the masculine ego as his rough nature is refined."

Sincerely, June

Do you have a family or relationship question for our advice columnist, Dear June? Send it to [DearJune@EpochTimes.com](mailto:DearJune@EpochTimes.com) or Attn: Dear June, The Epoch Times, 229 W. 28th St., Floor 7, New York, NY 10001.

June Kellum is a married mother of two and longtime Epoch Times journalist covering family, relationships, and health topics.



Debbie Moorefield (C) provides in-home and end-of-life care for the elderly.

Debbie Moorefield has cared for 225 seniors since she began working for Visiting Angels.



COURTESY OF VISITING ANGELS

COURTESY OF VISITING ANGELS

## HISTORY

# How a Polish Entrepreneur Went from Death Row in a Nazi Concentration Camp to 'the Sam Walton of Brazil'

Samuel Klein's amazing journey is a true rags to riches story

LAWRENCE W. REED

For honest, successful entrepreneurs, the fabled journey from rags to riches is peppered with initiative, misfortune, reward, luck (good and bad), and lessons galore. In the remarkable life of the late Samuel Klein, all those elements were present in such superabundance as to render his true story almost unbelievable. It is certainly one of the most incredible I have ever run across, and it involves two of my very favorite countries as well.

Rags to riches is, in this instance, an understatement. At his lowest point, Klein was on death row in a Nazi concentration camp in occupied Poland. At the other extreme some years later, he was one of the richest men in Brazil, a world away.

## The Son of a Carpenter

Klein was born to Jewish parents on November 15, 1923, in Zaklików in southeastern Poland. It is a small town even today, boasting barely 3,000 inhabitants. Notably, its citizens engaged in a year-long uprising in 1863-64 against the Russians in a failed but courageous attempt to resurrect the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

**With seven gas chambers, two gallows, and well over 200 buildings, Majdanek was where Samuel might well have expected to breathe his last.**

Samuel's father worked as a carpenter. It earned him a very modest income he stretched to feed himself, his wife, and nine children. Samuel attended only the first four years of elementary school, then went to work assisting his father. Being Jewish, the Klein family faced immediate, mortal danger when Hitler invaded Poland in September 1939. For three years they endured constant harassment until the Nazis forcibly separated them. Mrs. Klein and five of the children were dispatched to the infamous Treblinka extermination center, where most of them perished. Samuel and his father were transported to another camp, Majdanek.

With seven gas chambers, two gallows, and well over 200 buildings, Majdanek was where Samuel might well have expected to breathe his last. Some 80,000 prisoners were murdered there. Fortunately, Samuel Klein was not one of them. He mustered the audacity to attempt escape, and in July 1944, he succeeded. During the next ten months, he dodged authorities while living in the woods and fields of southern Poland, aided by Christian Poles who protected him.

## From Carpenter to 'the Sam Walton of Brazil'

After World War II in Europe ended in May 1945, Klein moved to Germany and took up the carpentry skills he had learned from his father. It was there that he showed the first spark of entrepreneurship. He discovered he could make more money selling vodka and cigarettes to Allied troops than he could in wood-working. He also opened a delicatessen in Berlin. Then in the early 1950s, he decided it was time to move on. He left Germany with a wife, a two-year-old son, and about

PUBLIC DOMAIN



-APP VIA GETTY IMAGES



(Left) Samuel Klein in 1952. (Right) Klein became friends with soccer star Pelé, who became a company spokesman for Casas Bahia.

\$6,000 in savings—a sum that proved crucial in his next venture.

Klein's first choice was the United States, but immigration quotas blocked his entry. America's loss was Brazil's gain, as he and his small family headed then for São Paulo by way of a short stint in Bolivia. His savings bought him a house, a horse, and a wagon that included a list of the previous wagon-owner's 200 customers. For nearly five years, while speaking only rudimentary Portuguese, Klein peddled blankets, sheets, and towels and grew a loyal customer base to about 5,000.

On New Year's Day 1958, Klein opened his first store in Brazil. It marketed the linens he previously sold door-to-door and later, appliances, furniture, and other housewares too. Over the next 50 years, the Polish-born former concentration camp prisoner built Casas Bahia into a network of more than 500 stores in 15 Brazilian states with 55,000 employees and millions of happy customers each year.

Before he died in November 2014 at the age of 91, he gained a reputation as one of the most beloved business figures in the country, "the Sam Walton of Brazil." From the rags he wore when he escaped Nazi clutches, he traveled all the way to a net worth just shy of a billion dollars.

## A Truly Uncommon Marvel

Along the way, Klein did some remarkable things that earned the company endless awards for retail excellence. He became a life-long friend of Brazilian soccer star Pelé, who became a company spokesman. He built Latin America's largest network of warehouses. He focused laser-like on customer service. He created a popular installment plan that made his goods affordable to low-income people and inspired a Brazilian rock group to include this repeating chorus line in a hit song: "My happiness is a Casas Bahia payment book." And he was a generous philanthropist, giving millions to new schools and charities.

Pedro Tavares Fernandes, president of Observatório do Empreendedor in Florianópolis, Brazil, assisted me in translating one of Klein's obituaries from Portuguese to English. He ranks Klein as a model of entrepreneurial achievement:

"Because of a history of poverty, it has always been tough for Brazilians to buy furniture and household appliances. Samuel Klein developed a very effective system of credit so the poor could buy them. He reached a huge crowd of buyers with reasonable interest rates and they rewarded him with low default rates and customer loyalty. It is very common here to say, when

you're about to buy something expensive, that you're paying for it over 24 months in a Casas Bahia financing program. I never heard anything bad about Samuel Klein."

Three-quarters of a century after he left Poland, Klein still has admirers there, too. Mikolaj Pisarski, president of the Mises Institute of Economic Education in Wrocław, told me this:

"Had Samuel Klein lived in Poland at the time of his death he would be the 5th richest Pole. Not unlike other post-communist countries, many among the richest here owe their wealth either to close relations with the former regime or illicit government deals shortly after the transformation. Klein stands out as an example of what a true entrepreneur should be. What he achieved he owed only to his hard work and ingenuity. He achieved it despite not having friends in high places and in the process, he made the lives of the people in a country that welcomed him as an immigrant so much better."

According to Pisarski, the Klein story is just one of several involving Polish achievers in South America. Another fascinating one is that of Ernest Malinowski, who engineered the Ferrovia Central in the Peruvian Andes. In the late 19th century, it was the highest railway in the world.

Barriers to economic success stand in the way of almost everyone, big and small, to one degree or another. Little that is truly worthwhile is easy to come by, let alone a large fortune. Some people give up easily and quickly.

Then there are the Samuel Kleins of the world—the truly uncommon marvels who overcome the unimaginable to become the unexpected. They are heroes, builders, creators of wealth, and servants to the millions whose lives they improve.

## A Final Word From Samuel Klein Himself

No essay about the remarkable Samuel Klein should conclude without a few words from the great man himself. I offer these to the reader because they epitomize Klein's spirit of service and enterprise:

"I trust the human being. Otherwise I would not open the doors of my stores every single day. What helps keeping me alive is the trust I have in others."

"One plus one equals two. But the sum of an idea plus an idea is not two ideas, but thousands of them."

"The wealth of a poor man is his name... Whether the customer is a janitor or a mason, if they are good payers, Casas Bahia will give them lines of credit; that way they are able to make their dreams come true."

"My motto is trust. Trusting patrons, suppliers, employees, friends and mainly trusting myself."

"The bigger the problem, the bigger the opportunity."

Lawrence W. Reed is FEE's president emeritus, Humphreys Family senior fellow, and Ron Manners global ambassador for liberty, having served for nearly 11 years as FEE's president (2008-2019). He is author of the 2020 book "Was Jesus a Socialist?" as well as "Real Heroes: Incredible True Stories of Courage, Character, and Conviction" and "Excuse Me, Professor: Challenging the Myths of Progressivism." His website is [LawrenceWReed.com](http://LawrenceWReed.com). This article was originally published on FEE.org

PICTORIAL PARADE/GETTY IMAGES



(Left) Without a formal declaration of war, German tanks, escorted by troops on motorcycles, drive into Poland on Sept. 1, 1939. (Right) German troops enter Poland on Sept. 1, 1939.

ST/APP VIA GETTY IMAGES



ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE



(Left) Aachen Cathedral's Palatine Chapel was commissioned by Charlemagne in the late eighth century. In the center of this photo is the "Radiant Madonna" by 15th-century Netherlandish sculptor Jan van Steffeswert. (Above) Golden mosaics with religious motifs adorn the chapel dome. (Below) Beautiful mosaics from around 1880 grace the octagonal dome of the Palatine Chapel.

LARGER THAN LIFE: ART THAT INSPIRES US THROUGH THE AGES

## Aachen Cathedral: The Astonishing Chapel of Germanic Kings

From 795 to 843, Aachen, in western Germany, was the capital of the barbarian kingdom of Francia, also known as the Kingdom of the Franks. The Franks were Germanic people who ruled large parts of Western Europe from late antiquity to the early Middle Ages.

In the late eighth century, the king of the Franks and king of the Lombards—Charlemagne—commissioned a palace chapel to be built in Aachen.

(Charlemagne, also known as Charles the Great, went on to become the Holy Roman Emperor in 800.)

The chapel embraces the classical and Byzantine traditions and was the first vaulted structure north of the Alps since antiquity. It inspired religious architecture from the Carolingian until the early medieval period.

Constructed between 793 and 813, the octagonal Palatine Chapel features two



stories, the lower of which has eight pillars supporting arches, and the upper story is adorned with eight Carolingian bronze gates.

Originally, the chapel dome featured a magnificent mosaic of Christ enthroned and surrounded by the Elders of the Apocalypse, but today's mosaic dates from around 1880.

Aachen Cathedral had many architectural additions over the centuries of the Middle Ages, all differ distinctively from the original Palatine Chapel. The Gothic Choir is one example.

Facing the altar, the German kings of the Holy Roman Empire sat on the Carolingian stone coronation throne from the Middle Ages until 1531.

The cathedral's treasury houses some of the most significant ecclesiastical treasures of northern Europe, including a 14th-century gold and silver idealized reliquary bust of Charlemagne donated to the cathedral by Charles IV.

1. BECKSTET/CC BY-SA 3.0



2.



3.



6. JENNIFER LATUPERSIA-ANDRESEN/UNSPLASH



4.



5.



(Clockwise) 1. The 14th-century gold and silver reliquary bust of Charlemagne is one of the outstanding treasures in Aachen Cathedral. 2. Ceiling mosaic in Aachen Cathedral. 3. A replica of the golden crown of Margaret of York (1461), Richard III's sister, decorated with pearls and gems. 4. Stained glass windows in Aachen Cathedral. 5. The Palatine Chapel with its eight pillars, arches, and antique marble columns. 6. Aachen Cathedral, in western Germany.

Ideal study spaces have natural light and offer minimal distractions. They can be customized according to the child's taste.



# How to Create an Effective Learning Space

A conversation with educational design expert Karen Aronian

**BARBARA DANZA**

A student's physical environment has a significant impact on their ability to focus, be creative, and learn. I spoke to award-winning educator and educational design expert Karen Aronian about how to design effective learning environments for our kids. Here's what she said.

**The Epoch Times:** How does a child's physical environment impact his or her ability to learn?

**Karen Aronian:** Environments and conditioning drive learning and can genuinely optimize genetics. How we set up spaces can motivate and transform children's aptitudes and attitudes. Teachers are especially conscious about how they lay out their classrooms for learning, and parents—we are all teachers, too—can intentionally set up their homes for learning as well.

**The Epoch Times:** How do effective learning spaces differ among different age ranges?

**Dr. Aronian:** Families should reimagine their learning spaces each year, or as needed, with their children's input and interests regarding what is most comfortable and workable for them; ultimately, their input equals their buy-in.

**The Epoch Times:** What are some common mistakes parents tend to make

“**How we set up spaces can motivate and transform children's aptitudes and attitudes.**”

*Karen Aronian, educational design expert*



Educational design expert Karen Aronian.

when creating a learning space for their children?  
**Dr. Aronian:** A common mistake parents make when creating learning spaces is to visually over clutter and overstock manipulatives and playthings. Instead, rotate various educational activities and items on the first of the month; note those in your calendar.

Furthermore, don't overpay for education items or furnishings that you may already own, or someone may freely give; repurpose, recycle, and reuse what you find on Freecycle, Facebook Community Pages, Craigslist, and second-hand.

**The Epoch Times:** What are the fundamental elements every child should enjoy in a learning space?

**Dr. Aronian:** Foremost, consider safety in designing an education space; make sure the environment has a clear exit (label it for small children) with nothing underfoot or blocking their way out of the area. Key elements to consider within the learning environment are a quiet space with minimal distractions, a digital device with high-speed internet, and parental academic supervision.

Ideal study spaces have natural light, fresh air, noise-blocking sound machines and/or noise-canceling headphones, and air purifiers to clean the air (a plant can do this, too). Consider atomizers with scented oils to perk up or calm. Pepper-

mint is activating, lavender is calming.

The basics of feng shui—if possible, avoiding putting your back to the door—can further add to our readiness, wellness, and productivity within the environment.

The best way to create space is to personalize the spot to one's interests, colors, and themes. All the comforts of home—snacks, drinks, pets, lovies—should be the silver linings.

Additionally, bring in options that sustain children's attention—fidgets, focus music, wiggly cushions for seats—and post reminders about breaks and to-do's.

Furnishings should incorporate several options for learning and study: a seated chair and sturdy desk to replicate how children generally sit at in-person school. Aim to provide an ergonomic chair where feet touch the floor for better balance, driving better penmanship and keyboarding. Other potential offerings could be a wobble or ball seat to sustain attention.

Further alternatives are a standing spot, as well as a grounding floor location. A simple way to create a standing desk is to clear a shelf at chest height, and a floor spot could be a cozy corner with a soft rug, pillows, and wall for back support.

A basic clipboard or lap desk provides a low-cost way to move to multiple-choice locations inside or outside for an instant reset with company or no distraction.

# When Mom Ain't Happy

The solution could be simple

**BARBARA DANZA**

You know it's true: "If Mom ain't happy, ain't nobody happy."

So, Mom, why ain't you happy? The answer may be simpler than you think.

The next time you find yourself overwhelmed, frustrated, in a bad mood, and perhaps taking it out on your family, or just generally feeling that you're not the mom you want to be, stop. Before you decide that all is lost and you're in dire straits, ask yourself the following questions.

**Are You Hungry or Thirsty?**

Hanger is a real thing. Dehydration can knock you out.

You may have been doling out meals and snacks all day, but when was the last time you actually put a morsel in your own mouth or sipped some water? Running on empty is a sure-fire way to experience fatigue, reduced patience, and increased frustration.

**What Are You Eating?**

Maybe you are eating, but if it's more often than not coming out of a box or a drive-thru window, you need an upgrade. Make sure you're feeding your body plenty of clean, whole foods—the kind that can be found intact in nature. Stay away from processed foods and sugar as much as possible.

**When Was the Last Time You Stepped Outside?**

Is dinnertime approaching and you're still

in your pajamas? Do you have any idea what the weather is like outside today? Fresh air and sunshine are essential. Whether you lace up your sneakers and walk around the block or just step out onto the back porch for some healthy, deep breaths, make sure you head out the door and into the light.

**Are You Getting Enough Sleep?**

Might you be scrolling on your phone late into the night or waking up early with little ones underfoot? Prioritize your sleep and ensure that you're getting enough quality sack time.

You may think that you're completely fine on six hours a night, but if you're like most of us, that's not nearly enough.

**How Much Screen Time Are You Clocking In?**

Staring at a screen—whether a mobile device or your computer—is draining. For most of us, some screen time is largely unavoidable these days, but reduce it as much as possible and see if you don't find a little more pep in your step and glow in your cheeks. Look around you, in your real, non-digital life, and feel the relief wash over you as you do.

**How Stuffed Is Your Calendar?**

Are you over-scheduling yourself or your family? A great place to declutter is your calendar. How many of those obligations do you really need to be agreeing to? How many of those appointments align with your true priorities in life? Reduce the noise by canceling plans, renegotiating obligations, and leaving only those things that are truly important to you and your family. Appreciate a slower pace.

**How Much Solitude Are You Enjoying?**

Of course, we all love our family, but everybody needs time to themselves sometimes to recharge. If your every waking moment is spent with other members of your family,

**Running on empty is a sure-fire way to experience fatigue, reduced patience, and increased frustration.**



Make sure you consume wholesome, unprocessed foods.

it's time to carve out—even a little bit—of me-time.

Wake up early, ask for help, and do whatever you need to do to find some alone time.

Of course, your current state could be a symptom of a deeper issue. Introspection and spiritual searching are always recommended. It's kind of funny, though, how often we moms tend to overlook the simplest probable causes. Remember this list the next time you're feeling out of sorts.

# FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

**New Year's Morning**  
(excerpt)  
*Helen Hunt Jackson*

Always a night from old to new!  
Night and the healing balm of sleep!  
Each morn is New Year's morn come true,  
Morn of a festival to keep.  
All nights are sacred nights to make  
Confession and resolve and prayer;  
All days are sacred days to wake  
New gladness in the sunny air.  
Only a night from old to new;  
Only a sleep from night to morn.  
The new is but the old come true;  
Each sunrise sees a new year born.

**WHAT DO COWS CELEBRATE ON DECEMBER 31?**

MOO YEARS EVE

“**Dig deep within yourself, for there is a fountain of goodness ever ready to flow if you will keep digging.**”

MARCUS AURELIUS, ROMAN EMPEROR AND STOIC PHILOSOPHER (121 A.D.-180 A.D.)

# This Week in History



# TIMES SQUARE CELEBRATES

The first time revelers rang in the new year in New York's Times Square (then known as Longacre Square) was for the year 1905. The New York Times newspaper had just relocated to the area and hosted an all-day party for 200,000 people. A few years later, the famous ball drop tradition was added to the annual celebration.

By Aidan Danza, age 14

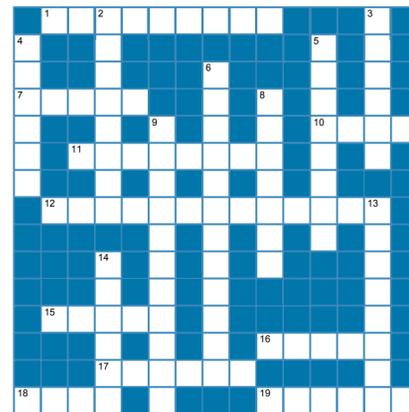
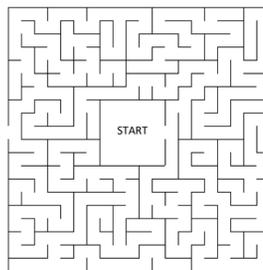
# THE LAYSAN ALBATROSS

**A**lbatrosses are some of the most captivating birds. They spend years wandering great distances in the vast oceans, returning to land only to nest. There are 22 species of albatross in all. Their wingspans can be 10 or 11 feet wide. They can live long lives. A Laysan albatross named Wisdom is the oldest known wild bird. Though Wisdom is around 69 years old, she and her mate are still incubating an egg right now!

Laysan albatrosses keep their colonies on the Hawaiian Islands and other small islands surrounding them, including Laysan and Midway. They mate for life, though pairs separate after the breeding season and meet again in the next one. In November, they return to the colony from months of wandering, join up with their mate, and perform elaborate dances in which the albatrosses spread their wings and point their bills in different directions. Once an egg is laid, the albatrosses incubate the egg and raise the chick in shifts, with one parent at home and the other at sea feeding. Often, they travel as far as 1,600 miles away from the nest, which is around the distance from Maine to Florida. When they get back to the island, they feed the chick by regurgitating their catch. The baby will stay on the island for 5 1/2 months before flying off to sea to wander. The young albatross may wander for years before coming back to land. At sea, they will mostly eat squid, but also fish, fish eggs, and crustaceans. They will often follow fishing boats as they pull up their nets, grabbing what they can of the catch. After a few years, the albatrosses return to the island where they were born, and the cycle repeats.

A Laysan albatross feeding its chick.

# AMAZING ESCAPES!



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

Easy puzzle 1

7	10		
6	7		
+	-	x	÷

Solution For Easy 1  
9 - 7 + 10 = 12

Medium puzzle 1

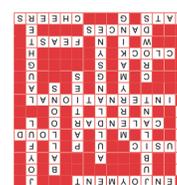
7	19		
7	10		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Medium 1  
7 - 61 - 7 x 0 = 1

Hard puzzle 1

14	25		
1	15		
+	-	x	÷

Solution For Hard 1  
1 x (91 - 91 + 52) (91 - 91) x (1 + 52)



**Across**

- 1 Delight (9)
- 7 Party tunes (5)
- 10 Like a New Year's Eve noisemaker (4)
- 11 Need a new one after this evening (8)
- 12 New Year's Eve celebrations (13)

**Down**

- 2 More than happy (8)
- 3 Elated (6)
- 4 Mother, Father, Brothers & Sisters (6)
- 5 They may get dropped at midnight (8)
- 6 "... Rockin' Eve" tune (12)
- 8 New Year's Eve events (7)
- 9 Boisterous celebration (11)
- 13 It's known as the best medicine (8)
- 14 Times Square ball watchers (6)

- 15 Chronometer (5)
- 16 Lots and lots of food! (5)
- 17 Party goers gyrations (6)
- 18 Party tops? (4)
- 19 Toasty saying (6)

