

THE EPOCH TIMES

LIFE &

TRADITION

MATELLY/GETTY IMAGES

Burnt Roses: Facing Loss and Grief

Reflections
on sorrow,
heartache,
and healing

Your physical presence
may mean more than you
can imagine to grieving
friends or family.

JEFF MINICK

Grief comes boxed in many different packages. The death of a loved one, a routine visit to the doctor that reveals a fatal disease, the end of a marriage, a heart broken by betrayal, a young person caught up in drugs and sentenced to prison, the untimely death of a pet, bankruptcy, a job lost through no fault of one's own: the list goes on and on, and the consequent anguish comes in all shapes and sizes.

And how we grieve is unique to every human being as well. Some of us share our pain with friends and family members while others stoically hide their agony. One woman abandoned by her spouse cries for days; another masks her suffering and carries on with her duties as a banker and a mother.

**Grief doesn't
come with
a timetable.**

Meanwhile, people attempting to console the afflicted are often at a loss as to what to say or do. Some offer awkward or inappropriate consolation because they feel the need to say something. Conversely, some may say nothing, prevented from reaching out after a funeral or some other catastrophe because of feelings of inadequacy and fear.

My public library includes a number of "how-to" books on grieving, including such titles as "Healing a Child's Pet Loss Grief: A Guide for Parents," "A Woman's Book of Grieving," and "You Can Help Someone Who's Grieving: A How-To Healing Handbook."

These guides are doubtless helpful, but here I offer only my own observations on grief and healing, and how to help the grief-stricken. Like all people my age—I'm 70—I've witnessed and experienced my share of sorrow and heartache.

Take the Time to Feel the Pain

Six weeks after my wife's death, our children and their maternal grandmother were

sitting around the kitchen table when she said, "We all need to get over this and move on now."

My oldest son, not yet 20, said, "Grandma, we will move on. But right now I'm going to go on missing Mom."

Those were wise words. My son allowed himself the time to grieve and worked his way through it. On her trips to our home, Grandma would ask to visit her daughter's grave, which was nearby, but usually stayed there less than a minute or two before breaking down into tears and asking to go back home. She had missed embracing grief.

None of us enjoys suffering, but such a loss demands we feel the pain and allow that great healer, time, to do its work. A therapist once told me that grief over the loss of a loved one can take up to three years before healing finally comes.

So be patient with yourself and with those around you. Grief doesn't come with a timetable.

Continued on Page 2

A Momentous Welcome

Hershel Woody Williams, the only living recipient of the Medal of Honor from World War II, welcomed his great-grandson into the Marine Corps

EMG INSPIRED STAFF

A new Marine recently received a special welcome into the Corps from his great-grandfather, who received a Medal of Honor for bravery during World War II.

Cedar Ross recently got through 13 weeks of vigorous training that saw him promoted to the rank of private first class.

During his graduation, family members were allowed to attend the ceremony for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic began.



Cedar Ross, with his great-grandfather, 97-year-old Hershel Woody Williams.

In attendance at the graduation was his great-grandfather, 97-year-old Hershel Woody Williams, a Marine who served during World War II.

Hershel is the last living Medal of Honor recipient from the Second World War.

At the June 18 graduation, where Ross and 350 other men and women entered the Corps, Hershel came to Parris Island in South Carolina to witness the event.

"The only advice I think I gave him was to do the very best that he could and then do a little more," Williams told CBS News.

Ross's drill instructor had realized halfway through the training that the recruit was a descendant of the legendary vet.

Hershel received the Medal of Honor from President Harry Truman in October 1945. The medal is the highest award for combat bravery in the country and Hershel did plenty to earn it.

While serving in the 3rd Marine Division as a corporal, he helped clear a path

for infantry in a place where the way was blocked with a series of reinforced concrete pillboxes, the award citation states.

The citation notes that 75 years ago, the legendary fighter destroyed seven Japanese machine guns one by one with the help of a flamethrower.

"Covered by only four riflemen, he fought desperately for four hours under terrific enemy small-arms fire and repeatedly returned to his own lines to prepare demolition charges and obtain serviced flamethrowers," according to the citation.

Commanding officer of the 2nd Recruit Training Battalion Lt. Col. Robert M. Groceman advised the graduating Marines to take pride in their accomplishment.

"But tomorrow is no longer about you," he said. "Tomorrow is about those Marines who came before us, whose legacy you are now a part of. Tomorrow is about those Marines to your left and to your right who are depending on you."

FIZKES/SHUTTERSTOCK

Burnt Roses: Facing Loss and Grief

Reflections on sorrow, heartache, and healing



Continued from Page 1

Presence Is All

By presence I mean both the presence of those who are directly afflicted and the presence of those who care for them.

Some of us who are hurting from a loss or a betrayal are tempted to remove ourselves from our suffering. I've known men and women who went on shopping binges, frivolously spending money in an attempt to keep the pain at bay. Others may turn to drugs or alcohol, throw themselves into work, look for another spouse or lover, or seek diversion in games like golf or tennis.

To run away from grief or to try and hide from it often lengthens the healing process and can bring on more troubles. We all have different ways of grieving, but one key element in this journey is presence, our willingness to confront our loss and sorrow.

And those who want to help grieving friends and family members should know this: your presence means more than meals, money, or words. Being there with the person, preferably physically, is the best gift you can give. A hug at a time like that means more than you may imagine.

Exercise, Diet, Routine

If life has dealt you a terrible blow, you'll often feel physically sick from the shock, sometimes to the point of nausea. You may find yourself sleeping poorly, refusing to eat, and wanting to do nothing more than to sit on the sofa and stare into space.

This is the time when, despite every impulse to the contrary, you must become proactive and take care of yourself. Eat healthy food. Try your best to get enough sleep. Take some exercise. Even a walk around the block can help better your mood.

Maintaining your routine as much as possible can also act as a grief-reliever. I was in the habit of walking with my youngest son to the library once or twice a week, and a couple of weeks after his mother died, we resumed this routine. Those visits gave both

A therapist or support group may prove invaluable.

To run away from grief or to try and hide from it often lengthens the healing process and can bring on more troubles.

of us a sense of continuity and a link to a happier past.

If you're trying to comfort a friend or family member who has experienced a tragedy, you can help by bringing them healthy, home-cooked meals or giving them a gift certificate to a local grocery. If you live nearby, you might offer to take walks with them two or three evenings a week, an exercise conducive both to good health and to good conversation.

Life Boats

Some people find themselves unable to cope with a loss even with the support of others in their lives. Some also either have no loved ones living close by or lack a network of friends who might boost their spirits and accompany them through the storm.

In these cases, turning to a therapist or a support group can be enormously beneficial. Support groups give us the chance to meet with people who have endured trauma similar to ours, and this shared pain can often lighten our burden, making us realize we are not as alone as we might think.

A therapist, too, can assist us in working through our sorrow, guiding us to try different healing techniques and if nothing else, allowing us to say things and shed the tears we might otherwise conceal from even those close to us.

Google "grief support groups near me," and you can see what help is available.

We're Never the Same

Grief changes us.

Here is one example. It may seem trivial to some readers, but it looms large in my gallery of failures in my life.

On Wednesday, May 12, 2004, I called my wife before 9 a.m. from the building where I taught seminars to homeschooled and asked her to look up some essay questions I'd forgotten to bring from home. She wasn't feeling well, but she found my notes and read me off the information I needed. As

we ended our conversation, her last words to me were "I love you."

My last words to her: "Gotta go. The students are waiting. See you at 4."

When I arrived home, she was lying on our bedroom floor in a coma. The following Monday, she died of a brain aneurysm in an Asheville, North Carolina, hospital.

What was wrong with me? Why hadn't I simply said, "I love you too?" Why? Why? Why?

That question haunted me. It haunts me today. But from that day forward, with one exception—a relative who seems uncomfortable with the words "I love you"—I now say "I love you" every time I end a conversation with my children, my grandchildren, and many of my friends.

Professor Grief

Loss and grief leave some people bitter or cynical, unable to see the good in their lives and in the world. If we pay close attention, however, grief is a great teacher. It can deepen our empathy and love for others, it eventually gives us the power to cherish those we have lost, and it even allows us to learn from those who wronged us—the spouse who abandoned the marriage, the dead mother who wounded us, the business partner who brought us to financial ruin.

As Kate McGahan, author and long-time hospice counselor, once wrote, "Grief will not let you go until you satisfy what it came to teach you."

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooled 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 to follow his blog.

Fostering Stellar Work Ethic in an Age of Victimhood

ANNIE HOLMQUIST

Happily making curlicues on cones and serving Blizzards upside down, the teenage son of a friend of mine is experiencing his first real job this summer behind the counter at Dairy Queen. So far it seems to be going well. He's already received a raise and has been promised a position as manager once he turns 16.

This young man also seems to be an expert at raking in tips. During a recent incident, he cheerfully and politely served a woman, who then told him to keep the change from her \$20 bill. He was \$12 richer when she left the shop, and by the end of the day, he had \$30 in his tip jar. His fellow

co-workers didn't fare nearly as well.

While the summer of COVID provided dismal job numbers for teens, this summer is already more promising. Office internships may still be a no-go, but opportunities in traditional teen summer jobs are tremendous, CNBC reports, particularly because employers have great difficulty finding qualified workers.

Why such difficulty? There are likely several reasons, but I would wager that a good deal of the difficulty stems from the fact that today's teens haven't been taught the three principles for job success that the young man above learned from his father: Show up on time, do your job, and ask for more work when not busy.

These principles are expounded upon in an essay entitled "A Message to Garcia." The essay, written by Elbert Hubbard in 1899, details an incident in the Spanish-American War in which President William McKinley asked a young soldier to carry a message to the head of Cuban insurgents, Gen. Calixto Garcia. This soldier did so diligently and without questions, despite having to track down Garcia for several weeks through adverse conditions.

Hubbard goes on to describe how this type of persistence, diligence, and commitment to the task at hand was lacking in many employees of his own time. Noting that public sympathy is often directed

toward the homeless, down-trodden individual who only wants a job, Hubbard reminds us that the employer's side of the story is often forgotten:

"Nothing is said about the employer who grows old before his time in a vain attempt to get frownsy ne'er-do-wells to do intelligent work; and his long patient striving with 'help' that does nothing but loaf when his back is turned. In every store and factory there is a constant weeding-out process going on. The employer is constantly sending away 'help' that have shown their incapacity to further the interests of the business, and others are being taken on."

Such a process happens regardless of good or bad economic times, Hubbard says, declaring that "survival of the fittest" plays into whether an individual succeeds in a job. In other words, those who, like my young friend at the Dairy Queen, take the simple advice of showing up on time, doing the job well, and even go the extra mile to make the customer happy are the ones who rise to the top.

But there's another piece of advice that Hubbard offers, which seems quite appropriate for our culture today. He says:

"I know one man of really brilliant parts who has not the ability to manage a business of his own, and yet who is absolutely worthless to anyone else, because he carries with him constantly the insane sus-

picion that his employer is oppressing, or intending to oppress, him. He can not give orders, and he will not receive them. Should a message be given him to take to Garcia, his answer would probably be, 'Take it yourself.'"

In other words, this employee is a prime example of someone with an attitude, sporting a victimhood mentality and ready to show how he has been treated unfairly. Unfortunately, it seems likely that this type of individual is even more common today than he was more than 100 years ago when Hubbard penned these words.

While it's discouraging to be surrounded by individuals who hawk their alleged victimhood even on the job, the encouraging thing is that we know a better way, both for ourselves and to pass along to our children. Like my friend, who is raising his son to show up on time, to be diligent on the job, and to go the extra mile in serving his employer, we, too, can adopt this method in our own offices, jobs, and homes. Chances are, such efforts will be noticed and met with success, especially in a world where victimhood is par for the course.

Annie Holmquist is the editor of Intellectual Takeout and the online editor of Chronicles Magazine, both projects of the Charlemagne Institute.

Finding Victory

Discovered abandoned and seriously ill, a young boy in Nigeria is now back on his feet and attending school

LOUISE BEVAN

When a passerby found a young boy lying on the street last year abandoned and emaciated, he assumed the boy was dead. However, the lone boy was still breathing. The passerby then posted photos on social media and a local NGO rushed to the site to help.

Arriving in the nick of time, the NGO, Land of Hope, would later refer to the boy, whom they named Victory, as "one of the worst child abuse cases we have ever had." Yet one year on, Victory has recovered and he's even attending school.

Anja Ringgren Lovén, who established Land of Hope in 2012, has lived and worked in Nigeria for close to a decade. Inspired by her late mother's passion for equality and human rights, Anja moved to Nigeria from Denmark and started the nonprofit in response to the widespread abuse and abandonment of children in Akwa Ibom State.

Anja, her husband, David Emmanuel Umem, and their team have since been involved in hundreds of child rescues.

Anja told The Epoch Times that the concerned citizen originally saw Victory in a dire state, living on the street alone, before the pandemic hit. "[The person] took pictures of him on different days to show to the police," she explained. However, shortly afterward, Nigeria went into national lockdown.

It wasn't until lockdown softened to a curfew that the concerned citizen could return to check on Victory, who appeared to be dead. However, when he heard the young boy—who was by then desperately sick and infected with tetanus—breathing, he posted pictures of Victory on social media and tagged Anja and her husband. The couple then acted quickly.

"David and our team rushed to rescue Victory and took him immediately to the hospital," said Anja. "He was only able to breathe with help from oxygen. Almost all of his bottom was gone and his whole body was in a state of dying."

Anja, who has a son named David Jr., was stuck in Denmark during that time, owing to travel restrictions due to the pandemic. But she trusted her team to do their best. However, empathy knows no borders. "I always feel very emotional when our children are rescued and see how they always fight so hard to survive," she said.

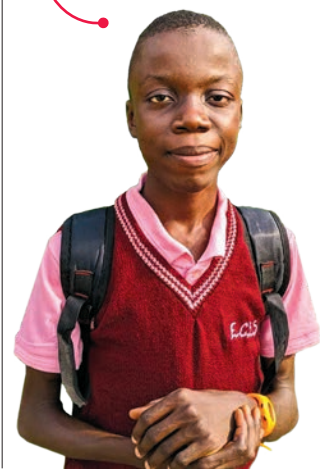
Victory spent the next six months in a hospital with a Land of Hope nurse, Itoro, and a male caregiver, Aniете. Anja maintains that Victory received the 24/7 care and the sense of love and protection that he needed to survive.

Critically ill with tetanus, a deadly and serious infection that had already affected his brain and nervous system, Victory was unconscious for two months. Due to the infection, Victory suffered painful body spasms triggered by noise, touch, and light, before being moved to a single room where he received oxygen, anti-tetanus drugs, and an abundance of love.



1. Victory was found in a dire state.
2. Victory during his recovery.
3. Victory with his nurse Itoro (L) and caregiver Aniете.
4. Victory with Anja Ringgren Lovén, founder of nonprofit Land of Hope.

Ten months after his rescue, in March 2021, Victory started to attend school.



It was during his recovery that David gave Victory his name, a name that honors his survival.

Despite an investigation, Land of Hope was unable to trace Victory's family. They did, however, find out his original name: Ubong. "He loves both names," claimed Anja, sharing Victory's one-year update on Facebook.

It is Land of Hope's mission to give a voice to the Nigerian children who fall victim to abuse, neglect, and superstition, providing a wealth of education and community outreach as well as its residential Children's Center.

Victory's survival is one of the NGO's most incredible success stories.

Ten months after the dying child was lifted from the streets and brought to safety, he began to attend school. It was a momentous occasion for Anja and the team, who marveled at Victory in his school uniform, walking to class unassisted.

"He loves to go to school and learn new things," Anja told The Epoch Times. "He loves to ask me many questions, and he's very social and caring."

Reflecting back on Victory's amazing transformation, Anja said it is the human survival instinct that is a powerful force. "Humans can live about 40 days without food," she ventured, "about three days without water, about eight minutes without air, but only for one second without love."

Share your stories with us at emg.inspired@epochtimes.com, and get your daily dose of inspiration by signing up for the Epoch Inspired newsletter at TheEpochTimes.com/newsletter

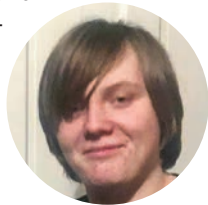
ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF ANJA RINGGREN LOVEN

Teen Turns Hobby Into Mission for Good

LOUISE BEVAN

A Rhode Island teen with a passion for collecting pre-owned objects has found a way to use his hobby to help others.

For Shane Jones, 16, from Wakefield, collecting secondhand items is "just something fun to do," he says. He's handy at using a metal detector to recover small items—bottles, coins, and other small trinkets—and likes visiting yard sales.



Shane Jones, 16, from Wakefield, R.I.

While housebound during the pandemic, the South Kings-town High School sophomore started researching storage unit auctions, compelled by the idea of the treasures he might find.

Using money saved from his summer job the year before, he bought his first unit for around \$100 from a facility in Providence.

At first, he hoped to sift through the contents, choose his treasures, and sell the rest. But upon opening the unit, the teen was struck by a heart-rending reality.

"I realized this isn't just something like yard sales where they gave it to me and sold it to me," he explained. "This is where their stuff was taken because they couldn't pay it."

Jones came across mail and personal documents, and took no joy in claiming what others would have, under better circumstances, kept and not discarded.

This did, however, afford him an opportunity to claim a reward of a different kind.

Finding names, the teen managed to track down the family of the unit's original owner, and eventually connected with the owner's mother, a nursing home resident—who was happy to receive the items that had belonged to her son.

Feeling uplifted by the kind act, Jones purchased another unit from Narragansett, and managed to connect with the previous owner's brother.

It contained family heirlooms that the man had no idea his brother had been storing. Grateful, he tried to offer money for Jones's trouble. "I didn't accept it," he said. "It was something to do, and it was nice."

Jones's most recent purchase—the most touching of all—was a large unit in Johnston, containing items that once belonged to a woman from Connecticut who'd lost her baby. After the tragic loss, she'd lost access to the unit, and all its contents.

"Most of the stuff was baby stuff," Jones said.

"I don't mind doing this when I have the funds," he added of his kind venture. "It's not mine. They didn't purposely give it to me, so why let other people suffer as I succeed?"

After reclaiming her once-lost memories, the bereaved woman messaged Jones's mom, Sarah, to express her gratitude.

"You don't even know ... how much it means to me to actually be able to get it and not have lost it," she texted, adding that her daughter died from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) three years earlier.

"You literally brought me to tears," she added. "God has a special place saved for him."

Now, having finished off his sophomore year, Jones plans to devote his summer to his new, rewarding hobby—and hopefully reclaim a few more cherished memories for their former owners.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF SARAH MARKEY



Shane started researching storage units, initially thinking he might come across interesting finds.



ERIC BARADAT/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

A teenage boy at work in a fast food restaurant in Arlington, Va., on June 6, 2021.

4 Ways Moms Can Take Care of Themselves

BARBARA DANZA

If you're a mom, especially with younger children at home, you're in high demand. While you probably wouldn't change that for the world, you sure could use a break. Am I right?

Until you're able to experience that dream weekend getaway with room service and lots of alone time—I know I'm not the only mom who dreamed of this—you'd be surprised at how effective very small breaks throughout the day can be at maintaining your energy, stabilizing your mood, and carrying you through until bedtime.

Here are four ways to take a mommy time-out.

Early Morning Ritual

First thing in the morning, before the kids awaken, is a golden time. If you can get yourself up early enough to savor the quiet of the morning, a cup of hot coffee, and time to just think, the rest of the day seems to be easier to handle.

It can be tempting at this time of day to get a jump on the laundry or other household chores. It can also be just as easy to get lost on your phone, scrolling away the precious minutes you have to yourself.

Instead, create for yourself a morning ritual that brings you joy, that you look forward to, and that makes you want to wake up even earlier. Perhaps you'll read something inspirational, write in your journal, sit outside to simply enjoy the sights and sounds of nature, or whatever truly brings you joy and optimism first thing each day. Even a night owl may find themselves adjusting their schedule a bit so as not to miss out on what can be a wonderful and life-giving part of every day.

Nap Time Rule

You've likely heard the advice, "nap when they nap." Well, that may or may not be the best thing to do when your young children go down for a nap. It can be helpful, though, to set up rules for yourself to follow during nap time. If you would genuinely benefit from a



An early morning ritual, before the kids awake, gives you some precious time to savor the quiet of the morning.

short nap in the middle of the day, by all means, take one. However, you may find that an afternoon coffee on your porch is more renewing or that checking some items off of your to-do list makes you feel lighter and accomplished.

Think about how you can best serve yourself during nap time, and make it a rule that you take care of you during that period.

Pressure Relief Valve

Sometimes the demands on mom can feel too overwhelming. If you find yourself getting frustrated, resentful, or angry during the day, have a plan in place to give yourself a real time-out. Make sure the kids are in a safe space—perhaps a bouncy seat or playpen for very little ones, or a room they're secure in for older kids—and allow yourself to step away for a few minutes. You can give them a toy or activity to occupy themselves.

Whether you head to your bedroom or bathroom, or step outside your door for a breather, allow yourself the time to calm down, be kind to yourself, and reset. Remind yourself of the important work you're doing and how blessed you are to have your family and these responsibilities. When you return, consider your nutritional needs. Have you eaten today? Do you need some water? Take care of yourself. If your

kids are content where they are, allow them to just be while you give yourself a breather.

Bedtime Rule

After the children go to bed, you're plain exhausted. It can feel like the only energy you have left is to flop on the couch and let the television take over.

However, this time presents another opportunity to nurture yourself. Before you flop, take just a few minutes to think about what would best serve you tomorrow. Is the kitchen cleaned up? Is the laundry at a good stopping point? Do you need to prepare something for yourself or the children tomorrow? Would it help to take a look at the calendar and note any appointments on the horizon?

Also take the time to take care of yourself physically. Any nighttime self-care routine that supports you should be undertaken before you crash for the night. Take care of yourself like you've cared for your family all day.

Motherhood is both challenging and rewarding. It becomes even more challenging when moms forget to take care of the one doing all the mothering. These investments in time aren't selfish but beneficial to the entire household. Whenever you need it, take a mommy time-out.

BOOK REVIEW

‘Preserve the Thread of Tradition, My Son’

Becoming a father puts the contemporary world in sharp focus

JAMES BRADSHAW

Sohrab Ahmari's new book, "The Unbroken Thread," follo ws his acclaimed spiritual memoir, "From Fire by Water," in which the Iranian American journalist had charted the story of his conversion to Catholicism.

This book is less personal and more ambitious, laying out an argument that we need to rediscover the traditions that have been swept away by the enhanced focus on individual autonomy and social liberation that has become so prevalent in recent times.

In diagnosing what he feels is our civilization's main malady, Ahmari, opinion editor of the New York Post, speaks from experience.

As readers of his previous work will know, Ahmari didn't convert to Christianity from Islam. Having been raised in a highly Westernized family that fled the Ayatollah's Iran, the young immigrant embraced a hedonistic life-style with a passion and felt appalled that others around the world were denied such freedom.

Years on, Ahmari has scaled the heights of journalism on both sides of the Atlantic and now enjoys a comfortable life in Manhattan. He is, by any definition, an example of a successful immigrant to the West.

But as a Catholic and a father of a young son, he is disturbed by what he sees around him and fearful about the world which his little boy will inherit. He writes:

"I have come to believe that the very

modes of life and thinking that strike most people in the West as antiquated or 'limiting' can liberate us, while the Western dream of autonomy and choice without limits is, in fact, a prison; that the quest to define ourselves on our own is a kind of El Dorado, driving to madness the many who seek after it; that for our best, highest selves to soar, other parts of us must be tied down, enclosed, limited, bound."

Self-Sacrifice and Freedom

His son Maximilian looms large in this book, as does Saint Maximilian Kolbe, who died a martyr in Auschwitz.

Ahmari writes that Kolbe's act of self-sacrifice in volunteering to die in the place of a stranger represents the climbing of "the very summit of human freedom," and argues that "we have abandoned Kolbe's brand of freedom—freedom rooted in self-surrender, sustained by the authority of tradition and religion—in favor of one that glorifies in the individual will."

Surveying the landscape of contemporary society, the author fears that his son will discard the "permanent ideals" of the past

in favor of a culture that prefers the new to the old, and which suggests that there is no purpose to life other than self-fulfillment.

This book—the final chapter of which is a touching letter addressed from father to son—is an attempt to explain the unbroken thread which connects us to the past.

Is God Reasonable?

Ahmari's structural approach is reminis-

cent of Jordan Peterson's. He divides the book into 12 sections, each of which is based on answering a particular question: Is God Reasonable? Can You Be Spiritual Without Being Religious? What Is Freedom For?

Like Peterson, Ahmari is a gifted storyteller and is refreshingly broad-minded when it comes to the examples he explores from a range of religious and cultural traditions.

In one chapter, he describes how C.S. Lewis came to abandon the shallow and materialistic worldview that he and others had developed in the early 20th century, and how this renewed respect for the old helped Lewis not just to explore this world, but to reconsider the Christian faith he had abandoned.

When explaining the relationship between faith and reason, Ahmari describes how Plato and Aristotle had, through the use of reason and without revelation, concluded that God must exist.

Elsewhere, in discussing the value of the Sabbatical rest and the costs which society has borne as a result of our collective decision to dispense with it, he highlights the work of the rabbi Abraham Heschel, who believed that by honoring the Sabbath, people weren't only reminded of their basic religious duties, but also helped to understand their task "to restore the world to the kingship of the Lord."

Secularization, Individualism, and Conservatism

Many prominent books about modern American life have touched upon what is surely the most consequential change to occur there in recent times: the rapid secularization of the population.

This usually involves a movement away from traditional religion toward an individual-centric form of vague spirituality, and Ahmari argues persuasively that the baleful effects of this shift can be seen

throughout society, including the rise of identity politics and the ever-greater social division that it's causing.

Politics isn't the central theme here, thankfully, although it's touched upon.

It's worth noting that the author has recently undergone more than religious conversion. In addition to this, he has become an increasingly vocal critic of the traditional fusionist approach of right-of-center Americans, which saw social conservatives work together with libertarian-leaning economic conservatives to advance their goals within the framework of the American political system.

In 2019, Ahmari launched a blistering attack on this approach in the pages of First Things, and he has since become associated with the quixotic integralist position, which favors a more aggressive approach in culture war issues, and which seeks to do the impossible in marrying Church and State at a time of accelerating secularization.

It would take another (very long) book to chart a path toward the society he and the other integralists seem to be aspiring towards, but few conservative-minded readers would disagree with his basic contention that the existing "American order enshrines very few substantive ideals I would want to transit to my son."

Those substantive ideals are there, surely, and in this book, Sohrab Ahmari has done an excellent job of explaining to his son and anyone else who cares to listen why the thread that binds us to the past must always be preserved with reverence.

James Bradshaw works for an international consulting firm based in Dublin, and has a background in journalism and public policy. Outside of work, he writes for a number of publications, on topics including politics, history, culture, film, and literature. This article was originally published on Mercatornet.

Homeschool Science: Expert Tips to Make It Fun and Simple

BARBARA DANZA

It seems that more parents than ever before are preparing to homeschool their children this coming school year. Some have been at this for a while, and some are embarking on their first year along this path.

As they gather materials and plan field trips, going down the list of subjects to include in the curriculum, they'll come upon the subject of science and have one of two reactions: They either rejoice because they'll get to dive deep into the things they geek out about or they worry because they have no idea how on earth they would ever be able to teach science.

I asked curriculum and educational product developer and author of "Let's Learn About Chemistry" Dr. Stephanie Ryan for her advice for homeschooling parents preparing to tackle science.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Many homeschool parents find themselves intimidated by the idea of teaching science. When it comes to gathering resources and devising a strategy, where do you recommend they start?

DR. STEPHANIE RYAN: I recommend they first sit down and make a list of their goals. What content do you want your child to learn?

Then ask your child about their current interests. We can teach a lot of science content using different contexts to still get the same point across. Remember: You don't need fancy chemicals to learn about chemistry. Baking soda and vinegar are chemicals that undergo a reaction when mixed. You can find those right in your kitchen! They have a chemical formula that you can work on balancing and stoichiometry if the kids are older.

See what is already out there! Loads of homeschool parents and science educators have made their content available online, in many cases for free. Why reinvent the wheel if you don't have to? Instagram, TikTok, Pinterest, and YouTube are all great resources and are filled with scientists, science communicators, and educators who would love to help answer your questions. It never hurts to ask.

Look at reviews of science programs and kits! There are some really great ones out there like KiwiCo and MEL Science. They send you everything you need to do your experiment and usually come with helpful guiding questions and answers to what is happening in that specific kit. They typically run great sales over holidays or work with influencers that have special promo codes to help you save some money.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What are the most important general aspects of science you'd recommend parents focus on for the elementary years, the middle school



If you can get kids to see the wonder of phenomena around them, they'll start asking questions and try to figure out some answers using science, says Stephanie Ryan.

years, and the high school years?

DR. RYAN: This is a tricky one because it depends on where you live, if you are homeschooling for the entirety of their schooling, or just for a year or two, and your kids' interests!

I'm speaking of chemistry here. For the younger kids, I always encourage parents to break concepts all the way down to solids, liquids, and gases. What are you starting with? What did you end with? Are they the same thing? What's different? What claims can you make? What evidence supports your claim? Do you see any patterns? These are basic skills that set them up for great practices as they get older.

Sometimes, kids have an obsession with a concept. For example, my son can't seem to get enough of learning about the human body, organs, and how all of the systems work together. He's 4. I mine through book reviews on Amazon to find good resources for young kids. He has a body systems puzzle from Usborne Books that I let him put together regularly. I know that 4 is much different than 14, but you can cover a lot of ground with a specific interest.

THE EPOCH TIMES: Science has the potential to be a lot of fun. What are some strategies you employ to make the explo-

ration of science fun for kids?

DR. RYAN: Adults aren't always the best at determining what is relevant to kids' lives. At times, we are forcing what we think is relevant onto them. Have your kids help guide what you do by tapping into their interests. If your child loves plants, start a garden as a project. They can learn about life cycles, the structure and function of plant parts, ecosystems, how to design a scientific study, probability, genetics, etc. All from one interest.

Another way is to point out the science that is always occurring around you. Science isn't this thing that only happens in laboratories. You are experiencing science every time you toast a piece of bread or add salt to water when you boil pasta. If we can help kids see the wonder around them in terms of, "Wow, look at that phenomenon that I'd like to understand!" then they will start asking questions more and try to figure out answers using science, instead of learning a bunch of facts.

Also, remember to let them be wrong. I know it is hard to let a wrong idea go forward, but provide them an experience that offers them contrasting evidence. What they do with that is the point. That is the learning and building of a concept in their heads—with real



Some experiments like this volcano one, require simple ingredients, such as baking soda and vinegar. LAPINA/SHUTTERSTOCK

Where Everybody Knows Your Name

On a visit to Ireland, a last name opens doors

BERNADETTE BONANNO

Several years ago, my husband Mike and I, along with 17 members of my extended family, traveled to Labasheeda, a small rural town in County Clare on the Shannon River in Ireland. My grandfather was born and raised there with his 14 siblings. The town consists of a post office, church, rectory, schoolhouse, general store, and Casey's Pub.

After our long flight, Mike and I unpacked and headed down to Casey's.

The pub was dark inside and the place went suspiciously silent with all eyes on the two strangers who just walked in. We sat at the bar and Mike ordered us two pints of Guinness. I began wondering if we'd ever make it out of Casey's alive. It felt like we were in an old movie about two clueless tourists wandering into a rural pub in Ireland. Needless to say, I kept my eyes down and my mouth shut.

As the Guinness settled, we waited uncomfortably for the bartender to bring them over. With the exception of a few murmurs from the corner of the pub, no one was speaking.

Finally serving the Guinness, the bartender asked, "So, what brings you here?" Mike said, "My wife's family is from Labasheeda and we came over for a visit."

The bartender looked at me and asked, "What's your name?" I assumed he meant my maiden name so I lifted my chin and said, "Crehan."

Tilting his head back, he shouted, "CREHAN?" Reluctantly, I whispered, "Yes."

Suddenly, the pub erupted in expletive-laden laughter and chatter as people patted us on the back and offered to pay for our drinks. The bartender led me across the room to meet one of my cousins. For the next nine days, the town embraced us simply because we were Crehans. They didn't care about our past and we didn't have to earn their approval.

Recently, my husband Mike wrote a beautiful song about the freedom that comes from knowing God's unconditional love. The lyrics include, "I know I'm not worthy, but just the same, You know my name."

I love the song but it's not always easy to remember this truth. Fortunately, Irish pubs aren't the only place we receive reminders.

As many know, nature has a mysteriously way of speaking to those who are inclined to listen. So, Mike and I have taken thousands of walks together. On occasion, among the clusters, Mike finds a four-leaf clover. It often happens while we are discussing something important. Speechless at the unique timing of these discoveries, we finish our walks in silence.

When we get home, Mike presses out his rare finding to clearly see all four leaves.



A village in County Clare, Ireland.

Then, with a smile, he goes upstairs and adds the clover to his collection. I don't know where he keeps his collection as we never talk about it. Without providing answers, these reassuring clovers remind us that like the Guinness, things will eventually settle down and work out.

We returned to Ireland to walk the Dingle Peninsula a few years ago. While enjoying a few pints at local pubs, we remembered Casey's and their unconditional acceptance, all because, like God, they know my name.

Bernadette Bonanno lives in Albany, N.Y. She can be reached at bernadettebonanno@gmail.com

The pub was dark inside and the place went suspiciously silent with all eyes on the two strangers who just walked in.

DEAR NEXT GENERATION

Passing the Torch, or How My Father Molded My Life

➔ Advice from our readers to our young people

Dear Next Generation,

Are you seeking wisdom? American writer Clarence Budington Kelland (1881–1964) once said, “My father didn’t tell me how to live; he lived, and let me watch him do it.” I was able to profit from watching my father as he lived life. I saw a man who demonstrated creativity. My dad was a farmer for the first half of his life in central California. When newly planted peach trees didn’t provide income, he planted watermelons in between the rows, and presto—he had income for sale of “3 for a dollar” in the 1940s.

Value of the Person: My dad invented the coffee break for farm laborers. Mom would bake a German delicacy called “zwiebach” and dad would take coffee and milk and give the men a break from picking peaches in the 100-degree weather.

I learned how to take responsibility for my actions from observing my dad. Like they say, ‘Actions speak louder than words.’

Respect: Always take your hat off when entering a church or elevator, when being introduced to a lady, etc. People will see that and give you respect because you are giving respect. Seems like today it’s a lost art. Let’s revive it!

Importance of Music: My parents believed in the importance of teaching their children how to play an instrument. Dad traveled 50 miles to a big city where there were pawn shops. We spent a whole day while I was in junior high to find a saxophone for me. I think dad wanted to see his son



march down the street in a parade. It happened. They also wanted me to learn the accordion, so my dad purchased me one after he found a store where they would give six free lessons. Next was membership in a 50-person accordion band, where group activity was valuable.

Confrontation: I saw firsthand my dad willing to fight a man who was harassing his family. Aggressive verbal action by dad proved his willingness to protect his family. He also had a saying when confronted by a person who was on the contemptible side by quoting for me: “Never let a disagreeable person upset you. Remember, he has to live with himself forever. You are only with him a short time.”

Church: I wasn’t sent to church, I was taken to church from two weeks old until I left for college. While living on a farm, that meant a 40-mile round-trip to the family church. Those early days of worship set the stage for my entire life.

Jack of All Trades and Master of None: Farm equipment is always breaking or in need of some repair. My dad could fix anything and if necessary he would design a way to skirt a problem with the equipment he was using. Need drove him to plan methods and styles of repairs. That skill passed to me because of my observation and involvement. When my mother suffered in the San Joaquin Valley summer heat, he designed an outdoor air conditioner. It consisted of a frame with gunny sacks and a hose running water over the sacks attached to the frame. As the air blew through the arrangement, mom would sit inside of the square enclosure and be cooled. Perishable items like butter, milk, etc. were also kept within the cooling enclosure.

Responsibility: Dad demonstrated and took responsibility for his decisions. Example: Irrigating on family farms in the 1940s to 1950s tested this trait. When it was your turn to take water out of the canal, you had to use it day and night for the prescribed and approved time. Often, I would volunteer to do a night shift, but

(Top left) The author’s parents, Walter and Martha Buller, celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary in December 1987.

(Top right) Three generations of Bullers enjoy their Oldsmobiles in Clovis, Calif., in May 1998: (L–R) Brian, 38; Don, 68; and Walter, 89.

(Above left) Walter Buller volunteering his time in Mexico to build a church in 1978. He would set the tone for his son Don to volunteer 20 years in his retirement in disaster areas.

(Above middle) The author, 61, with his father Walter J. Buller, 82, in a photo from May 1991.

(Above right) Water J. Buller, 39, in June 1948, on his way to irrigate his fields at night.

dad said it was important to get my rest and be ready for school the next day. Education was important to him because he was only allowed to go through the eighth grade. He couldn’t afford paid help, so he literally worked around the clock to irrigate. I can still see him taking a break in the evening hours while I was getting ready for bed. He had a light strapped to his head to see what to do. Cool weather, darkness, tiredness never stopped or slowed him down. He had accepted the responsibility to accept the availability of water for a specified time limit and fulfilled that responsibility. I learned how to take responsibility for my actions from observing my dad. Like they say, “Actions speak louder than words.”

Practicality: I wasn’t too keen on it. I wanted to drive a truck. Dad wanted me to get educated, so he challenged me to go to college one year. One year turned out to result in graduation. I “saw the light” through soft challenge. In my senior year of high school, I decided I needed a car to start college in the fall. Dad and I went car hunting, and I fell in love with a Lincoln because it had power windows. Dad reminded me about the upkeep costs of such a car and recommended we pass it by. I went along with the idea but down deep I still wanted that car. His advice on major items stayed with me. When I purchased a car in my second year, it was a car where I could do minor repairs as necessary. Dad’s advice paid off.

— Don Buller, California

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 or mail it to:

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

Michigan Teen Turns Wood–Chopping Hobby Into Business

COURTESY OF BARBARA KLINE



Cameron Janda, 13, has a passion for forestry.

LOUISE BEVAN

Eighth-grader Cameron Janda, from Michigan, has been chopping wood ever since he could read. Now 13 years old, he’s been running his own business chopping and selling firewood for two years—and he still finds time to ace his schoolwork. Proud mom Barbara Kline says it’s her son’s rigorous organization that makes all this possible. “The arrangement for all of this is that his school always comes first, even if he’s taking on these other responsibilities that he chooses to do,” she told MLive. “He manages it all, and I’m proud of him.” On Mondays, Cameron rises at dawn for chores and to feed his family’s horses at their Tallmadge Township home. Then, it’s wood-chopping time. “I started when I was really young, probably six, when I got a hatchet from Meijer,” he said. “I would cut up firewood for the campfire and I really enjoyed that, so it just kind of grew from there.” After chopping, Cameron stacks the wood and wraps it into bundles, ready to be sold. He sells his wares by volume—a bundle costs \$5; a 4-by-8-foot, 16-inch-deep face cord costs \$60; and a full cord three times that size costs \$160.

Cameron has drummed up most of his patronage via word of mouth. He delivers bundles of wood directly to homes, and to three local convenience store outlets. The teen lumberjack can produce around 300 bundles of wood in a day, and has no real idea of how much money he’s made so far. He keeps his profits in a coffee can. “I could count it, but it would take a while,” he joked.

“I would cut up firewood for the campfire and I really enjoyed that, so it just kind of grew from there.”

Cameron Janda

He’s learned much of what he knows from working with family friend Dan Dempsey. The pair chop wood together once a week, with Dempsey running a crosscut saw and Cameron handling splitting and stacking duties. The teen loves the outdoor lifestyle his hobby affords him. “It’s hard work,” he admitted. “But I have been doing it a while so

it’s not really, really hard for me. I like splitting wood because I really enjoy the physical part of it and I enjoy being in nature.” Besides lumberjacking, Cameron cares about forest regeneration. He likes to find and replant saplings in the woods whenever possible, sometimes building protective fencing, while lamenting that many young shoots get eaten by deer. In addition to being a keen student and runner, the busy outdoorsman plays classical guitar—as well as the occasional video game. “I’ve seen him grow a lot over the last few years with being able to manage his time,” Kline said. “And his school still comes first ... he carries very good grades.” Cameron, who’s signed on for online classes through Michigan Connections Academy, wants to dual-enroll into high school courses as well, to learn more about construction and forestry. Meanwhile, the 13-year-old is already learning to identify trees from Dempsey. “He can tell me the value of a tree just by looking at it,” his mother marveled. “Sometimes when he’s outside doing chores, I’ll look out the window and see him just looking up the trees, you know, sizing them up. “He’s always very intrigued by that sort of thing.”

RA-SMIT/GFDL



(Above) In 1547, the château was given as a gift by King Henry II to his favorite mistress Diane de Poitiers, who commissioned Pacello da Mercoliano to design and build the gardens and entrusted architect Philibert de l’Orme with the task of building a bridge over the Cher River to extend the gardens to the other shore. (Below) The gardens at Château de Chenonceau are arranged as a series of individual spaces that were created by Catherine de’ Medici, Diane de Poitiers, and others over the centuries. They feature an Italian maze, a green garden, and a vegetable garden.

LARGER THAN LIFE: ART THAT INSPIRES US THROUGH THE AGES

The ‘Ladies’ Château’: Château de Chenonceau

PHIL BUTLER

If there was ever a monument of architecture dedicated to the feminine soul, Château de Chenonceau should be that testament. The medieval castle that dominates the right bank of the Cher River in France’s Loire Valley exists only because of the women who loved this regal residence. Built upon the ruins of a 12th-century medieval structure, Château de Chenonceau is now a far cry from the dark bastion it was once. Instead, today’s visitors see the evolution of a shimmering masterwork built by France’s royal treasurer Thomas Bohier, between 1513 and 1576. However, the grand vision that spans the river today is that of his

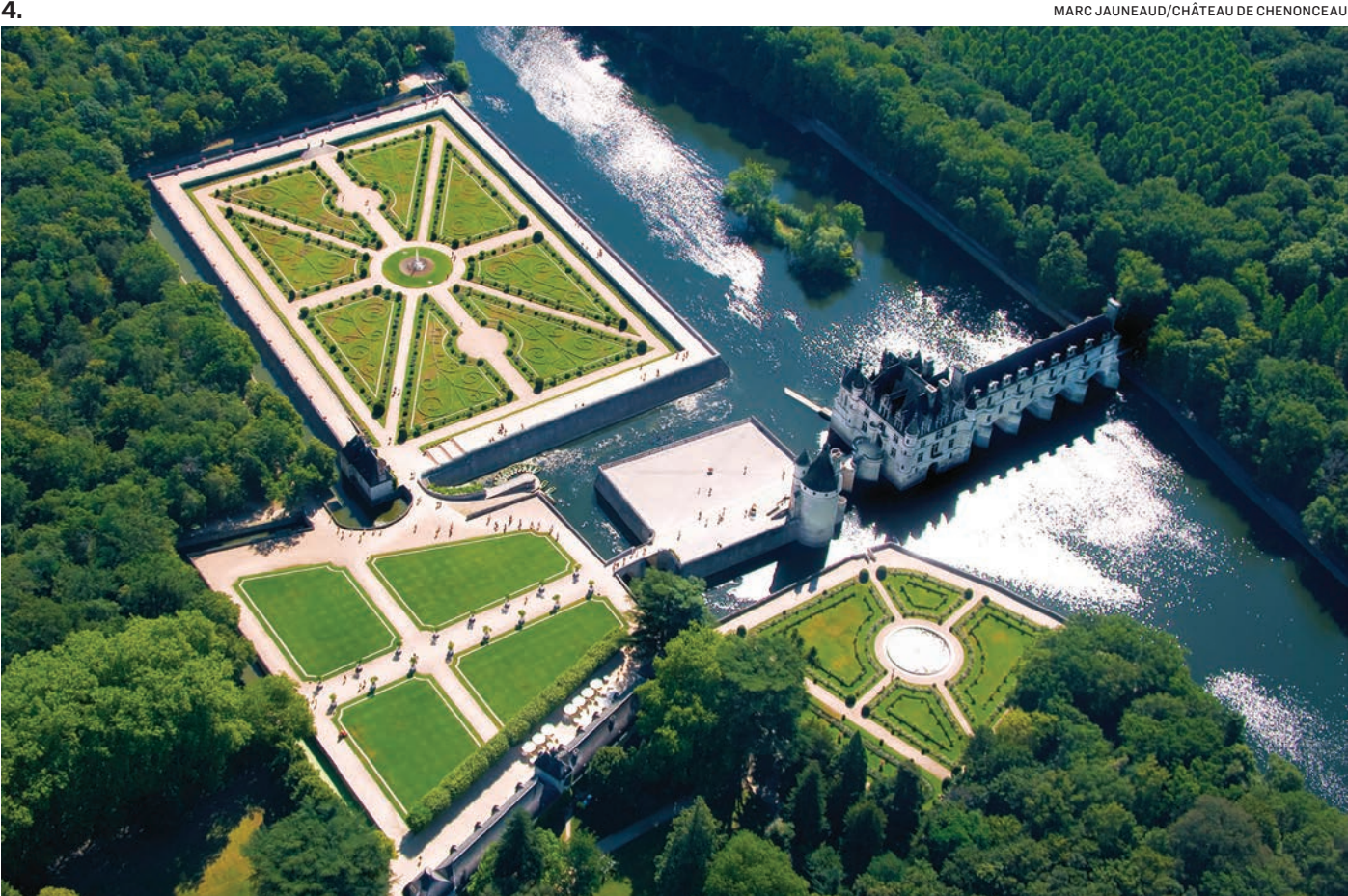
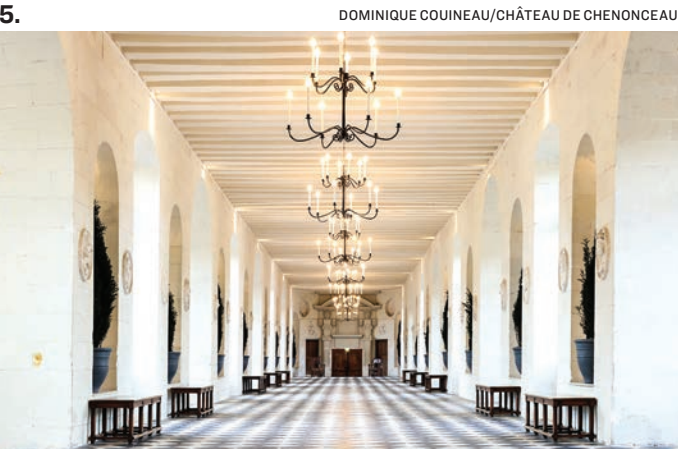
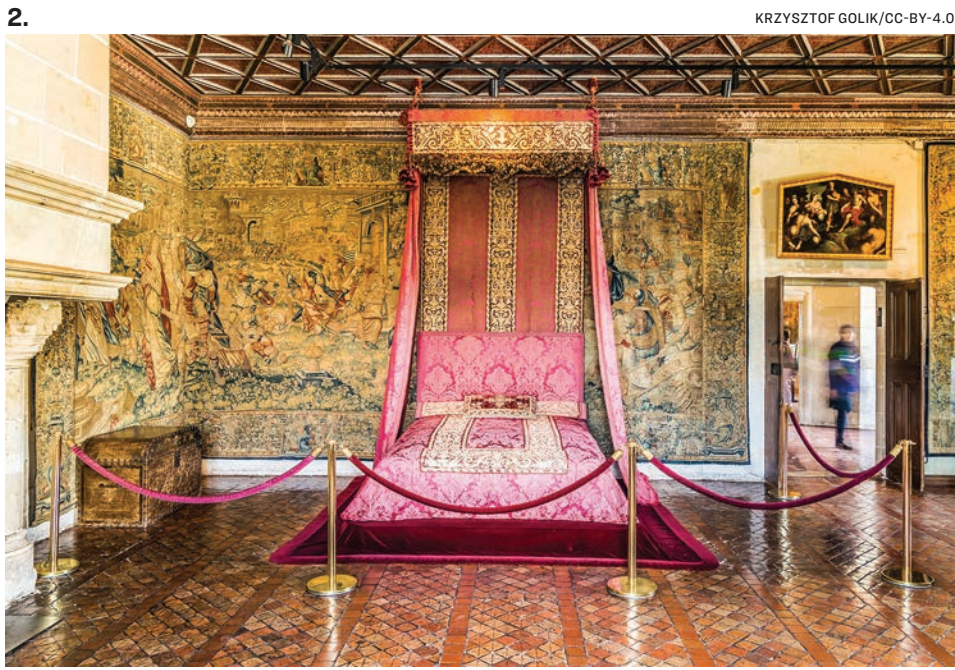
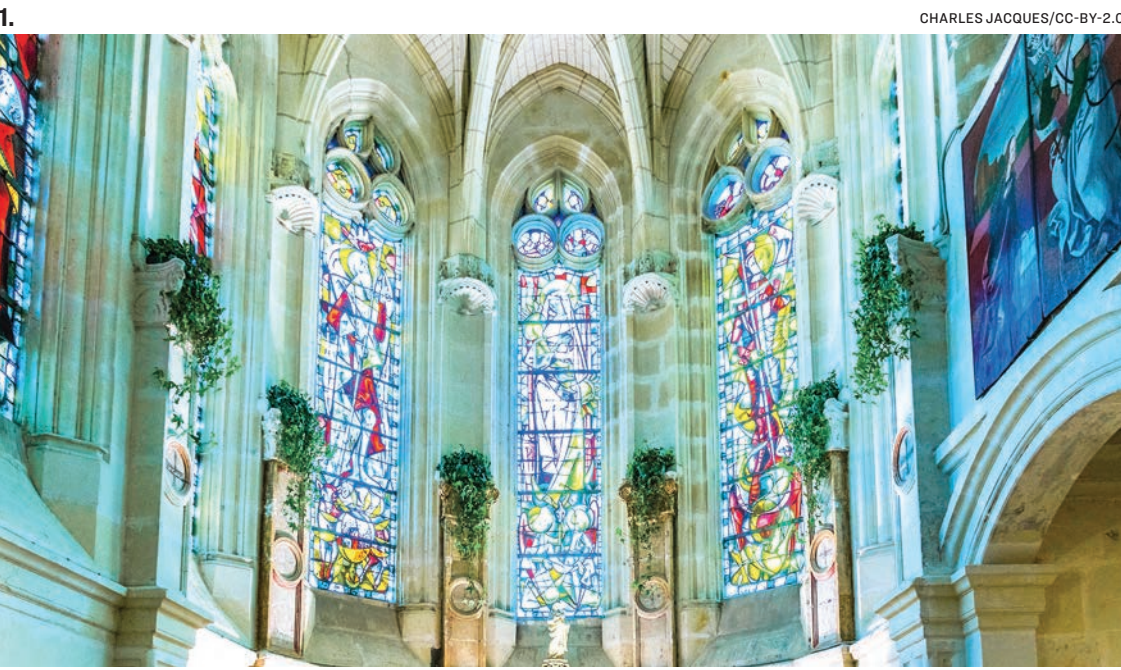
wife, Catherine Brignonnet, and a succession of women throughout history who followed in her footsteps. Also known as the Château des Dames or “ladies’ château,” the stunning palace has a long history of resilient women who called it their home. After Catherine Brignonnet, women including Diane de Poitiers, Catherine de’ Medici, Louise de Lorraine, Louise Dupin, and Marguerite Pelouze would inextricably link their names and influences to Château de Chenonceau. The château is also unique for its transitional architecture, a dramatic blend of late Gothic and early Renaissance influences. Its uniqueness is magnified by the fact that it bridges the Cher River, a tributary of the Loire River. A place of pomp and splendor,

MARC JAUNEAU/CHÂTEAU DE CHENONCEAU



tragedy and triumph, controversy, and even intrigue, its history is woven into the fabric of French and European culture—here, philosophers discussed, queens reigned and mourned their kings, and the wounds of warriors were tended to. Surrounded by immaculate gardens and forests, the château is the second most visited palace right after Versailles.

Phil Butler is a publisher, editor, author, and analyst who is a widely cited expert on subjects from digital and social media to travel technology. He’s covered the spectrum of writing assignments for The Epoch Times, Huffington Post, Travel Daily News, HospitalityNet, and many others worldwide.



1. A favorite for visitors, the small chapel has a gallery where nobles attended Mass. On the walls of the chapel are the inscriptions of Mary Stuart’s guards, written in English. On the right at the entrance, bearing the date 1543, “Man’s anger does not accomplish God’s justice.” Another, dated 1546 reads, “Do not let yourself be won over by Evil.” The stained glass had to be re-created after being destroyed by the bombing in World War II. Louise Dupin managed to save the chapel during the French Revolution by transforming it into a storehouse for wood and masking its religious nature. 2. The Room of Five Queens is one of the most lavishly appointed rooms. Ornate tapestries adorn the walls, and masterworks by Rubens and Pierre Mignard look down on the elaborately embellished bed used by Catherine de’ Medici’s daughters Margaret of France and Elisabeth of Valois. The bed was also used by her daughters-in-law: Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots; Elisabeth of Austria; and Louise of Lorraine. 3. Chenonceau is famous for its extravagant Renaissance furnishing and finishing touches, like the magnificent gold-embossed Renaissance fireplace in Louis XIV’s Drawing Room. 4. An aerial view of Château de Chenonceau bridging the Cher River. 5. Catherine de’ Medici had the former horse stables of the castle transformed into a magnificent Italian-style gallery and ballroom lit by 18 windows that look out over the river and the countryside. At the far end, a door gives access to the opposite bank of the Cher River.

PARENTING MATTERS

The Lifesaving Power of Mothers

PARNELL DONAHUE

Think of all that mothers do! First they carry us for nine months, then birth us into the light. They clean, feed, educate, and support us physically, emotionally, and often financially. But most of all, they love us and teach us how to love others.

This past year has been especially hard on mothers. Many of them work full- or part-time to support their families, and with schools closed, they somehow manage to school their kids as well. Thank God for mothers!

Mothers Are Often Heroes

One of my 14-year-old patients told me this story about her mother:

"When my brother Fred was about 10 months old, he was napping with a Hey Diddle Diddle mobile hanging above his crib. Somehow, he was able to reach one of the stars, pull it off, and put it in his mouth. Mom felt something wasn't quite right, so she opened the door to his room and saw him all blue and just limp. She knew he was choking on something.

"But she didn't panic or anything because she knew just what to do. She picked him up, turned him over, and whacked him really hard on the back; the star came flying out of his mouth. He started to cry and in a few seconds he was just his normal self, but if Mom hadn't known what to do, he would have been dead in just a few more minutes. At least that's what the doctor told her when she called him a little while later. So Mom is Fred's hero and Fred is my favorite brother, so she's my hero too."

"It's amazing what mothers can do, isn't it?" I said.

"Oh yeah, that's why I think that ..." She paused and hit me with those big brown eyes. "I think mothers save more lives than doctors."

Mothers do save more lives than doctors. Not all mothers perform CPR on their kids, but think of the accidents mothers prevent by carefully watching their toddlers, or the lives they save by putting them in car seats, and making and enforcing rules of behavior for children and yes, even for adolescents.

There are many other ways mothers save lives. On May 3, 1980, 13-year-old Cari Lightner was killed by a drunk driver who had had three prior drunk driving convictions and was out on bail from a hit-and-run accident two days earlier. Turning Cari's tragic death into something positive, her mother, Candy Lightner, founded MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Drivers). MADD's mission is to stop drunk driving, support the victims of this violent crime,



SHAPECHARGE/GETTY IMAGES

Mothers have the opportunity to shape their families and their communities.

and prevent underage drinking. Due to efforts by MADD and other programs to reduce drunk driving, alcohol-related traffic fatalities have decreased from more than 30,000 in 1980 to 10,511 in 2018. Because of MADD's work, more than 370,000 lives have been saved.

But mothers' social activities haven't stopped. Today mothers are taking a stand against Critical Race Theory. A Wall of Moms united to protect the protesters in Portland, Oregon. No matter which side of the equation you stand on, there are mothers who stand with you.

Setting the Tone at Home

Every day we read about mothers doing heroic deeds to save their kids. But moms do so much more. Mothers set the tone of a home; if the father is a single parent, he needs to be sure his kids have a woman to act as a surrogate mother. Their grandmothers often volunteer, but an aunt, a neighbor, or even a good sitter can fill this position.

I believe mothers are one of God's greatest creations. It may sound sacrilegious, but God could have done it differently. He could have made mothers more like dads, or in some way made them less influential in our lives—but he didn't.

In her commencement speech at Wellesley College in 1990, Barbara Bush said, "Your success as a family ... our success as a society, depends not on what happens

in the White House, but on what happens inside your house."

Commenting on Mrs. Bush's remarks, columnist Cal Thomas said, "Home, not Congress or the White House, is where ultimate power lies."

I would add that the power in the home lies with the mother. Mothers have the opportunity to shape their families and their communities. In a poem published in 1865, William Ross Wallace summed up the feelings of many of us when he praised motherhood by stating, "For the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world." This line from his poem has become a well-known adage.

My thoughts keep going back to the girl who told me her mother saved her brother's life. If only the mothers of the world knew how important they were in their children's lives, maybe more of them would have the kind of relationships that she and her daughter enjoy. I can't imagine anything that could make the world a better place than that.

May God continue to bless you and your family!

Dr. Parnell Donahue is a pediatrician, military veteran, author of four books and the blog ParentingWithDrPar.com, and host of WBOU's "Parenting Matters" show. He and his wife Mary, have four adult children; all hold Ph.D.s, two also are M.Ds. Contact him at Parenting-Matters.com

A Few Simple Ways to Lighten Things Up

BARBARA DANZA

The times we are living in can feel heavy. If you've been carrying the weight of the world on your shoulders, it's time to set that down and lighten things up. Here are a few simple ideas to consider.

Dump It Out

What things are weighing on your mind? Whether you're anxious about the future of humanity or that stack of papers on your desk—take out a pen and paper and write it all down. Keep writing, from the silly to the profound. Get every idea that is taking up space in your mind onto the page. When you truly feel as if you've captured it all, you're done.

Take a deep breath, pour yourself a soothing beverage, and relax. Recognize any sense of relief that comes from this simple act of what's known as a "brain dump." Set aside your list. If you're so inclined, take a walk outside or even a nap.

Let Go of All You Can't Control

Later—hours or days later—return to your brain dump. If anything else has since popped up for you, go ahead and add it. As you review your collection of concerns, begin searching for those you have no control over. Some examples of things you can't control include the weather; the past and future; thoughts, feelings, and actions of others; and the constraints of space and time.

Cross out every item on your list that you realize you can't control. As you cross off, imagine the worries over these things disintegrating from your mind and from your realm of responsibility. Let them go.

Let Go of Irrelevant Things

Now, return to your list. You may find items that actually aren't very significant by your own standards—items that you don't want to spend any more time thinking about or expending energy on. Find those and cross them off. Let them go.

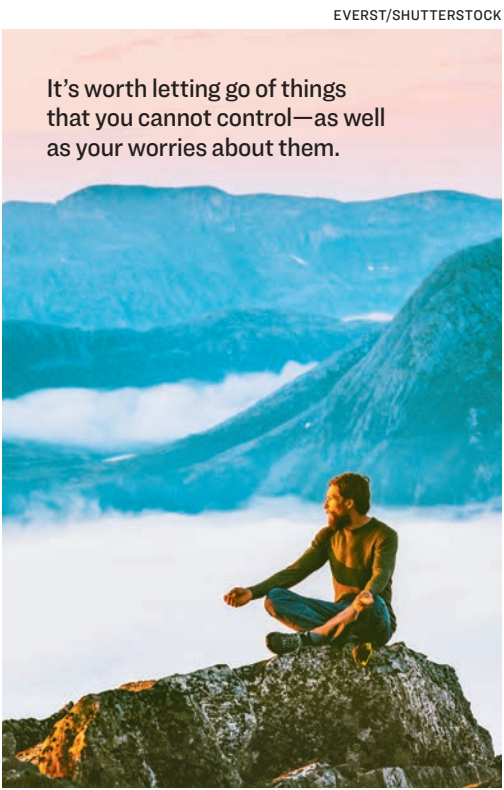
Make the Best List Ever

You may be thinking, "Another list?!" Stay with me here. This one is the idea of productivity guru David Allen as described in his classic book, "Getting Things Done." This list is called a "Someday/Maybe" list, and it's one you'll want to keep.

Looking back at your brain dump, choose the items that you may want to do something about in the future, or those you simply want to remember, but that aren't priorities for you right now. Add these items to your Someday/Maybe list and cross them off your brain-dump list.

When you're done, you can rest assured that you've captured these ideas and you can view them at any time. Keep your Someday/Maybe list in an accessible location and add to it whenever you wish. You'll probably find that now that these items are captured, you no longer need to expend mental energy worrying about them.

What's more, if you look at your brain dump now, what's left should be only those things you deem a priority and that you can do something about. You've lightened the load! "Getting Things Done" is an excellent resource for systematizing your productivity from this point.



EVERST/SHUTTERSTOCK

Declutter

The number of possessions you live with and maintain can really weigh you down. What items are no longer serving you? Begin to let things go and lighten the load.

You may feel compelled to tackle this in a big way—going through every corner of your home and keeping only the items that "spark joy," as Marie Kondo would say. If you've got the time and motivation, go for it. You'll feel lighter in a jiffy.

If a more gradual approach suits you, set out a few receptacles by your front door ready to collect any items you choose to part with as you go about your days. When one is full, bring it directly to where you're donating the items—or at least to the trunk of your car. Replace the full box or bag with a new one and make this habit a part of your

life. You'll feel more and more lightness as time goes on.

Reduce the Noise

Just as material clutter impacts your physical environment, consider the mental, emotional, and spiritual impact of the entertainment and media you consume. Can you reduce the noise and find more stillness, quiet, and peace?

We're all fully aware that the various forms of media consumption available are largely addictive, so this may be challenging, but possibly the most beneficial.

A few strategies to consider include utilizing your phone's screen time tracking to set new goals for yourself, continually reducing engagement.

You might also set rules for yourself and your family such as: The television can only be turned on during certain hours; when you're home, all digital devices must remain on their chargers in a common area of the home; or every Sunday, everyone takes a break from all forms of media.

Consider how you feel after you spend time on social media or watching the news. What if you stepped away from them for a while or checked them only at brief, set times?

Reducing the messages that are flooding your mind and influencing your thoughts and emotions is a surefire way to lighten things up.

Consider Your Spirit

Whether you consider yourself a spiritual person or not—allow yourself to explore what a spiritual life is all about. If you've been bogged down by the material world, perhaps the antidote lies beyond it. Take your newfound lightness to explore those big ideas that have been passed down through the centuries. You may experience the light, or enlightenment, that you've truly been seeking.



FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES



Little Jack Horner

by Mother Goose

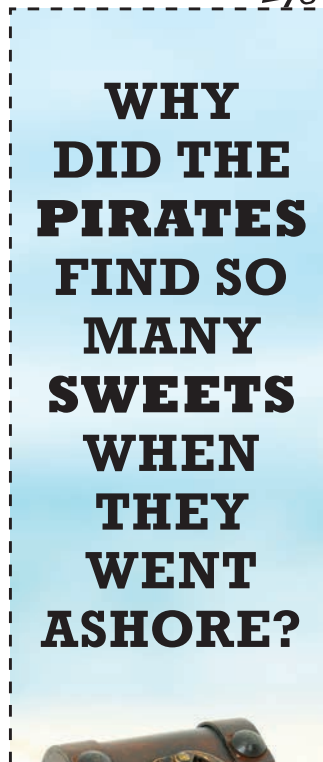
Little Jack Horner
Sat in the corner,
Eating a Christmas pie;
He put in his thumb,
And pulled out a plum,
And said, "What a good boy am I!"

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY THE EPOCH TIMES



“
**Cookies
are made of
butter and
love.**
NORWEGIAN PROVERB

RANGIZZ/SHUTTERSTOCK

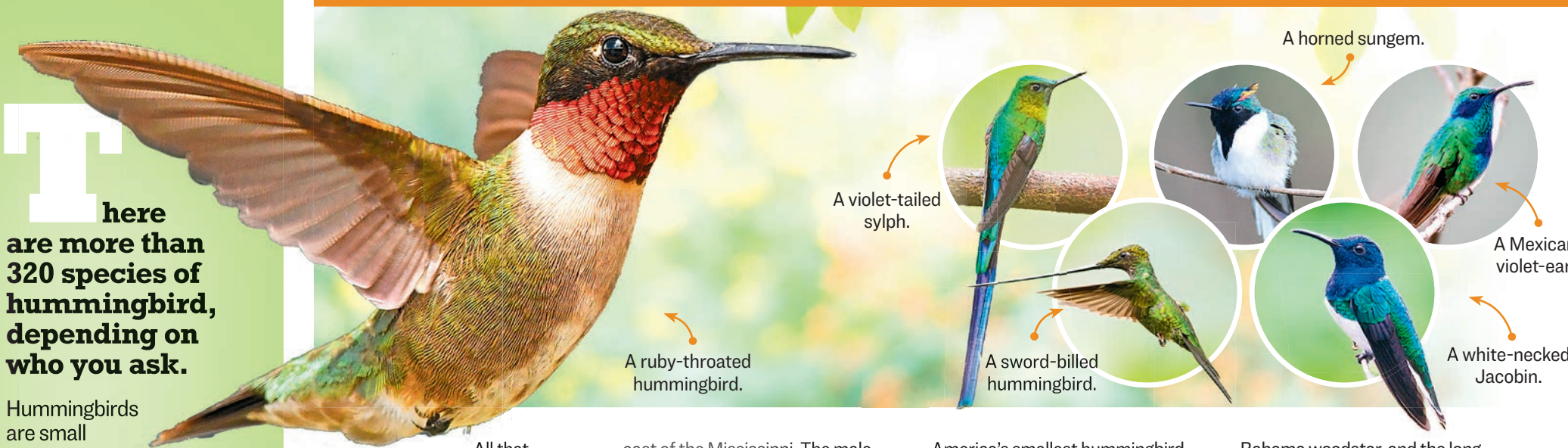


**WHY
DID THE
PIRATES
FIND SO
MANY
SWEETS
WHEN
THEY
WENT
ASHORE?**

ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

By Aidan Danza, age 15

THE BEAUTY OF THE HUMMINGBIRD



ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK

There are more than 320 species of hummingbird, depending on who you ask. Hummingbirds are small and fast—very fast. Their wings flap so fast that their noise in the air gives the hummingbird its name, while their hearts can beat up to 1,260 beats per minute.

All that hummingbirds eat is sugar in the form of flower nectar (although in a pinch, tree sap sometimes suffices). I've heard them referred to as flying jewels, and this is a perfect metaphor for the hummingbird. Here are what I think are the prettiest and most interesting hummingbirds, from America as well as South America. We start with the ruby-throated hummingbird, the only hummingbird

east of the Mississippi. The male has the trademark red throat, while the female has green above and white below, as in many female hummingbirds. Like many other hummingbirds, the ruby-throat drinks from flowers that are the color of its throat, in this case, red. They enjoy honeysuckles, bee-balm, and hummingbird feeders.

In the West, there are more hummingbirds, like the Rufous, the Costa's hummingbird, and

America's smallest hummingbird, the Calliope.

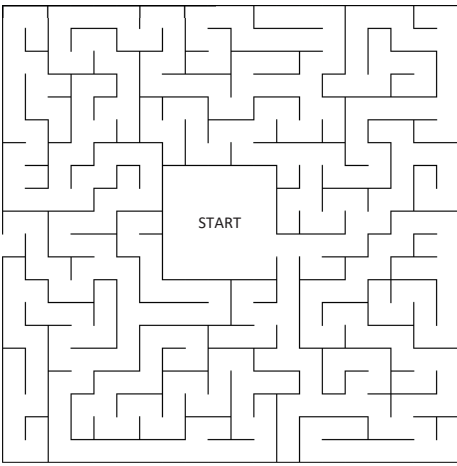
Going south, in Mexico, more hummingbirds can be found, including the Mexican violetear, which is found in tropical highlands. It's all green, with a purple patch on the side of the head. Also common in Mexico is the white-necked jacobin.

Even farther south, hummingbirds become more colorful and interesting, and there are such species as the horned sunger,

Bahama woodstar, and the long-tailed sylph, whose tail is so long (five inches) that it hampers flight.

The Juan Fernandez firecrown is found only on Isla Robinson Crusoe in the Juan Fernandez Archipelago. Also in South America, there is the sword-billed hummingbird of the Andes. Its bill and the long tube of the Passiflora mixta make the hummingbird essential for the flower's survival, as nothing else can pollinate the long flowers.

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

3	8		
90			
2	8		
+	-	x	÷

Solution For Easy 1

2 + 8 x (8 + 8)

Medium puzzle 1

15	18		
38			
10	15		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Medium 1

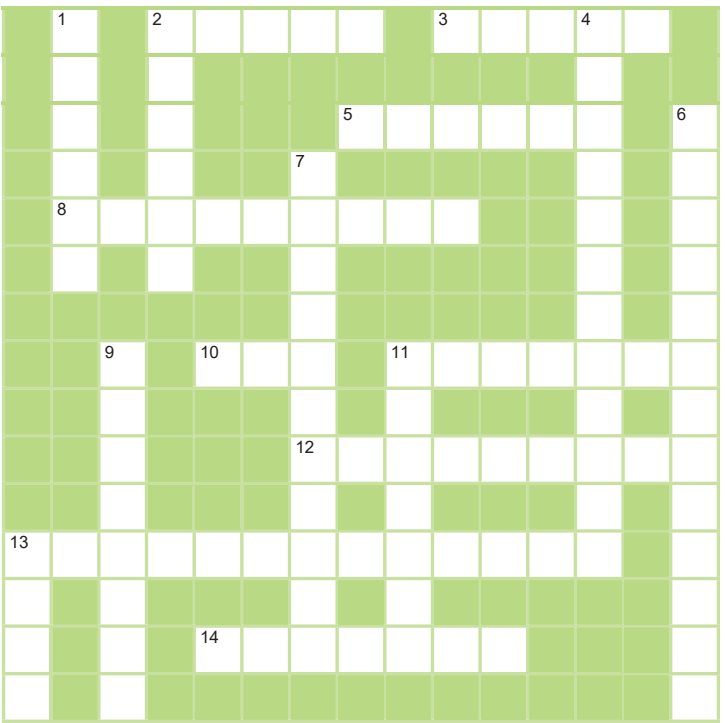
01 - 51 + 51 + 81

Hard puzzle 1

10	27		
33			
3	11		
+	-	x	÷

Solution for Hard 1

11 x (22 - 2 x 01)

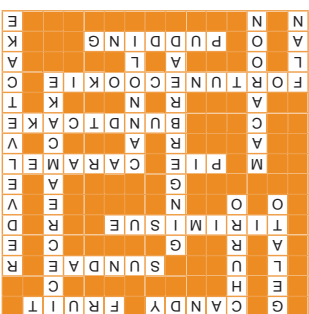


Across

- 2 Kisses, possibly (5)
- 3 Peaches, plums, or bananas (5)
- 5 Ice cream parlor order (6)
- 8 Italian treat made from "Lady fingers" (9)
- 10 Pecan, e.g. (3)

Down

- 1 Cold dessert (6)
- 2 Cinnamon-covered snack (6)
- 4 Summertime's favorite dessert?(3,5,4)
- 6 Colorful, layered dessert (3,6,4)
- 7 You can make a house from this dessert (11)
- 9 Almond cookie (8)
- 11 Italian pastry (7)
- 13 Custard concoction (4)
- 11 You can dip an apple in it (7)
- 12 Confection with a hole in the middle (5,4)
- 13 A Chinese restaurateur competes on "Wheel of..." (7,6)
- 14 Like a custard (7)



NTD

THE POWER OF TRUTH



32

STATES

22M

HOUSEHOLDS

AT NTD, WE DON'T DECIDE WHERE NEWS BREAKS. WHAT WE DO **IS COVER IT.** WE TAKE YOU THERE. **SEE FOR YOURSELF.**

Find *NTD* in Your Area

ZIP code

www.NTD.com/TV | 646-201-4999

VERIZON | SPECTRUM | COMCAST | AT&T U-VERSE | COX DIRECTTV | DISH NETWORK | OPTIMUM | CHARTER and more

Roku

Apple TV

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play

DONATE YOUR CAR

To a media that stands for TRUTH and TRADITION

Your old vehicle can support The Epoch Times' truthful journalism and help us get factual news in front of more readers.

WHY DONATE TO US?

- Vehicles accepted as-is
- Free vehicle pick-up
- Maximum tax deduction
- Support our journalists

Donate Now: www.epochcar.org 1-800-822-3828 cars@epochtimes.com

Our independence from any corporation or holding company is what ensures that we're free to report according to our values of Truth and Tradition. We're primarily funded through subscriptions from our readers—the stakeholders that we answer to, who keep us on the right track.

THE EPOCH TIMES

THE EPOCH TIMES

NOW HIRING JOURNALISTS

The Epoch Times seeks journalists to cover local news of national relevance in:

- Arizona
- Texas
- Florida
- Ohio
- Michigan
- North Carolina

- Oregon
- Wisconsin
- Minnesota
- Pennsylvania
- Colorado

The ideal candidate should be grounded in ethical journalism and able to balance the production of daily news, contributing reporting for enterprise stories and developing feature articles. You would be working remotely with an assignment editor.

Duties

- Find and pitch local stories of national relevance
- Develop and maintain a pipeline of mid- and long-length articles
- Seek out primary sources and conduct original interviews
- When assigned, carry out reporting for national enterprise stories
- Adhere to the Journalism Code of Ethics and The Epoch Times reporting guidelines

Skills

- Clear and concise writing on deadline, strong narrative skills for feature articles
- A proven ability to tell complicated stories in a thorough yet readable way
- Ability to take well-composed still photos a big plus

Job Requirements

- Bachelor's degree
- Two years of experience as a professional reporter

Send résumé and cover letter to careers@epochtimes.com