

THE EPOCH TIMES

LIFE &

TRADITION

DAVE PAONE/THE EPOCH TIMES

Longtime volunteer firefighters (L-R) Ray Preziosi, Steve DiLorenzo, Bobby Troncillito, and Jim Bracco have a combined 222 years of service.



A Tradition of Enduring Service

In some locales, volunteer first-responders are a necessity. Some of them have served for decades.

DAVE PAONE

Jim Bracco has been a volunteer firefighter for 64 years. Bobby Troncillito for 58 years. Steve DiLorenzo for 53. Ray Preziosi, the “kid” of the bunch, has been one for a mere 47. That’s a combined total of 222 years of firefighting, all for free.

Family Affairs

Bracco’s grandfather, an Italian immigrant, was a volunteer fire chief, and his uncle was a volunteer firefighter as well. Bracco joined at age 18, in 1958. He’s been with three departments over the past 64 years and is currently a commissioner.

Troncillito’s four uncles were volunteer firefighters, with one being a chief. His father was a firefighter, too. Troncillito never felt pressure to join, but he did, by his own choice, at age 18 in 1964.

DiLorenzo’s father was both a firefighter and a commissioner. DiLorenzo joined in 1969, at age 19. He was chief for three years and has been fire commissioner for the past 23.

Volunteer Versus Career

While big cities have full-time, career-first responders who are paid with tax dollars, most suburban and rural communities rely completely on unpaid personnel for both fire and ambulance service.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, 67 percent of first responders in the United States are volunteers.

DiLorenzo’s department in Highland, New York, occasionally provides “mutual aid” to nearby Poughkeepsie, which has

67 percent of first responders in the U.S. are volunteers.

career firefighters. He believes he and his fellow volunteers are perceived as “inferior,” solely because they’re not paid for what they do. “We’re really breaking that stigma,” he told The Epoch Times.

Community Service

Each one of these heroes felt the need to serve their communities in some way from an early age. While there were several organizations in which to do that, they all chose the fire department.

Even as a child, Preziosi gravitated toward fire service. He tricked out his bicycle as a fire truck by attaching a shampoo bottle as a fire extinguisher and a garden hose as a firehose.

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Bill Malone has 46 years of service with the Malverne (N.Y.) Volunteer Ambulance Corps.

INSPIRING READS

Heartwarming Tales of Healing, Destiny, and Hope

True stories about a donkey and a plow horse, and the humans they touched

MATTHEW JOHN

To hear “I love you,” as your child’s first words is something most mothers could only dream of.

For Tracy Austwick, just to hear any words from her daughter—who doctors had predicted would never speak, following an emergency tracheostomy when born 14 weeks premature—was a miracle.

But even more arresting, was to whom—or what—those words were spoken: a gentle giant of a donkey named Shocks. Tracy only happened to overhear Amber’s whispered words of affection for the dear creature that had, in her third year of life, effected a miracle.

“Amber’s Donkey” tells the incredible tale of Amber, who was born a mere 1 pound and 9 ounces, and the unlikely friendship she forged with a beleaguered burro.

The tale of her furry friend, affectionately dubbed “Shocksy,” is equally remarkable. He had been saved from the brink of death himself, only a few years before meeting Amber, by the good souls at the Donkey Sanctuary, in England.

Shocks had been found on an Irish farm with a rope so tightly tied around his neck it had dug into the flesh. His callous owner had taken to pouring bleach on the creature’s horrid wounds. Few expected him to survive.

While his flesh and fur did manage to slowly recover at the sanctuary and its plush paddocks, the donkey’s heart was not so easily mended. The trauma left him timid and isolated. (Quick tidbit: Donkeys are surprisingly social creatures, capable of rowdy play, pranks, and deep and enduring friendships.)

But just as Shocks managed to bring about an awakening in Amber, so too did she in her four-legged friend.

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Giulia Lamarca and Andrea Decarlini reach the top of Machu Picchu, Peru.



On a visit to the Raja Ampat Islands, Indonesia.



Decarlini and Lamarca with their daughter Sophie.

Following Her Dreams Around the World

LOUISE BEVAN

After having sustained damage to her spinal cord, after a few months, she was diagnosed with spinal cord injury. So began nine months in the hospital with a dedicated physiotherapy program where she learned how to move again.

"Pretty much everything was a daily challenge at the time. ... I couldn't even get dressed by myself," she said. "Somehow, I overcame these problems, mainly because I wanted to get better, and I was actually recovering my autonomy bit by bit."

A personal mantra, "I can do this," helped Lamarca stay on top of her struggles. Her family had already endured her brother's battle with leukemia as a child—thankfully, he recovered—and she didn't wish to bring a similar burden on them.

She began every day trying to elicit a smile by reading jokes, but says it didn't always work.

Then along came Andrea Decarlini.

"Andrea was a physiotherapy student, I met him some days after the accident," said Lamarca. "He came to say hello because our fathers used to work together. ... Having someone 'on the other side' when you are in a hospital can be very useful sometimes."

Weeks later, Lamarca began seeing Decarlini every day. The two began spending

a lot of time together, since Decarlini had to "study" her. After Decarlini's internship ended, the two began to go out as friends and have conversations about everything. As their friendship blossomed, Lamarca and Decarlini became more than just friends.

Though she feared he wasn't serious about a romantic relationship, their connection was undeniable. Decarlini soon found a way to reassure her, and he wanted them to see the world together.

"One day we were sitting outside the hospital, when he asked me, 'What if we go to Australia as soon as I graduate, and you get out of the hospital?'" Lamarca said. "I thought he was crazy, but I said yes anyway." Since then, they've visited 30 countries together, collecting photos and videos of their epic adventures along the way.

The couple's conquests include Machu Picchu, the Great Wall of China, and the sacred boulder of Sigiriya, Sri Lanka, where Decarlini carried Lamarca on his back for 1,000 steps to its summit.

In an account of their story shared with *Love What Matters*, Lamarca marveled: "My husband has literally carried me places I cannot access otherwise."

Through her travels around the world, Lamarca shares what she has learned and experienced in the process.

"Travel teaches us a lot about the world, and a lot about ourselves," she told *The Epoch Times*. "When you have an accident, there is always a 'before' and an 'after,' and if you don't find a way to let go of the before, you will end up living in the past."

"During our travels, nobody knows me; I am just Giulia, so I can start over and be who I really am, not just who I used to be."

Lamarca has not walked since her accident, but today she's independent. She drives and works, and has even designed the couple's home. In September 2021, she and her husband welcomed their daughter, Sophie.

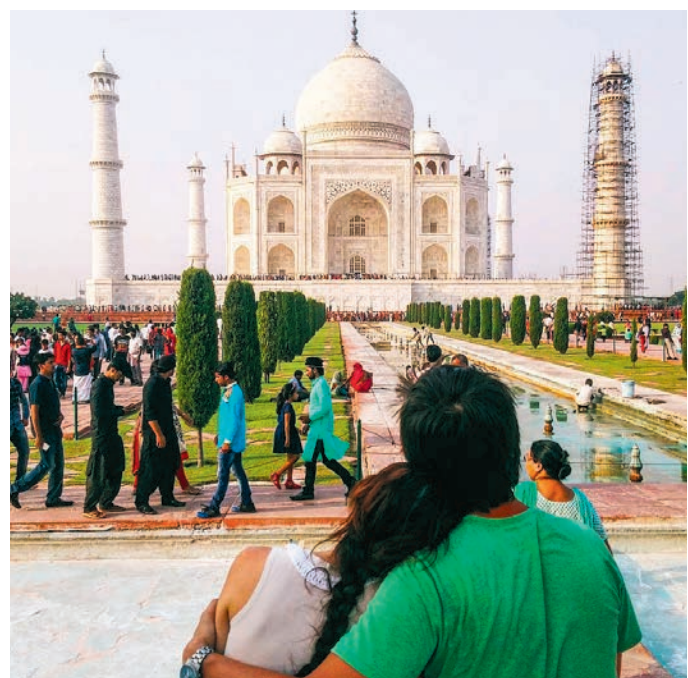
They also share their daily adventures on Instagram.

While currently based in Italy, Lamarca and her family have begun a "world tour" this year and will be living all around the world for at least one year. The wife, mother, and globetrotter advocates that everyone find their passion.

"You really need to find what you love and stick to that," she said. "Don't follow other people too much. ... Take your time and find your way."

"For me, it has been travel; for some, sport or family. Set your goals a bit at a time. Start thinking about tomorrow, then the next week, the next month, the next year, and soon you can start to program your life again."

The couple's conquests include Machu Picchu, the Great Wall of China, and the sacred boulder of Sigiriya, Sri Lanka, where Decarlini carried Lamarca on his back for 1,000 steps to its summit.



Lamarca and Decarlini contemplating the Taj Mahal in India.



Decarlini and Lamarca on their wedding day.

From Homeless to Valedictorian

'I made this pact to change my life,' says Griffin Furlong, of his tenacious journey marked by hardships, hard work, and a life-changing realization

LOUISE BEVAN

After losing his mother to leukemia, a Kentucky native and his family lost their home and struggled with homelessness for a period of time until they were taken in by the boy's grandmother in Florida. Experiencing a glimmer of light, the boy made a pact: to change his life for the better.

Through hard work and tenacity, Griffin Furlong, 26, excelled at school and became valedictorian. Today, he's a civil engineer and is writing a book about his inspiring journey from living in a homeless shelter to becoming a high achiever.

Furlong's worldview changed completely when he lost his mother at the tender age of 6.

He told *The Epoch Times*: "It made me start thinking about what eternity meant, and I learned that life was very, very fragile."

In the days leading up to her death, there was a series of events that have since been ingrained in Furlong's memory forever, he said. He recalls spending time with her when she was at the hospital. She helped him to learn to read, and he would read back to her. Although he didn't completely comprehend it at that time, he knew his mother was suffering.

"I couldn't quite understand it fully," he said. "She started to lose color in her face, she started to lose her hair, and eventually, one day at school, I was called up to the guidance counselor's office."

That morning would be the last time he would see his mother.

He remembers standing beside her open casket at the funeral, holding her "cold hand," hoping it was all a dream. Back home, his heartbroken older brother, Sean, cried with him in their shared bedroom. They then promised to be there and support each other no matter what challenges they encountered.

Months later, hardship put their promise into practice.

Furlong's father, a car salesman, lost his job after his wife died, and filed for unemployment.

"He really wanted to watch over us, that was his main priority, and that's what I commend him for today," said Furlong. "[But] we went through a lot of our retirement accounts; it was a slow depletion of our money and our

mental and emotional wellbeing."

The family downgraded from their rented house to an apartment, temporarily living with Furlong's maternal grandmother before "bouncing around" friends' couches.

At that time, Furlong and his brother, Sean, found solace in Little League baseball—as per an account of his story shared with *Love What Matters*. Furlong recalls writing "Never Give Up" with a marker pen under the bill of his baseball cap.

Life grew harder still when his dad surrendered their car, unable to afford repairs.

Furlong told *The Epoch Times*: "Life was definitely changing, and I knew it changed for the worse when we finally ended up in a hotel with a little bit of money. That's what led us into the homeless shelters."

At Wayside Christian Mission homeless shelter in downtown Louisville, he felt like a caveman, tallying the days on the wall. His family took one of two bunk beds in a shared room; another family took the other. There were rats and mold, the plastic mattresses were thin and cold, and the shelter wasn't heated.

He also began to feel like an outcast at school. He was the only kid to hop off the school bus from the homeless shelter and rarely wore clean clothes.

Despite this, never once did he tell a teacher that he had lost his home.

To this day, Furlong considers this period of his adolescence a test of stamina and patience. Yet the more he took a step back and observed his life, the more he realized the positives surrounding him. He then took the "glass half full" approach to life.

"I realized that everything was based off my mindset," he said. "If I were to continue viewing the world in more of a positive way, the world would be good. ... If I made the choice to be negative, if I made the choice to allow my circumstances to define who I was instead of having me define who I was, well, I wouldn't really make it out anywhere."

Circumstances changed when Furlong and his family were removed from the shelter and they stayed in a hotel.

However, at that time, his paternal grandmother, living in Jacksonville, Florida, with his aunt and uncle, reached out. She had always sent money, but had finally decided to move her grandsons in.



Griffin Furlong, today a civil engineer, is writing a book about the lessons he has learned. He also hopes to start a scholarship fund for a student in need every year.

“ In order to do anything, you have to learn how to do it; you don't magically become an engineer. you don't magically become a doctor. ”

Griffin Furlong



Furlong's mother suffered from leukemia.



Furlong played baseball during his middle school years.

Furlong at his high school graduation.

It was "just like a miracle," Furlong said. The move was like a "restart button" to his life.

The first time he achieved straight-As was in sixth grade. His brother, Sean, a huge role model, told him, "If you keep getting all A's, you can be valedictorian."

He said, "I made this pact to really change my life, the more I started realizing that my input was my output."

However, it wasn't all smooth sailing; a few months before high school graduation, in 2014, Furlong met with another ordeal where he found himself homeless again.

As he was dropped home one day by his girlfriend's family, he saw a U-Haul out front and was mortified. He'd had no idea his family was behind on rent. Shamefaced, he walked back to the car and explained his history to his girlfriend's family, who briefly took him in.

Throughout this ordeal, Furlong kept up with essay deadlines, exams, and college applications. A few days later, he found out he was his class valedictorian.

"My brother was dating a news producer at the time," he said. "She was like, 'Hey, I think a news story about this could really help you get a scholarship.' She was persistent enough, so I finally agreed."

"Literally the next day, I get a call from Good Morning America and The Today Show, and I wake up and my face is on the TV. It was honestly unreal," he said.

His story came in as a huge shock to his teachers and his friends.

The news coverage changed Furlong's life and cemented his personal motto: Never Give Up. With a scholarship and a public fundraiser behind him, he enrolled in Florida State University's engineering program, alongside like minds who provided "awesome motivation."

He struggled, but grew, earning internships and becoming a "sponge" in learning as much as possible.

"I was not shocked that I graduated college," he said. "I was not shocked that I was magna cum laude. I was not shocked because I knew the effort that I put in."

Joining the professional world, Furlong's work ethic persisted. He moved up the ranks quickly, gaining the trust of his colleagues and mentors. He still firmly believes mindset controls every action we make.

"If I'd made the choice back in the homeless shelter to not care, to not do my work, to just sit around, then my path would have been completely different," he said. "I probably would have hung around people who thought the same way. I probably wouldn't have graduated."

"In order to do anything, you have to learn how to do it; you don't magically become an engineer, you don't magically become a doctor, you don't magically become whatever you want to be. ... Education is one of the best investments you can ever make for your long-term plans."

Furlong, who now lives in Tampa, claims his myriad experiences made him the man he is today. Citing an Earl Nightingale quote—"Success is the progressive realization of a worthy goal or ideal"—he says his lifelong goal is to learn and grow.

He's currently writing a memoir-based book of his inspiring journey and hopes to launch a scholarship fund providing full tuition for a student in need every single year. A portion of his book proceeds will go toward the fund.

He also hopes to one day have the financial means to relieve his father from minimum-wage jobs once and for all.

"I think the best thing that we can ever do is share our perspective on things, because you can learn a lot from people. One story could change someone's life," he said.

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that will happen forever.

"You don't have to be fully related to someone to be their family," Camerin said.

Although the regular visits are for a brief period of time, the joy that the newfound relationship adds to Floyd's life is meaningful.

"I feel like it's adding years to his life," Camerin said. "It's something you can't buy at the store."

The beautiful relationship between Floyd and Brinley has tugged at the heartstrings of netizens after Camerin shared the video on his social media accounts. Additionally, a flood of encouragement and support has poured in for Floyd in the wake of the loss of his wife.

Through sharing this video, Camerin wants to deliver the message that humanity is still alive.

He shared: "Whatever you can do, it may impact someone's life more than you think it could."

An 'Unbreakable Bond'

Dad visits widower, 86, with infant daughter, to brighten his days

E. S. ARMSTRONG

A young father introduced his infant daughter to an 86-year-old widower, and the resulting relationship has been mutually life-changing.

In a moving moment captured on video, Floyd, who recently lost his wife, meets baby Brinley Kindie for the first time. Brinley's father, Camerin Kindie, 22, brought the baby to visit Floyd at an Idaho assisted-living facility where the elderly man currently resides.

"You could just see light being brought to his eyes," Camerin told *The Epoch Times*. Camerin's mother, who works at the assisted-living facility where Floyd lives,

had told her son about him. Having lost his wife, Floyd was in a "pretty dark place." So, Camerin's mother urged her son to bring the baby for a visit, in the hopes that it would encourage and lighten Floyd's mood.

The first time Floyd was introduced to 6-month-old Brinley, he had no idea that he was being recorded on video, but according to Camerin, he instantly took Brinley to be his own granddaughter.

Since then, Camerin, Brinley, and Floyd have created some precious memories together. Floyd and the baby have developed "an unbreakable bond."

Sometimes when Camerin stops by for a visit, Brinley just falls asleep in Floyd's arms. On other occasions, they have done things like watch the Superbowl together, and even venture out for a trip to the local ice cream shop. Floyd, who "insisted on buying" the ice cream during their outing, cradled baby Brinley as if she were

his own granddaughter.

What started as a simple visit a while ago has now blossomed into a relationship with the quality and character of a true family. Camerin now even considers him to be "Grandpa Floyd."

On a regular basis, Camerin and baby Brinley visit "Grandpa Floyd" at least once or twice a week. The elderly man's face lights up each time he sees them.

Camerin also said it's not unusual for the newfound grandfather to proudly boast about his "granddaughter," or to show an innocent and endearing protectiveness when it comes to sharing Brinley with the others at the assisted-living facility.

The trio has become family. When Floyd thanks Camerin for visiting, the young man gently rebuffs him, reminding him that it's not needed, since he's "grandpa," and bringing her to visit him is something



Floyd and Brinley. COURTESY OF CAMERIN KINDIE

From a Childhood of Poverty in Haiti to Finding Opportunity in America

Through hard work and ingenuity, photographer Randy Bince has built a business that keeps on adapting to the times

DAVE PAONE

Applying conventional logic, Randy Bince should either be in prison or dead by now. But he's not in prison and he's certainly not dead. He and his wife, Christina Murray, are living the American Dream with their own youth sports photography business.

A Childhood of Poverty

While Bince was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1981, he spent his early childhood in poverty in Haiti. At 8 years old, he relocated to the Ravenswood Projects in Queens, New York, where he lived in more poverty with his parents and his three brothers and two sisters (whom he had never met until then) in a two-bedroom apartment.

Indoor plumbing was something new to him, and he had to learn how to flush. Bince also shared the apartment with creepy-crawly things, and the building was surrounded by rats.

Having only spoken Creole in Haiti, Bince started fourth grade not knowing English, but learned it rather quickly, thanks to English as a second language classes and "Sesame Street." Today, he speaks with an American accent.

Things Get Worse

One night, there was a big fight at the apartment between Bince's father and aunt.

"Guns were drawn and people were shot," he told *The Epoch Times*.

His father eventually went to prison.

Bince's mother had permanently returned to Haiti, so he and his siblings were sent to live with their two uncles and grandmother in another part of Queens.

"Grandma was a real parent," Bince said, with "education and church" being "the core foundation" of her parenting methods. Additionally, one of his uncles was "super strict," keeping Bince and his siblings on the straight and narrow, with school being a priority. Household chores were a close second.

He graduated high school, and thanks to public assistance programs, was able to attend St. John's University. However, the programs didn't cover everything and even with a part-time job, he couldn't make it work.

Bince transferred to a community college, which was far more affordable. Even so, his old-world, Haitian uncles weren't happy with him having a job—in their minds,



(Above) Youth sports photographer Randy Bince in Studio L.

(Right) A MyStyle portrait shot on location.



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His old-world, Haitian uncles weren't happy with him having a job—in their minds, school was to be his only job—and actually kicked him out of the house for working.

A MyStyle team composite with graphics.

COURTESY OF RANDY BINCE



school was to be his only job—and actually kicked him out of the house for working. "So I went downstairs, I packed my bag, I walked out the side door, and I never turned around," Bince said.

At 17, he was on his own.

Hired at Legends

In 1999, Bince was hired at Legends Photography, which photographed youth sports. It was founded by husband-and-wife team Chris and Nancy Minerva in 1986. They shot team photos and individual portraits of players in organized youth sports on Long Island (where it's located) and in neighboring New York.

Generally, the spring season was baseball and soccer and the fall season was football and cheerleading. There were the occasional lacrosse, gymnastics, and ice hockey teams, as well as other sports.

The Minervas developed a method of photographing hundreds of players at a time, often having multiple units shooting at several locations over a weekend, both interior and exterior.

Photographs could be put on plaques, coffee mugs, custom-made trading cards, and a host of other items.

"Randy was Mr. Energizer Bunny," Nancy Minerva told *The Epoch Times*.

"I loved him. I loved his energy," Chris Minerva said of Bince.

Bince described his photography skills at this point as "absolutely zero," but having grown up in the environment he did, he was a "good soldier-kid" who followed orders and didn't talk back, which is what the Minervas were looking for.

Bince took it upon himself to go to the library and read books on photography, as well as look at fashion magazines he would swipe from his neighbor's recycling bin, thus launching his career in photography.

Eventually, Bince dropped out of college and worked at Legends full time. In between seasons, when business was slow, Chris Minerva often handed Bince cash "right out of his wallet" if he needed it to pay the rent and even gave him a car.

Legends is where he met fellow employee Christina Murray, whose first impression of him was "such a goodie-two-shoes," having no immediate attraction to him. At the time, Bince had no idea how this job would greatly change the course of his life for the better.

The Digital Age

When Bince started at Legends, it was the waning days of film. As the world made the transition to digital photography, so did Legends. So Bince learned how to shoot and edit digital photography from its early days.

Bince and Murray were married in 2015, and he became a stepfather to her daughter, Kaylee. They've had two children together, Abigail and Nathan.

Eventually, they knew everything needed

to run and own the company. In order to raise capital, Bince sold every personal item he could and borrowed money from friends and family. He and Murray purchased Legends from the Minervas in 2017.

Their first order of business was to bring it into the 21st century, replacing much of what was done on paper with digital alternatives, which saved hours of manpower. They also hired a full-time equipment manager to upgrade the old, worn-out items with profession-grade equipment.

The step after that was to acquire more clients, often through social media, which they did.

'MyStyle' Is His Style

While Legends shoots clean, professional pictures, every parent has a cellphone with a camera in it and can shoot pictures that are "good enough" for their purposes. Bince knew he had to shoot pictures that no one else could shoot and make them so desirable that parents and coaches just had to have them.

With inspiration from another photographer, the style he developed is high contrast with a lot of attitude. Instead of having the subject smile, he'll say, "Put on your game face." This, combined with either a jet-black background or an urban-looking location, results in the fiercest-looking 11-year-old girls' softball teams you've ever seen.

Bince also combines customized graphics with the photos so players can have their position and number included in the layout. He also makes composite team photos, commingling the individual portraits into one large poster.

Players love it, parents love it, and coaches love it. Bince calls the method "MyStyle" and copyrighted the term.

A Blessing in Disguise

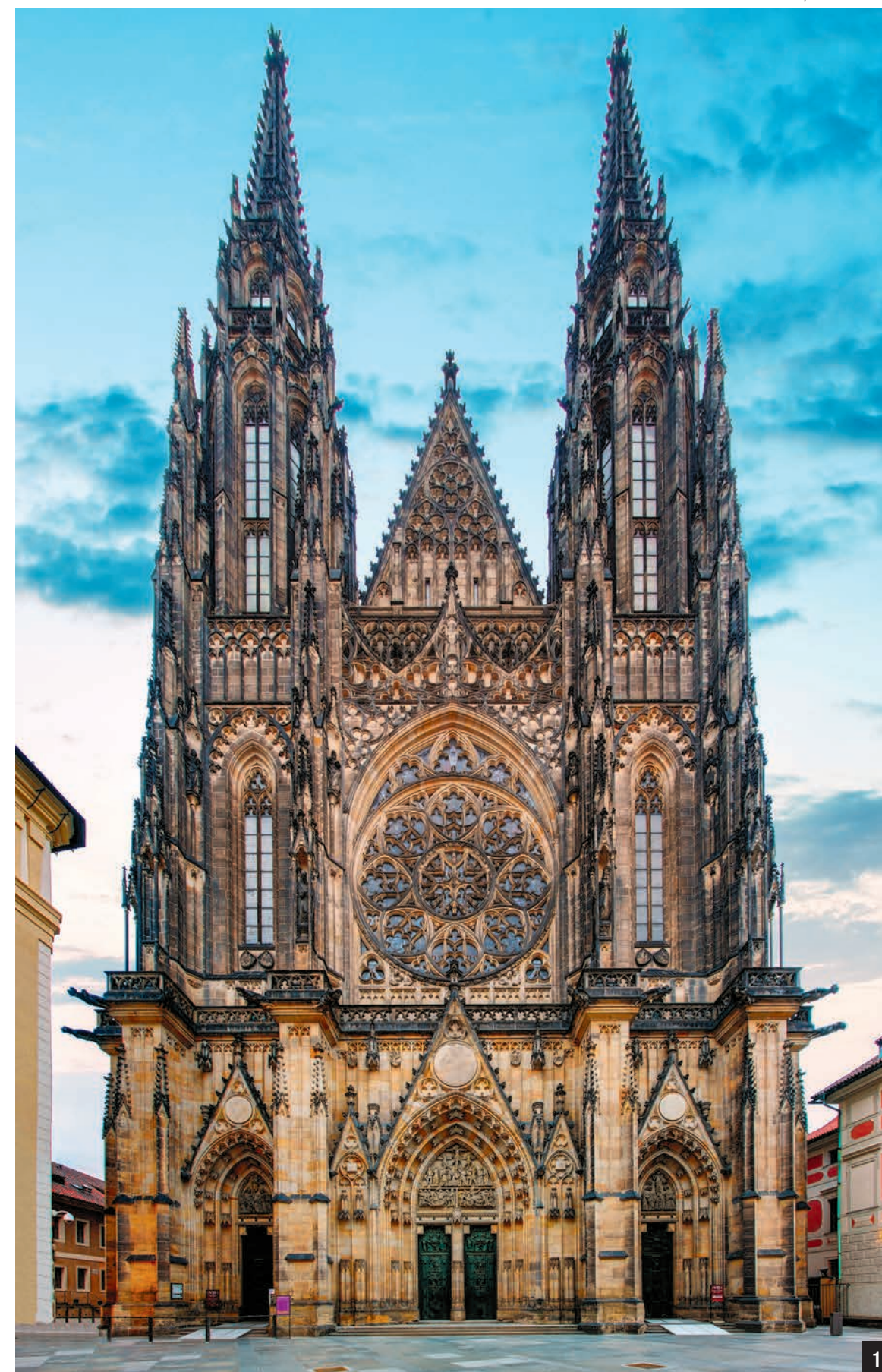
As the spring 2020 season was approaching, Bince and Murray were expecting to have a banner season (with all the newly acquired clients) to the point of having to hire more staff and purchase more cameras.

The COVID-19 lockdown put an end to that.

"We were one step from falling off the cliff with everyone else," Bince said.

However, having zero jobs coupled with an SBA loan gave them the opportunity to renovate the office space that they rent. They tore down walls and ceilings, ripped up floors, and started from scratch. They made half the building studio space for their own use and for rental. They dubbed it, "Studio L."

Bince and Murray don't know what the future holds any more than anyone else does, but given his past as a Haitian immigrant born into poverty and his present as the co-owner of his own business, there's a good chance that they'll continue to thrive in the United States, making it the Land of Opportunity indeed.



1

JAMES BURKE

The St. Vitus Cathedral is located on a hill that overlooks the city of Prague. When construction began in the 14th century, Prague was the third-largest city in the world after Rome and Constantinople. In this grand Gothic cathedral, kings have been crowned, married, and buried, and national treasures have been held.

As in the past, pilgrims continue to pay their respects to the church's patron saints Wenceslaus, Vitus, and others represented within.

French master-builder Matthias of Arras brought with him the French Gothic style.



5



6

The St. Vitus Cathedral of Prague

St. Vitus Cathedral's inherent beauty stands as a testimony to the structural mastery and lofty interiors of the timeless Gothic aesthetic.

He employed a system of harmonious proportions to underpin the overarching composition. The cathedral's slender verticality is created by tall interior columns that form the central nave, and by ribbed vaulting that holds the seemingly weightless, high ceiling. On the exterior, carved stone spires top flying buttresses that support the walls, the pointed arched windows and portals, and the main façade.

A Gothic architect set the style of the cathedral, but it remained only half-completed for several centuries. A baroque spire was added to the south tower during the 18th century. Then, in the late 19th century, architect Josef Kranner took up the chal-

lenge, forging ahead with the building's Gothic style. He and others who followed added the main nave and front façade, finally completing it in the early 20th century.

While architectural styles have come and gone, St. Vitus Cathedral's inherent beauty stands as a testimony to the structural mastery and lofty interiors of the timeless Gothic aesthetic. The cathedral's completion reflects the perseverance of a culture and its people.

James Howard Smith, an architectural photographer, designer, and founder of Cartio, aims to inspire an appreciation of classic architecture.



2



3



4

1. The three portals are capped with pointed arches and reflect the triple-naved basilica plan within. The cathedral is characterized by two tall towers with long, thin windows and spires that create its verticality. The façade faces west, and in the center, a rose window allows in afternoon light.

2. St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague. The light-green copper spire was added during the Baroque period.

3. Created by Frantisek Kysela in 1925, the rose window on

the main west-facing façade forms a radiating pattern of eight petals. Filled with colorful geometric-shaped stained glass, the form is a beautiful centerpiece for the nave that glows in the afternoon sun. The inscriptions on the stained glass tell the story of creation as told in the Bible.

4. The stone-sculpted gargoyles were created to prevent rain damage to the building by moving the water away from the stone walls. Their animated sculptural forms were intended to ward off evil spirits.



7

5. In this triptych, the stained glass windows with angled sides appear on the south side of the cathedral. Their glowing quality create a sense of awe. In the center, Jesus is held in the hands of the Creator, and above, a white dove appears, symbolic of the Holy Trinity. On the left, we see the Virgin Mary, and on the right, St. Wenceslaus and St. Vitus on their knees.

6. Tracery are stone structures that hold the sections of stained-glass windows. Their vine-like sculptural forms create a weightless effect, lightening the atmosphere of the window composition. The scene here is a depiction by famous Prague artist Max Svabinsky of the Last Judgment.

7. The interior columns elegantly line the nave leading to the pointed arch that frames the entrance, with the prominent rose window above.

Winking at Disobedience, Winding Toward Destruction

ANNIE HOLMQUIST

A little girl sporting a blue tutu came into view the other day as I walked by a school parking lot. But it wasn't the tutu that caught my attention—it was her mother's various commands and entreaties that she was happily ignoring. "It's time to go, honey!" No movement. "We need to go home now," came the repeated request, but little tutu lady kept playing behind a dwindling snow pile. "One ... two," the increasingly frustrated mother counted.

Leaving the pair behind to sort out their homeward bound issues, I soon came upon another child playing while her parents looked on. Repeating the "time to go!" command numerous times to no avail, her mother finally told her that she had one more minute to play, but within seconds, she also told the little girl that "the minute is up," completely reneging on the—apparently dishonest—promise just made.

I get it. In fact, anyone who has ever worked with little ones gets it. Children have minds of their own and don't come by obedience naturally. Furthermore, no adult enjoys the shame and difficulty of dealing with a public tantrum. The easy thing to do is to just wink at disobedience, cajoling and coddling children instead. What many of us forget, however, is that such an approach to childhood disobedience not only affects the child and the adult working with that child, it also affects society at large in many negative ways, a fact we are seeing play out today.

The reason it negatively affects society is that a child's failure to learn obedience to proper authorities builds distrust, confusion, and rejection of rightful authority as that child grows into an adult. Writer and speaker Elisabeth Elliot discussed this idea roughly 50 years ago in her book "Let Me Be a Woman":

"Failure to fulfill threats and promises trains a child to discount what is said. It trains him to lie. The parents are not to be trusted, therefore they need not be obeyed, therefore no authority is trustworthy or need be obeyed. Obedience is optional, depending on convenience or inclination or obvious reward."

But such parental action (or inaction) not only trains a child to lie, but also trains



A child's failure to obey proper authorities when young results in distrust of rightful authorities when he or she grows into an adult.

him to believe a lie. When a child cannot count on a parent or teacher to follow through, he lives in a world of uncertainty, which creates further chaos in his life and may even confuse him enough to follow and believe other authorities who tell him further lies and lead him down ruinous paths.

"A child has to know first of all and beyond any shadow of doubt that the word spoken will be the word carried out," Elliot wrote. "Threats ('If you don't do this, you'll be spanked') or promises ('If you pick up all your toys you'll get a Popsicle')—if not carried through are ruinous to a child's morality."

And it is that ruined morality that we are experiencing today. We see it in the riotous individuals who regularly engage in smash-and-grabs at stores or hijack yet another car. It shows up in angry students disrespecting those who present a different viewpoint than their own. It rears its head in those who pull down statues thinking they're symbols of a racist past. And it shows up in those who fool them-

When a child cannot count on a parent or teacher to follow through, he lives in a world of uncertainty, which creates further chaos in his life.

selves into thinking that a man can be a woman, or even those who can't truthfully define what a woman is.

The fact is, when children don't learn how to respond rightly to and interact with their parents—their first and foremost authorities—they won't know how to respond to other authorities in the future. They thus risk being misled or abused by those authorities, or conversely, abusing authorities themselves.

Many today see our nation declining and wonder what they can personally do to help it change course. One answer? Train your children to obey. Follow through not only on your threats, but also on your promises. In doing so, you will be raising children with a moral compass, who will then have the discernment and character to advance the type of government that will make our nation prosper once again.

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

Homeschool Planning: Ask the Kids

BARBARA DANZA

'Tis the season for homeschool planning. Many homeschooling parents, as they work their way toward the finish line of this school year, are also making their plans for next year. It's a time to review the year that's wrapping up and anticipate the needs of each child for the coming year.

One invaluable resource that parents may be overlooking is the perspective of their children. If you're in the thick of your homeschool planning for next year, don't forget to tap into the experiences, hopes, and wisdom of your children.

Some of the greatest advantages of homeschooling include the ability to cater an individualized education to the needs of each child and creatively dive deep into his or her interests.

Here are some questions to ask each child as you plan your homeschool. A student entering middle school or high school may be very willing to answer all of these questions thoroughly. A younger child may prefer just a few simple questions, and the very young can answer perhaps just one or two. Don't make this a dreaded chore. It should be a lighthearted and simple exercise. Some children will really appreciate being asked and having their input respected. Some children may love to answer in colorful doodles rather than words. Others would prefer this be a loose conversation over a tray of brownies. The key is for you to create a space for your children to share their thoughts and for you to be able to carefully consider them.



Tap into your children's experiences and interests when planning for next year's homeschool.

What were your favorite parts of this school year? Start out on a positive note. Encourage your child to pause and think about specific memories from the past year that brought joy or excitement or that were funny or interesting.

What were your least favorite parts of this school year? Here they'll likely start with a subject they may not be too fond of ("The math problems!") Dig deeper to discover if any habits or routines stand out as less than supportive to their well-being or if they're losing interest in something they once loved due to a new approach or circumstance. Listen to what your child shares here and ask follow-up nonjudgmental questions.

What do you hope 'X' grade will be like? Younger children may need some help with this question. Add specifics such as, what field trip would you like to go on next year, or what kind of stories

would you like to read?

If you were in charge of our homeschool, what would you do? Encourage creativity here and leave no ideas off-limits.

What do you wish you had more time to do? This question may offer some real insights into ideas to bring more joy into your child's homeschool experience, as well as develop their strengths. Listen carefully.

What do you want to learn more about or get better at doing? This question can give you ideas but also allow your child to think a little bit about the outcome of their own education. You may be surprised at some of the things your child suggests.

What's your favorite part of each homeschool day? Another important aspect of your homeschool life to review are habits and rhythms—those things you

do each day. It can be enlightening to know what your child most looks forward to every day.

What would you eliminate from homeschool if you could? Ask yourself when you get this answer if you could really comply with this request. If it's a key component of their education (reading or math, for example), how can you change it up or make it much easier or simpler?

What do you hope we continue doing in homeschool? When making new plans, it can be tempting to reinvent the wheel and change everything. This can be a good reminder that if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

What was the best thing you read this year? Looking back at the books your children read can be enjoyable and point to genres or authors that deserve further exploration. Look into this before you purchase new books for your library.

What was the best thing you created this year? The projects that your child poured time and effort into can point to some skills that need further development or interests that deserve further encouragement.

What are you most proud of? When your children find great meaning in their work, they may be proud of the effort they put in or the obstacles they overcame. Ensure you're up to speed on their development and what they deem most important.

What's the best thing about homeschooling? End your questions on a positive note that lends to a sense of gratitude. How fortunate to be able to homeschool. It's good for everyone to devote some time to this question.



FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

Week 14, 2022



The ARROW and the SONG

By Henry Wadsworth

I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

WHY WAS THERE THUNDER AND LIGHTNING IN THE LAB?

THE SCIENTISTS WERE BRAINSTORMING!

Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850-1894), SCOTTISH WRITER

President Woodrow Wilson asking Congress to declare war on Germany on 2 April 1917.



THE UNITED STATES WORLD WAR I

On April 6, 1917, the United States formally declared war on Germany and joined the battle already underway in Europe, alongside Belgium, Britain, France, and Russia. More than 2 million U.S. servicemen, led by Maj. Gen. John J. Pershing, served in France. The war wouldn't end for another year and a half, in late 1918.

By Aidan Danza, age 15

TREES OF THE EASTERN WOODS

OAKS

Oaks are some of the bigger trees. They make up a huge part of the eastern forests. They are a deciduous tree, meaning they lose their leaves every winter and grow them again in the spring. There are two major types of oaks: the red and white oaks. Their shape, bark, and leaves can vary widely, but red oaks and white oaks always have two things that define them: the shape of their leaves. A red oak's leaves have lobes, which come to sharp points and end in bristles, while the ends of the white oak's lobes are curved.

MAPLES

There are four common types of maple in America: red, silver, sugar, and boxelder. The boxelder is easiest to distinguish, for its leaves have no lobes. The sugar maple's leaves are more petite than those of other maples and the lobes have smaller sub-lobes on their tips. The red maple's leaves are more stocky, with shorter lobes and a generally wider leaf, while the silver maple's lobes are deeply cut and jagged. Oaks and maples are usually easy to distinguish. Oak leaves are usually longer and thinner than maple leaves, which are more circular.

PINE

Pines are an easy tree to distinguish, just by the fact that it has needles. Other evergreen trees also have needles, but they are a bit different. Pine needles are usually long, dense, and clustered, while the needles of other evergreens singularly stick out of the twig.

HOLLY

Unlike the other trees on this list, hollies do not make up the bulk of the forest. Instead, they are present in small groves or individually. The holly is unique among evergreens in that it has leaves (not needles) and berries. It usually inhabits more acidic soil but is tolerant of a wide range of conditions. Hollies develop their green berries in the summer. In the winter, around Christmas, they ripen, and they remain ripe until the spring, or until they are eaten by birds.

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

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 8 | | |
| 3 | 6 | | |
| + | - | x | ÷ |

Solution For Easy 1: 6 + 9 + 9 = 8

Medium puzzle 1

| | | | |
|---|----|---|---|
| 7 | 19 | | |
| 4 | 17 | | |
| + | - | x | ÷ |

Solution For Medium 1: 41 - 9 + 4 + 61

Hard puzzle 1

| | | | |
|----|----|---|---|
| 27 | 35 | | |
| 7 | 31 | | |
| + | - | x | ÷ |

Solution For Hard 1: 22 - 4 + 16 + 98

- Down**
- Tooth care Professional (15)
 - Fixes cavities (7)
 - Sells policies (14)
 - Makes pets feel better (12)
- Across**
- If you can read, thank a _____ (7)
 - Bilingual person, at times (10)
 - Counsel (6)
 - Computer boss (8)
 - Tests blood and urine (13)
 - Insurance company employee (13)
 - Translator (11)
 - Drugstore employee (10)

THE EPOCH TIMES

Epoch Times reporter Charlotte Cuthbertson interviews Yuma County Sheriff Leon Wilmot in the desert by the U.S.-Mexico border.



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National Reporter Full-Time

Cover one of a number of national news beats and craft rigorous, authoritative, and serious news articles and features.

Ideal candidates should be grounded in journalism ethics and dedicated to seeking the truth regardless of how it may contrast with personal bias or convictions.

Requirements

- A four-year degree in journalism, communications, or a related field
- Five years of experience as a professional reporter

To Apply

Send a cover letter, resume, and three samples of your news writing to careers@epochtimes.com

Breaking News Reporter Full-Time

Cover breaking news in the United States and around the world. Follow breaking news as it unfolds on social media and other platforms and cover the news in a timely fashion for The Epoch Times' website.

Requirements

- At least 2 years of experience in news reporting
- Very familiar with the news cycle

To Apply

Send your resume, a cover letter, 2+ samples of your work (URLs and/or attachments, please include links to any relevant photo or videos samples) and 3 references to DJYEditor@epochtimes.com

Political News Reporter Full-Time

Cover DOJ, FBI, Department of State, Pentagon, DHS, HHS and related institutions, EPA and Energy Department, Treasury Department.

Requirements

- At least 2 years of experience in news reporting
- Very familiar with the news cycle

To Apply

Send your resume, a cover letter, 2+ samples of your work (URLs and/or attachments, please include links to any relevant photo or videos samples) and 3 references to DJYEditor@epochtimes.com

China News Reporter Freelance

Cover topics related to China. The publication's China news section is a flagship feature, at the forefront of covering the Chinese regime's global ambitions, the latest issues affecting Chinese society and economy, and China-U.S. competition.

The ideal candidate would develop feature articles and pitch shorter-length pieces pegged to the latest happenings in the news cycle.

Requirements

At least two years of journalism experience.

To Apply

Send your resume, cover letter and writing samples to DJYEditor@epochtimes.com and pitch an idea for the article you would like to write for us.

Business News Reporter Full-Time and Freelance

Cover Business and Economy, with an initial focus on either economic policies that affect businesses, stock market news, or market research analysis.

Requirements

- A four-year degree in journalism, communications, or finance
- Two years of experience as a professional reporter

To Apply

Send a cover letter, resume, and three samples of your news writing to careers@epochtimes.com

Education Features Writer Freelance

Contribute Education-related feature stories. This may include, but is not limited to, stories about specific educational schools or programs, education methods, homeschool, or lifelong learning.

Requirements

- Experience in writing on education
- Excellent communication skills

To Apply

Send your author bio, 2+ samples of your work (URLs and/or attachments, please include links to any relevant photo or videos samples), and pitch an idea for the article you would like to write for us to editor@americanessence.net

Health Reporter Freelance

Contribute articles that give health-related practical tips, philosophical insights, research-backed findings, and expert advice. You will work remotely with a health editor.

Requirements

- Bachelor's degree or 2 years of combined experience in news reporting or health-related reporting
- Knowledge and interest in a wide range of health-related topics, trends and methods
- Knowledge of how to interpret and report on scientific studies

To Apply

Send your resume, a cover letter, 2+ unedited and edited samples of your work (URLs and/or attachments; please include links to any relevant photo or videos samples), and 3 references to chrisy.trudeau@epochtimes.com

Copy Editor, News and Features Full-Time

We are looking for experienced copy editors to join our dedicated print team.

Requirements

- A bachelor's degree in a writing-intensive major, or equivalent on-the-job training and experience
- Strong editorial and grammar skills, with an excellent command of the English language
- Proficiency in AP style preferred

To Apply

Along with your resume and references, please include a cover letter explaining your interest in working for The Epoch Times, sent via email to careers@epochtimes.com

Assistant Food Editor Full-Time

Help shape and execute food content strategy, build, and work with a team of writers, and manage day-to-day operations, including editing and occasionally writing a wide range of food and cooking articles for web and print.

Requirements

- 4+ years journalism experience, with at least 2 years' experience editing food, including developing and editing recipes
- Professional cooking experience preferred (culinary school, restaurant/catering jobs, test kitchen work, etc.)
- A passion for food and home cooking
- Enthusiasm for growing the Epoch Times brand

To Apply

To apply, please send your resume, a cover letter, 3-5 samples of your work (URLs and/or attachments, please include links to any relevant photo or video samples), and 3 references to food@epochtimes.com

Food Reporter Full-Time and Freelance

Contribute feature articles about time-honored culinary traditions and recipes, from across the U.S. and around the world. Cover profiles of inspiring people dedicated to keeping these culinary traditions alive—whether chefs, artisans, entrepreneurs, family business owners, farmers, or home cooks.

Requirements

- 2+ years journalism experience, preferably with a focus on food/drink
- Professional cooking and/or recipe development experience a plus
- A passion for food, people, and storytelling

To Apply

Send your author bio or resume, 3-5 samples of previously published work (URLs and/or attachments, please include links to any relevant photo samples), and 1-3 story pitches you think would be a great fit for us to food@epochtimes.com



We are an equal opportunity employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, gender identity, disability, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law. We will consider for employment qualified applicants with criminal histories consistent with applicable law.